

Pre-engineering program set

By Aleta Zak
Of the Emerald

Until recently, anyone interested in an engineering career either enrolled at Oregon State University or a scientific-technical program in some other school. Pre-engineering students just didn't come to the University.

But beginning next fall, students planning to enter engineering school can attend the University to complete pre-engineering requirements in science and mathematics.

"We aren't adding any new courses," says David Sokoloff, advising coordinator for the pre-engineering program and associate chairman of the physics department. "It's just a matter of selecting the courses we already have."

Most pre-engineering students take physics, calculus, computer science and other theory courses during their first two or three years in college which gives them a solid background in science.

After entering engineering school students take applied

science courses in a specific professional field. Completing an engineering degree usually takes five years, Sokoloff says.

The pre-engineering program is designed for those who want to transfer to OSU or any other engineering school. This gives students who like the University and Eugene the option to attend school here, he says.

The physics department is also planning to begin a special program in which a student would study physics at the University for three years, then transfer to the OSU engineering school. The student would graduate with a bachelor's degree in physics and a degree in a special engineering field.

"This program will be unique because there is only one other one like it in the state," Sokoloff says. The physics department expects this program to begin in the fall of 1984.

University officials talked about beginning a pre-

engineering program last year, he says.

"When we went to OSU and asked them if they would be interested in us starting a program, the answer was a resounding 'yes!'" Sokoloff says. "OSU is overwhelmed with pre-engineering majors."

The University admissions office is currently sending explanatory brochures to 3,000 high school students who expressed an interest in pre-engineering during the University preview day earlier this year.

Sokoloff says he has no idea how many students the pre-engineering program will attract next fall, but he is planning for 50 to 100 students. "It's been very late in getting started," he says. "We're just now getting the word out that the program is here."

A shortage of engineers with degrees makes engineering a good career choice right now, Sokoloff says. "The need for engineers will not disappear," he says.

Duplication

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members travel back and forth between the two campuses.

Are other education programs across the state necessary?

"It would be a tremendous waste of resources to do away with them," Harms says.

Teachers trained in one area usually work in that area after graduation, he says. Training teachers at the regional schools ensures a supply of teachers for those school districts, Harms says.

Students who completed their student teaching and applied for a certificate as of June 30, 1982, ranged from 86 at EOSC to 295 at WOSC. OSU had 277, PSU 230, SOSOC 124 and the University 277, according to a chancellor's office report.

Cutting education programs at any state institution may not save money, says Diane Dunlap, assistant dean at the University education school. If students transferred to another state system school, then the state still would have to spend a fixed amount per student.

"It would decrease student access to the programs," Dunlap says. "Right now the programs are placed strategically around the state. It would not solve a problem — it would create another one."

A more radical solution has been suggested to cut some duplication — the state system could close Western Oregon State College.

The state system carefully considered closing WOSC, Pierce says. But the state wouldn't save much money if the faculty and students simply were shifted to another institution, he says.

"Closure is not an issue," says Dori Beeks, assistant to the WOSC president. "We do not see this college as a concentration of duplication of other colleges."

"It is unfortunate the issue comes up," Beeks says. "It is irresponsible in the extreme." Closure rumors may keep some students from attending the college, and others may decide to transfer, she says.

WOSC also provides advantages to the community.

"Western not only has an economic impact on our community, but also contributes to our quality of life in the area," says Ed Stineff, Monmouth/Independence Area Chamber of Commerce president.

A comparison of states with similar geographic size and population shows Oregon has fewer higher education institutes, Pierce says.

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