

# B.S. requires more math

By Pam Cline  
Of the Emerald

Beginning this term, proficiency in mathematics has been added to the requirements for a bachelor of science degree, and officials are speculating about the possible effects.

The requirement applies to students who will graduate in 1988. Currently enrolled students, who are not freshman, will not be required to meet the new rule.

"In the past, the University took all comers," says Charles Wright, math department chair. The new requirement is just part of the University's effort to inform schools that more math is needed for all majors, including psychology, sociology and journalism, Wright says.

Students may fulfill the new math requirement several ways, he says. Students either must show competency equivalent to one year of college-level mathematics by passing an examination administered by the mathematics department or pass three courses from a designated list of either mathematics and/or computer and information science courses.

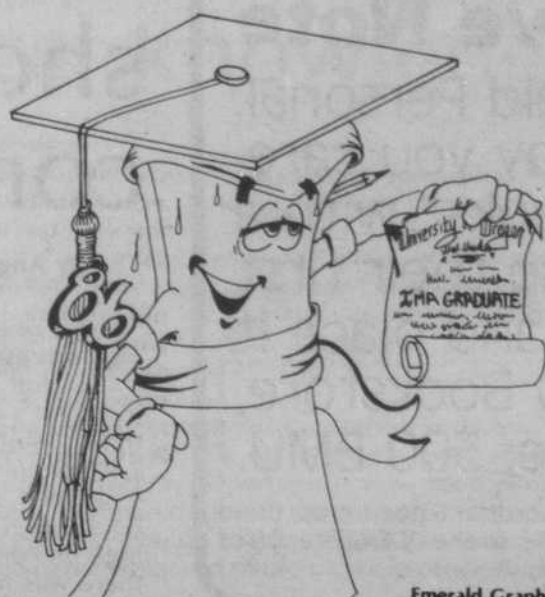
But Wright says the expected growth of enrollment in lower division mathematics courses may affect the department's list of course offerings.

"There is some concern on our part as to whether we can provide all of the courses that will be needed with the staff that we have," he says. Because several faculty members are on leave for the upcoming year, Wright thinks the department's flexibility may be hampered somewhat.

"We want to do everything we can to meet ongoing student demands," he says.

"The one thing that I can see happening as a spin-off of this requirement is the cutback on junior- and senior-level classes," if enrollment significantly increases, Wright says.

But Alison Baker, associate dean of the college of arts and sciences, says "more and more of the freshmen entering the University are better prepared in mathematics — hence the drop-off in demand for entry-level courses in that area." But Baker stressed the possibility that recent



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freshmen classes may be exceptional rather than representative of current trends.

"We need to keep monitoring each new class in order to substantiate projections and seat of the pants guesses," she says.

The number of students deciding to take a foreign language probably will remain relatively constant, Baker says. However, those who will be most affected by the new rule probably will be students working on a B.S. with majors such as sociology, journalism or fine arts. Business, education and hard-science majors already have existing programs that require math, she says.

"In the '60s, students went to college, chose from the menu, and came out with what they wanted. Today's graduates are more interested in job opportunities. Some years ago the language requirement for the B.A. degree was reinstated and now the math people feel we will have a B.S. with a similar sensible requirement.

"The undergraduate curriculum will be much better off and it will help our University's graduates compete more effectively in a changing job market," Baker says.

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- 7196 Lecture session III, Oct 31 - Dec 17 Fri 10:00 - 11:20
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- 7216 Lecture session I, Sept. 30 - Dec 17 Fri 8:30 - 9:50;
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- 7218 Lecture session III, Sept 30 - Dec 17 Fri 2:30 - 3:50;

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