

UNLV engineering grads in big demand

The demand for new engineers far exceeds the number of graduates from UNLV's engineering programs, according to university officials.

The chairpersons of the civil and mechanical engineering departments and the electrical engineering and computer science departments say that most of their students begin working for engineering firms while they are still pursuing bachelors degrees. When they graduate, they have full-time jobs waiting for them.

Dr. Richard Wyman, chairman of civil and mechanical engineering, said that within three weeks of graduation he had more than 70 requests from engineering firms who want to hire recent graduates.

"We don't have anybody to give them," he said. "Most people think that students go to school for four years, then find a job. But most of our students are working while they are in school. Come graduation day, there is no one looking for a job."

Noting that most of the current demand is for civil engineering students, Wyman said that each of the two departments is graduating 10-15 students per year.

"That number is increasing, but we should be graduating three or four times that many students," he said, adding that he would like to see the department swell from the current 60-70 majors to 200-250.

"We would like to get more good high school graduates into our program," he said. "There is a great demand for engineers, and I think that will remain the case for the next decade."

The Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering, which moved into the 101,000-square-foot Thomas T. Beam Engineering Complex last year, is growing and has room in classes for many more students, Wyman said. But many high school graduates are unprepared for technical study, because they haven't taken the right classes in high school.

"If high school students want to go into a technical field like engineering, they should take all the math and physical science courses offered in their school," Wyman advised. "And biology is also important for those who think they want to become involved in the growing field of waste water treatment."

Wyman said that if these departments graduated 100 new engineers, they would all find jobs.

"The demand is great nationally, because much of the nation's infrastructure—roads, bridges, and water distribution systems, for instance—are old and worn out. And the demand is especially high in Southern Nevada, particularly in the civil engineering field of transportation and environmental engineering, because the area is

growing so rapidly," he said.

Dr. Tom Nartker, chairman of computer science and electrical engineering, said the demand for graduates in those programs is so high that very few students get through their senior year without taking a job at 80-90 percent of the salary they will make after they graduate.

Some students work full-time and some part-time, Nartker explained, adding that companies in the technical industry are eager to hire students full-time by the time they reach their junior year.

"We have sort of an informal cooperative program with companies like E.G. & G., Lockheed, Nellis Air Force Base, and others who hire our students," Nartker said. "The demand is very high right now."

Wyman noted that a reorganization in the college is setting up separate departments for civil and environmental engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical and computer engineering, and computer science. Under that reorganization, the department of civil and environmental engineering will offer concentrations in the areas of structural, geotechnical, hydraulics, transportation, and environmental engineering.

For more information about UNLV's engineering programs, call 739-3699.

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1.35 percent ahead of Bakersfield in economic increase indicators.

"Las Vegas, in a league by itself, posted an estimated real growth of 29 percent in the last two years," the firm said. "Moreover, fueled by a hotel and casino construction boom, its growth in the first quarter alone was nearly three percent."

Alphametrix said its performance indexes are constructed using aggregate personal income

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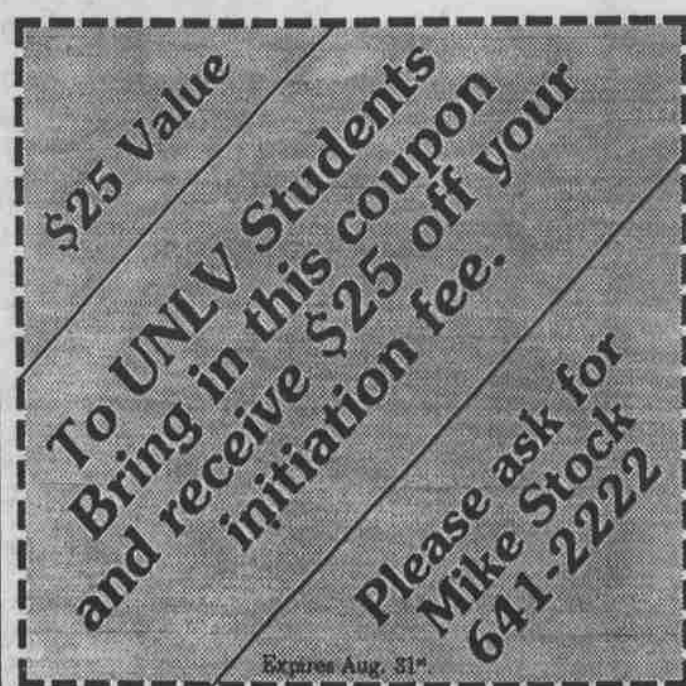


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