Local

Placement Center helps find jobs, then keeps score

Students should plan ahead for first job, says A&M placement director Van Pelt

By TRACEY BUCHANAN
Battalion Reporter

The Career Planning and Placement Center was packed Monday morning with students filling out information forms, glancing at the number board, smoothing skirts, adjusting ties and waiting.

These seniors were anticipating interviews - the first step toward life after Aggieland.

Representatives of different companies interview students daily until spring break and then some afterwards, said Louis Van Pelt, director of placement at the Career Planning and Placement Center. The Placement Center's semi-annual review showed that 490 major employers recruited at Texas A&M University last fall and that 78 of them were first-timers. They held 17,077 total student interviews.

Students should go through interviews at least two semesters so that they will be prepared, Van Pelt said. Ideally, preparation for landing that first job would begin the freshman year, he said.

Career counselors and faculty advisors are available to help students identify their aptitudes, he said. He emphasized the importance of retaining strong faculty ties, which he said are invaluable.

Academic excellence is a primary indicator recruiters evaluate in a prospective employee, he said.

"I've not seen any correlation at all between a GPR (grade point ratio) and success in a career, if you can even define success, after graduation," Van Pelt said. "However, when you're looking for employees, you look for indicators of some kind."

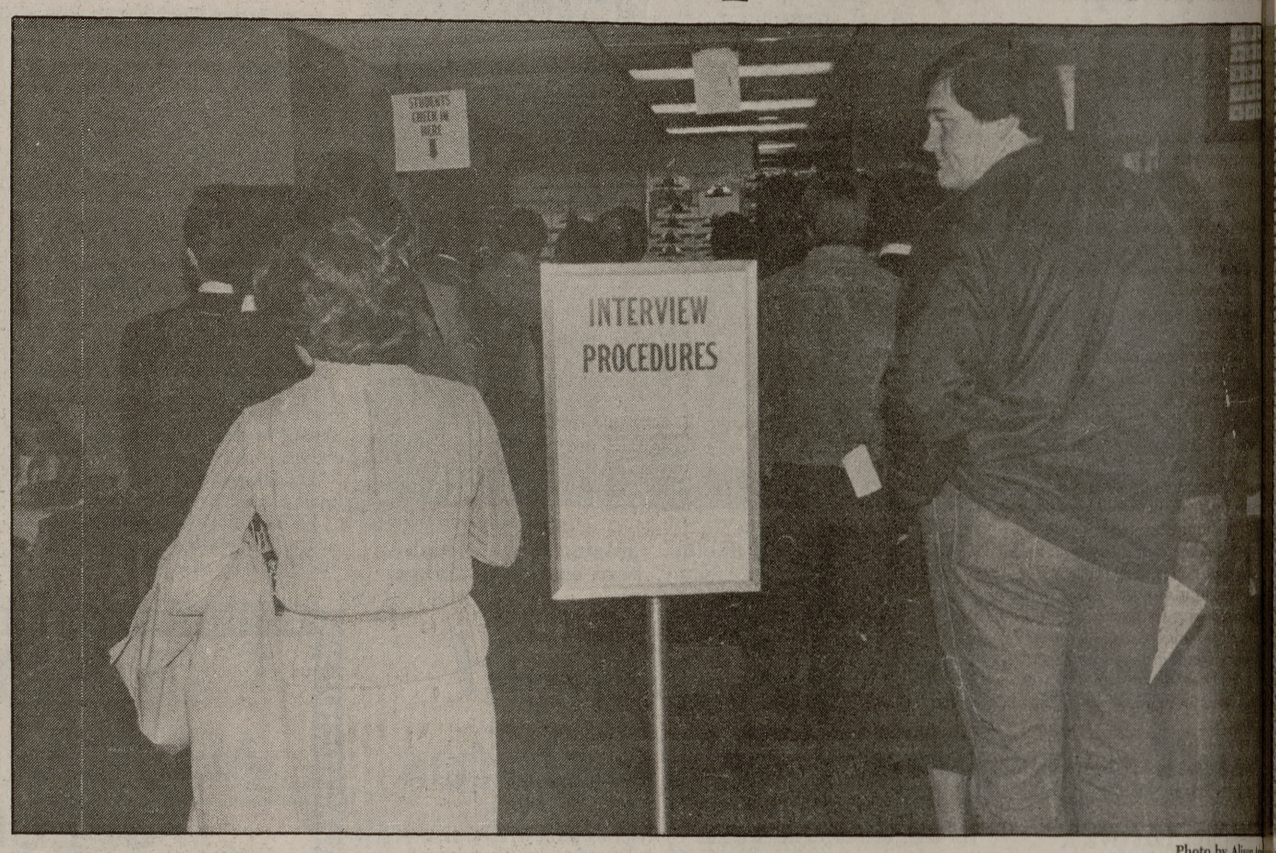

Photo by Alison

Texas A&M University seniors and potential members of the job market wait in line at the University Placement Office. Spring recruiting and interviewing began this week on campus.

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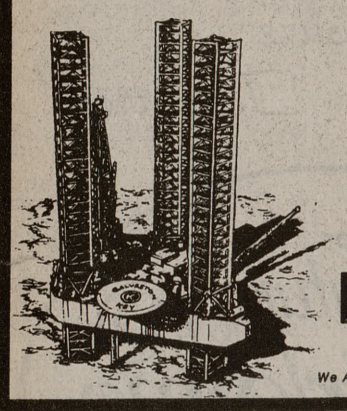

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Science, business pay above average

By TRACEY BUCHANAN
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Texas A&M University graduates, on a national average, receive larger salaries and are more eagerly sought than graduates from other schools, said Louis Van Pelt, director of placement at the Career Planning and Placement Center.

He said they have traditionally done better and will probably continue to do so for a number of reasons - a strong group of former students, supportive administrators, a caring faculty and a good reputation among employers.

The Placement Center's semi-annual review, listing job offers, acceptances and salary offers showed that fall 1980 petroleum engineering graduates received the highest offers, an average annual starting salary of $26,052.

The College of Engineering reported 621 job offers overall, the highest number of offers reported. The College of Business Administration followed with 150 offers.

A forestry graduate and a history major reported the lowest starting salary offer, of $9,600 annually.

The average monthly salary of those reported by the College of Engineering was $1,688 ($20,256 annually). This almost matches the national average of $1,685.

The College of Sciences reported an average monthly salary of $1,467 ($17,604 annually), which is 7.9 percent higher than the national average of $1,366.

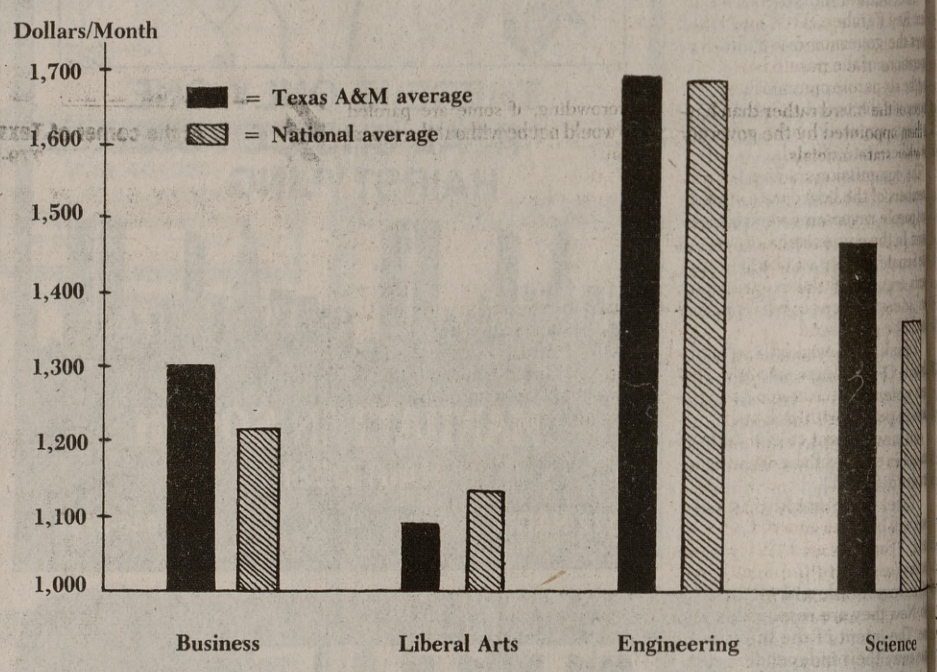
The College of Business reported an average monthly salary of $1,300 ($15,600 annually), which is higher than the national average of $1,219 by 6.9 percent.

The College of Liberal Arts trailed the national average by 3.5 percent with a reported monthly average of $1,093 ($13,116 annually).

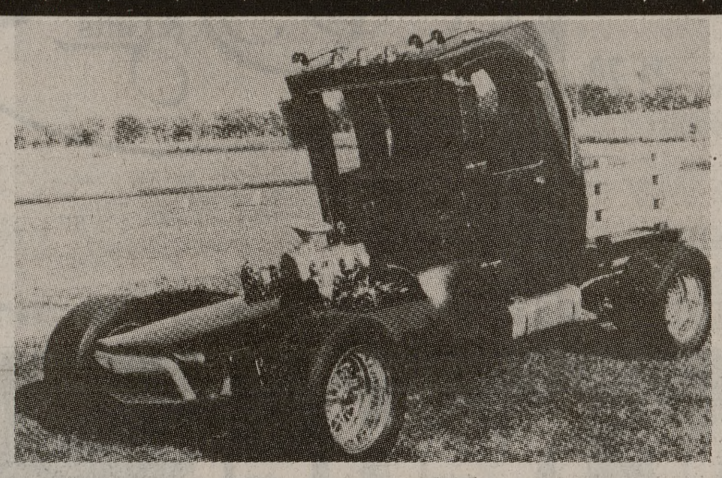
Van Pelt said, "The market is probably depressed in certain liberal arts disciplines, where it's difficult to pin a direct tie between a course taken and a function and a job after graduation."

There are certain disciplines where a baccalaureate degree is generally considered to be a preparatory degree for graduate study, he said. Having a master's could pay off, he said.

Ultimately, an individual has to know what he wants and then thoroughly study the job market, Van Pelt said.



Engineering starting incomes for last year outstripped the other academic departments, according to information from the University Placement Center.



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