



UNC health sciences graduates are among the most competitive in the nation

# UNC life sciences earn high marks

By **GORDON RANKIN**  
Staff Writer

The life science departments of UNC are established as among the finest in the country, department members say. The biology, nursing, medicine, and allied health study programs produce graduates who are competitive employment applicants.

According to an employment survey of May, 1984 graduates conducted by the UNC Career Planning and Placement Office,

nearly 80 percent of the 60 nursing school graduates who responded were employed full-time with permanent positions. Thirteen percent were working part-time, and three percent were still seeking employment.

Jill Thomas, an associate of the School of Nursing, said the program at UNC remains popular and is growing in recent years due to an increasing interest in medicine.

"It seems that there is a definite trend back to medicine, and not just as doctors, but as male and female nurses, too," Thomas said.

She said the public's notion of nurses as ladies in white cap and dress with thermometer in hand to assist a doctor is unfounded.

David Motouski of the School of Pharmacy is proud of the high rate of employment for the school's graduates. Approximately 91 percent of those who left in 1984 are now working in full-time positions, and the remainder are working part-time.

"Basically, opportunities for employment in the pharmacy field are always existent," Motouski said, "because our graduates work in a sort of apprenticeship before officially becoming pharmacists, and some even open their own drug stores."

Biology majors usually don't have as much success as pharmacy majors in their job-hunting, however. According to another part of the 1984 survey, three of the 12 students who graduated with biology degrees held full-time positions, and the remainder were either jobless or still applying for work.

The reason for this, according to Maria Gray, who helps guide graduate students at UNC in their job-planning process, is that unlike other life science degrees which are flexible, biology is highly specialized and limits employment opportunities.

Medicine remains the most competitive school to enter among the life sciences, and one of the most difficult to complete.

Students are required to complete a multitude of courses varying from biochemistry to zoology during their undergraduate years. They must attend special classes and laboratories after graduation before they become interns.

"It's been rigorous, to say the least," said Kelly Martin, a dental student from Kernersville. "There have been so many times when I've just about thrown in the towel, but I try to remember how rewarding it will be when I finally get out into the profession."

Not only is a life science degree rewarding for the recipient, but employers reap the benefits as well.

ICORP, a synthetic drug development firm in Research Triangle Park, is one of several companies that hire graduates of medical and biological programs at three area universities, including UNC. Trip Osburn, manager of personnel at ICORP, said he was pleased with decisions to hire Carolina students.

"We are especially proud of one particular student who developed serum that improved the delivery of oxygen to red blood cells," Osburn said.

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