

Foston / continued

kind of person. Our electronic industry and our agri-industry, both are looking for another kind of person, so we came up with this program."

Computer-integrated manufacturing may soon be an interdisciplinary program at CSUF or, as Foston says, "an interschool program."

"We are looking for engineering to be part of this program because in manufacturing we have to have the engineers," Foston explains. "Our business people have to be involved; we need computer science, human psychology and so on."

"You would be surprised at the dialogue that's going on between engineering, business, industrial technology and some of the other departments. Can you believe we're all sitting down at the same table and

talking? We are, and it's a good thing because those segments aren't doing it in industry."

The professor, internationally recognized for his excellence in teaching, research, writing, and service to the profession and the community, attributes declines in production in the United States, in part, to industry's lack of communication and inability to share data.

"As educators, we don't have to alter our way of teaching the concepts," Foston says, "but we have to give our students the basic understanding that no operation, no person is an island. We all have to work for the same cause to generate those bucks for industry. In order to get bucks, we have to have good product quality, short production cycles and a lot of other factors motivating people."

Throughout his professional career, Foston has always been a teacher, having taught junior high and high school students before coming to the university. In addition, he is a consultant for Hughes Aircraft Company. He works for the El Segundo, Calif., company in the summers and on other special projects during the year.

"I've been with Hughes almost as long as I've been with Fresno State," Foston says. "It's good to get away from the educational arena sometimes, but the main reason for my wanting to work at Hughes Aircraft is that I can bring new technologies, new ideas and new concepts back to my students."

Discovery . . .

Art Foston discovered he didn't need a second opinion when, in 1968, he made the decision to leave his home state of Texas to live in California.

Before joining the CSUF faculty, Foston was told that Fresno was in the San Joaquin Valley, the richest farmland and largest agribusiness area in the world. Impressive facts, but Foston needed to know more. As any amateur radio operator would do, he did some calling. One ham reported, "It's very foggy; you don't want to move to Fresno. You'd better get another opinion."

To check it out for himself, Foston traveled from Texas to Los Angeles and then took that short, non-jet flight to Fresno. As fog rolled into the Valley, the plane couldn't make a landing in Fresno, so Foston was bused here from Bakersfield.

Did the professor have any doubts? Yes, but when he reached his destination, he decided a second opinion wasn't necessary "because," he says, "under that cloud you have the warmest people in the world."

Continuing, Foston makes an analogy between the technical qualities manufacturers want to build into their products and the impact his teaching style has on his students. "I try to build these same kinds of qualities — human as well as technical — into my students so they can go out there and perform. They can grow into the industrial environment and make a contribution . . . then come back and tell me how many bucks they are making."

Many success stories are realized by the graduates of industrial technology. One female student who took an electronics course from Foston is heading the engineering operation for Pacific Bell and serves on advisory committees that give advice back to members of the Industrial Technology Department here at CSUF!

Another former student stopped by to tell Foston that he had just signed a \$2 million contract in West Germany and had returned to the States to sign another contract for \$6 million. Other industrial technology graduates work for large computer companies, Hughes Aircraft and heavy industry.

"It's a good feeling to see former students at professional meetings and hear about their successes," Foston says. "It makes me feel great to chat with them. I sit back and smile and say, 'They got something from me.' "