

OMSI PASCAL



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

April 11, 1979

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

OMSI  
2340 S.W. Canyon Road  
Portland, Oregon 97201

Gentlemen:

We are ordering OMSI Pascal, including the source codes for the object libraries, running under RT-11, version 3. We would like to request the instructional discount for our order.

Our institution is a non-profit, graduate-level university, concentrating on the biomedical sciences. In addition to PhD candidate students, we have a large number of post-doctoral fellows whose primary purpose at Rockefeller is to further their training in their fields.

Our computer facilities here consist of a small central facility, used for both scientific and training purposes as well as word-processing and administrative purposes, and a variety of laboratory computers in various buildings. There is, at present, a need for a good programming course for the graduate students, the post-doctoral fellows, and the working scientists on the staff. Pascal offers the best opportunity, given the minimal support staff, for teaching our many categories of "students" the basic tools of programming. Especially valuable is the structure Pascal enforces, which tends to make programs self-documenting and less prone to logical errors ("That wasn't what I meant for it to do!").

A course on programming, using Pascal, will be offered in the summer and fall of 1979, open to the entire University community, and repeated at whatever interval seems appropriate to our needs. The course will be run jointly by Dr. Robert Schor (the Designated Contact Person) and Dr. Robert Schoenfeld, who heads the Laboratory of Electronics and Microprocessors. One of the most important

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uses of computers on this campus is in the laboratory environment, where they are used for controlling experiments, collecting data, and performing both on-line and off-line analyses. One of the biggest problems faced by the scientist-user, be he a student or a full professor, is that of writing programs for his machine. Several laboratories have been fortunate to include good programmers (who are usually graduate students in the lab). It is for those non-experts primarily that a course in Pascal is planned. The virtues of Pascal extend beyond its use as a language in itself. The principles learned from using the language can be readily applied to writing Fortran or assembly-language programs.

We are requesting licenses for Pascal on five machines. The primary site is a PDP-11/45, serial #552, which Dr. Schor uses in his work. The second site is an LSI-11 computer, serial #6133, in the Laboratory of Electronics and Microprocessors. The third site is another PDP-11/45, serial #2090, in the laboratory that was the site of the University's first computer, which is currently one of the most active computer enclaves on campus. The other two machines belong to users who have expressed an immediate interest in Pascal.

These sites are expected to produce a substantial fraction of the participants in the initial Pascal course -- interest in Pascal is high in these places. These machines, therefore, can be expected to be heavy users of Pascal during the course. These machines will also be available for students not currently part of these laboratories, for instructional use. Should the response to the course offering overload these sites, a version of Pascal is also available on the central computer, running under the Unix operating system.

Because our funds are extremely limited and our purposes appear to qualify generally under your guidelines, I hope that we will be given the instructional discount.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg

cc: Dr. Robert Schor (Designated  
Contact Person)  
Dr. Robert Schoenfeld

bcc: Mr. David Lyons  
Mr. James Stewart  
Dr. Melvin Ferentz  
Mr. Rodney Nichols