

Alcohol education pushed at UNL

By Lise Olsen
Senior Reporter

Concern about responsible student drinking has prompted UNL officials to hire a special consultant for alcohol education at the University Health Center.

Last spring, Dr. Margaret Nellis began working with health educator Janet Crawford to provide alcohol information and referral services for students.

They met with campus groups such as health aides, fraternity and sorority members, campus police and the health center's Student Advisory Board to create a program tailored for UNL.

The fruits of their research are now beginning to ripen. The health center soon will publish a pamphlet about drinking issues at UNL. Nellis and Crawford found that students generally drink on weekends and Thursday nights.

Drinking games are often played at parties, but students are becoming more concerned about driving while intoxicated charges. Many students walk to bars and student groups often provide transportation to off-campus parties, Nellis and Crawford said.

Nellis and Crawford also have worked with existing programs such as Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity's "Do It Sober."

In the 1970s, society was less concerned about drunken drivers and placed more emphasis on drinking techniques, said Clay Rivers, UNL psychology professor.

Today, the emphasis has shifted. For example, Rivers said, in one evening recently he saw eight advertisements against drinking and driving.

"Public consciousness about drinking and driving is the highest I have seen in many years," Rivers said.

But attitudes about drinking in general are paradoxical, he said.

"(We say) isn't it awful to drink and drive, but isn't alcohol a way to have a good time and really whoop it up?" Rivers said.

Nationally, groups like Students Against Drunk Driving and Mothers Against Drunk Driving have influenced legislators and citizens to consider

stiffer laws and promote responsible drinking behavior, several alcohol educators say.

But MADD's emotional approach may be too simplistic, said Ron Dade of the Lincoln Council on Alcohol and Drugs.

"Putting people in jail has a very limited effect on a drinking problem," Dade said.

Dade, like Rivers and others, emphasized the importance of continuing students' alcohol education.

Even the 18 percent of college students who don't drink, according to a national survey, need to know because they may have friends who do.

Despite increased interest in alcohol education, 19- to 24-year-olds still account for more than 40 percent of all

DWIs in Lancaster County. DWI offenders usually face a choice of going to jail or entering a county court probation program, which often includes alcohol education classes.

Although probation programs may help social drinkers, problem drinkers are less likely to change, said Jay Corzine, an assistant professor of sociology who teaches a course on drugs and society.

Despite improved public attitudes and education programs, more and more DWI offenders are likely to choose a jail sentence rather than probation, said John Napue, director of the Lancaster County Probation program.

"People don't have the fear of jail that they used to," he said.



Mark Davis/Daily Nebraskan

Editorial illustration: Students no longer can drink alcoholic beverages legally after their 20th birthdays.

Police Report

MONDAY

7:56 a.m. — Bomb threat reported at the College of Business Administration.

1:42 p.m. — Backpack reported stolen from Nebraska Union.

3:56 p.m. — Student arrested at the University Bookstore for allegedly stealing a book.

4:40 p.m. — Emergency phone at 14th and New Hampshire streets reported vandalized.

Shell out more change: vending prices increase

By Jonathan Taylor
Senior Reporter

Having a sweet tooth at UNL now costs 5 cents more than it did last month. Nicotine fits cost more, too.

Because wholesale suppliers of vending machines raised their candy and cigarette prices about 15 percent, UNL's vending department was forced to increase prices, said Gene Meerkatz, manager of UNL's vending department.

Mark Behrends, route supervisor for the vending department, said the 5-cent increase of university-owned candy and cigarette machines became effective Feb. 1. Prices rose in all 61 candy machines and 18 cigarette machines at UNL.

The suppliers, Vendor Supplies of America in Denver and General Tobacco and Candy Co. of Lincoln, "hit us without warning," Meerkatz said.

Meerkatz said Mars Inc. raised their prices in January, "and the rest followed like sheep."

But the higher candy prices are not limited to vending machines.

Jan Halleen, general merchandise buyer for the UNL bookstore, said their candy prices would go up as the new higher-priced goods arrived. But not all of their candy prices will increase, she said. Currently, 35-cent candy still is available.

Halleen said she assumed candy prices would increase all over Lincoln.

Despite the price increase, Meerkatz said UNL's candy prices still will be lower than many retail stores and other vendors.

"A lot of vendors' prices...are now at 50 cents," he said.

Because of that, Meerkatz said, he doesn't think the increase will have an adverse affect on sales.

Test program allows interaction

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Installation at UNL became possible only after businesses showed interest in ITFS and the price of the equipment dropped, McBride said.

James Strickland, manager of a 3M Co. plant in Valley, said ITFS instruction eases the problems of providing continuing education. Employees can take classes at work instead of commuting to class, he said, so they can be more effective the next day at work.

UNL Chancellor Martin Masssengale said that besides 3M, AT&T, Northwestern Bell, Data Documents and the Omaha Public Power District have signed up for the program.

UNL's only ITFS transmitter is based

in Omaha, McBride said. UNL hopes to have a transmitter built in Lincoln by fall so Lincoln businesses can use the service.

During the test period, Massengale said, the five Omaha businesses will receive courses and programs from PBS' National Narrowcast Service. The service, which is also in a test period, has been made available to 21 cities across the United States, he said.

UNL spent about \$100,000 to build and equip a special classroom in Scott Engineering Center that will be used for ITFS classes, said Lee Rockwell, manager of educational telecommunications. But participating businesses will have to pay tuition and operating costs to receive the service, he said.

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