

# Spiraling Costs May Curtail Future College Students

**By Larry Lough**  
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 In the decades to come the barb of spiraling college costs may puncture one of America's long cherished dreams. That dream: that the qualified youth of the nation can attain a college education.

And many potential University of Nebraska college entrants from the next generation may find their college dreams punctured by the hard reality of higher education's high cost in their home state.

According to NU estimates, the Nebraska resident student 20 years ago paid about \$800 to cover college charges and costs of living at school. Today the university estimates \$1,633 is needed for the current school year. If present college cost trends continue at the university, the NU resident student 20 years hence may require \$3,333 — and possibly a good deal more — to defray expenses for 1987-88 nine-month school year.

Like their counterparts across the nation, Nebraska parents may be shocked when they discover that \$5,000 endowment policy to cover junior's total college education may possibly cover expenses for only his freshman year.

Books, articles and reports are beginning to tell how spiraling college costs may turn away qualified college aspirants who will lack the necessary finances.

Dr. Benjamin Fine, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author on education and former education editor for the New York Times, gives implicit evidence to the college cost squeeze. Writing in his 1966-67 edition of "How to be Accepted by the College of Your Choice," Dr. Fine states, "Both the cost of college education and the cost of college living have risen along with (but in excess of) other living costs each year for the past twenty-five years." He adds, "Moreover, there is no reason to believe that this trend won't continue."

### Concern Expressed

In a report published this summer, two University of Wisconsin educators have expressed concern over the rising costs of higher learning. The two Wisconsin professors, William H. Young and Robert Taylor, state in their report, "the American dream of a century ago—that the qualified sons and daughters of the nations farmers and laborers would have an opportunity for higher education — is in jeopardy."

The Young-Taylor report pointed out, "public institutions increased their per student income from fees and tuitions 49 per cent in the 1953-64 decade, but were obliged to hold their educational expenditures per student to a 17 per cent rise." The report added, "... public institution tuitions are rising faster than family incomes, and may thus be pricing a growing number of qualified high school graduates out of an opportunity for higher education."

An article appearing in the September, 1967 edition of Reader's Digest entitled "Can Our Colleges Close the Dollar Gap" said that officials at Harvard University estimated "at the present rate of increase Harvard's tuition, now \$2,000, will reach \$5,000 by 1978."

Though as Dr. Benjamin Fine pointed out college costs have increased faster than family incomes over the past 25 years University of Nebraska resident students may be financially more fortunate as a whole than their counterparts on a national basis. Unlike many private college and public universities where costs to the student have more than doubled (and in some cases tripled) during the last 20 years total college costs to the NU student have closely paralleled the cost of living index which has roughly doubled during the same period.

According to the university's estimates 20 years ago a resident student could have expected to pay \$800 for the 1947-48 school year. Today's NU student requires \$1,633 to cover tuition and fees and costs of living at school according to the UN General Information Bulletin's guide for basic expenses. This represents a 204 per cent increase during the last 20 years to pay tuition.

### Tuition Increases

However costs to the student have the greatest increases in the last five years. During the last five years the university has increased tuition and fees from \$264 to the present charge of \$433; estimates for room and board have been raised from \$600 to \$800; estimates from books and supplies have jumped from \$70 to \$100; while miscellaneous expenditures have remained at \$300.

Does this 32 per cent increase (from \$1,234 in 1962-63 to the present \$1,633; during the last five years represent an accelerated trend in college costs to the NU student? Apparently not. NU administrative officials prefer to think that college costs will roughly double at the University of Nebraska in the next 20 years. However should costs to the NU student rise in 32 per cent increments every five years of the next 20 the NU college costs to the student conceivably could triple to about \$5,000 by 1987.

Although University of Nebraska administrative officials have made no projections as to the cost-to-student college expenses for future years there is general agreement that the costs will double in the next score of years.

Glenn W. Smith NU Acting Comptroller surmised, "Chances are... it's a reasonable estimate" that college costs to the student 20 years hence will increase from the present \$1,633 to \$3,333. Smith added "I can't see anything in higher education that will change materially but it will change in cost substantially."

John E. Aronson Director of Admissions estimated that total costs to the NU student 20 years from now "in terms of today's dollar value... will double."

According to Harry Allen NU Director of Institutional Research tuition at the university (currently \$433) "might be \$1,000 a year" by 1987.

Should costs to the student double by the end of the next 20 years Merk Hobson NU Dean of Faculties estimated that \$3,300 a year "would be a pretty good ball park figure."

### 400% Increase

How have college costs increased for resident student attending the University of Nebraska in the last 20 years? According to university estimates, the NU resident student 20 years ago would have paid \$107 for tuition and fees compared to today's \$433 blanket charge for tuition and fees — an increase of just over 400 per cent. Costs of room and board are up \$250 from \$550 to the 1967-68 estimate of \$800. Books and supplies have quadrupled the last 20 years from the 1947-48 estimate of \$25 to the current \$100. Estimates for miscellaneous expenses have increased from \$118 to \$300 for the 1967-68 school year.

How does the university's current \$1,644 guide for basic expenses compare with what students estimate they are spending?

In a survey of 27 NU students at the start of the

current school year, the university's guide for basic expenses may appear slightly conservative. The students were asked to estimate their total college costs for the current school year. The average of their estimates was \$1,752 or \$119 above the university's estimate. Their estimates included a low of \$900, with one student reporting a high of \$3,000. The most commonly reported figure was \$1,800.

In the same survey, the students were asked to estimate the price tag for their four year undergraduate level education. Average of their estimates was \$7,491 with a high of \$15,000 and a low of \$3,750.

One coed commented in the survey that \$1,633 "was not quite enough" adding that "I must watch my pennies pretty closely." Another student reported, "it can be done for \$1,633, but it will miss many things that Lincoln has to offer."

Harry Allen, Director of Institutional Research for the university, commented that the school's \$1,633 estimate for resident students was "a

very tight figure." He added, "I'm certain a kid living on that budget won't be spending a lot of time at the local beer joint."

Apparently the University of Nebraska is somewhat cheaper than other public supported universities around the nation. In "How to be Accepted by the College of Your Choice," Dr. Benjamin Fine states that a student attending a public university should expect to pay "about \$2,000 a year... for tuition, room and board, travel and incidental expenses."

Harry Allen, asked if he thought a \$2,000 estimate was more reasonable for the NU resident student, replied, "it's a high estimate... I expect a student with that budget would be dating a lot, have a car."

There are indications that certain plans are in the offing to lighten the increasing costs of college education. Outside of expanding and adding to the current scholarship program, two supplementary programs are most frequently mentioned by NU educators in the future.

### Tuition—Free?

One (Though possibly remote) program is that many of the nation's public supported institutions, including Nebraska, may eventually open their classrooms to resident students on a tuition-free basis. However, some educators opine that tuition-free schooling is a guise of further shifting the costs of college education to the student indirectly as a taxpayer.

If and when college doors are opened tuition-free, it will not be with a fight. Allen pointed out, "the battle is now getting hot and heavy as to what portion (College cost) is paid by the student and what portion by the taxpayer." Allen added that probably "there will be a greater portion paid by the student."

A second off-mentioned possibility of lightening the student's college costs is the establishment of a federally-funded educational bank. Under this plan, a student could borrow up to \$15,000. Following graduation the student would be required through personal income tax to pay back into the bank one per cent of his gross annual income for a period of 30 consecutive years. However, some educators attack this program on the grounds that it places the burden on a long-term debt. In an article by Time magazine, "Ford Foundation's Marshall Robinson frets about the threat of a 'reverse dowry,' when, for instance, a graduate of Vassar presents a lifetime tax bill to her husband."

University of Nebraska officials in general pin the increased costs to the student on the rise in the cost of living which affects all segments of the American economy. Specifically, the single out the increase professional pay checks as the main cause for increasing charges to student. A September Reader's Digest article states, "in 1950, the national average for all college-level teachers was \$5,310; today it is \$10,354."

NU Dean of Faculties, Merk Hobson, pinned part of the university's increased charges to the student on the cost of buying and maintaining the larger quantity and better instructional "hardware." As Hobson put "cost of the kind of equipment and knowledge needed which have skyrocketed."

Glenn Smith indicated that, although costs of expanding library facilities and classrooms are largely financed through tax funds, parts of the student's tuition is indirectly allocated to fund portions of these costs.

Any financial forecast for

tomorrow's NU resident student necessarily involves a lot of 'maybes.' As Harry Allen put it, "there are too many imponderables." There are, however, ample indications that the NU student two decades from now will need at least \$3,333 for the 1987-88 school year, if the present 20-year NU college cost spiral continues. And maybe if the college cost trend Nebraska the last five years established itself, \$5,000 will just about cover a native Nebraskan's freshman year at the university, by 1987.

At any rate, there are no "maybes" about that barb of high cost! It's a reality now and a growing one. Maybe future students, like many with frugal finances today, will somehow manage to struggle through. Or maybe as the barb grows a little sharper, a little longer with each year the growing number of college aspirants who were turned away for lack of an adequate bankroll will give hard testimony that one of America's dreams has indeed been punctured.



## Lincoln Hosts AAU Meet

Once again Lincoln is the site of the National Amateur Athletic Union Men's and Women's Long Course Swimming and Diving Championships.

The event, to be televised in part by the American Broadcasting System, will be held at Wood's Memorial Park Pool at 33 and J Sts. in Lincoln, July 31 to Aug. 4.

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DIVING			
Wednesday, July 31	Women's 1M Springboard	10:40 A.M.	Finals 3:30 P.M.
	Men's 2M Springboard	1:00 P.M.	4:15 P.M.
Thursday, August 1	Women's 3M Springboard	9:20 A.M.	Finals 3:15 P.M.
	Men's 1M Springboard	12:30 P.M.	4:15 P.M.
Saturday, August 3	Men's Platform	12:30 P.M.	12:30 P.M.
Sunday, August 4	Women's Platform	1:30 P.M.	1:30 P.M.

### SWIMMING

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1				FRIDAY, AUGUST 2			
Prelims: 11:00 A.M.	Finals: 6:00 P.M.	Prelims: 9:30 A.M.	Finals: 5:30 P.M.				
Women's 100M	Butterfly	Women's 200M	Freestyle	Women's 200M	Freestyle	Women's 400M	Indiv. Med.
Men's 100M	Butterfly	Women's 400M	Indiv. Med.	Men's 400M	Indiv. Med.	Women's 400M	Free Relay
Women's 400M	Freestyle	Men's 200M	Indiv. Med.	Women's 400M	Free Relay	Men's 400M	Medley Relay
Men's 400M	Freestyle	Women's 100M	Breaststroke	Women's 200M	Indiv. Med.	Women's 1500M	Freestyle
Women's 100M	Breaststroke	Men's 200M	Breaststroke	Women's 1500M	Freestyle	Men's 1500M	Freestyle
Men's 100M	Breaststroke	Women's 200M	Backstroke	Men's 1500M	Freestyle	Women's 400M	Medley Relay
Women's 200M	Backstroke	Men's 200M	Backstroke	Men's 400M	Medley Relay	Men's 400M	Medley Relay
Men's 200M	Backstroke						

## Research Cited

A University of Nebraska professor has received the Antarctic Service Medal from the U.S. Secretary of Defense for his work on that continent.

Dr. Samuel Treves, chairman of geology, received the medal, one of a few in the nation which can be awarded to civilians, upon the recommendation to Congress by the National Science Foundation U.S. Antarctic Research Program.

### A Week's Rest

The staff of the Summer Nebraskan will take a week's rest before putting out the final issue for the session, Aug. 13.

Any copy submitted for publication from students or faculty should be sent to 319 Nebraska Hall by Aug. 8.

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