

Nebraska Free University

There's no credit for them. They're really quite loosely organized. They're initiated strictly by students or other interested persons. They have nothing to do with the University of Nebraska curriculum.

They are a chance to explore new things. They are an education opportunity.

"They" are the Nebraska Free University courses slated to begin Monday.

The classes range "from the highly relevant to the highly irrelevant," according to Steve Fowler, a student senator and head of the Free University program.

Organized nearly four years ago, Free U is "a place where students can experiment with a different style education," he commented.

The curriculum is flexible enough and varied enough to allow a maximum of student involvement.

Most of the leaders and participants are students, although faculty members are also involved. But persons from outside the University can and do participate.

The course leaders are not to be confused with lecturers or teachers in the normal use of the word. Anyone can be a course leader, regardless of academic background. The leader can handle the group in a traditional way or he sometimes becomes a "non-leader" in a discussion or research group.

Free U doesn't operate on the semester system. If interest dies or all the material of a given course is covered, the class ceases. Other times, students and leaders are so pleased with the course that it continues, perhaps in altered form, for many months.

About 30 courses will be offered this semester, ranging from cooking to draft counseling. Some are action-oriented or study groups, while others will complete specific projects. An ASUN resource fund is available if course leaders arrange for outside speakers and films. But there is no tuition charge and leaders are unpaid. Usually the group must provide any financing necessary.

Fowler regards Free U as a means of changing society. "It provides the opportunity for people to share interesting ideas with other people and to try to create an open society through free discussion."

As a testing ground for education, Fowler hopes the NFU can change the structure of the University in the direction of smaller classes formed by student interest rather than official curriculum committees.

University credit for NFU classes has been proposed by both students and the Academic Planning Committee. However no decision is expected in the immediate future.

About 900 persons registered for Free U courses last semester. One change in the U's operation this semester is the abolition of registration. If you're interested in a course, go to the first meeting and you're registered.



Still looking

The ASUN Free University is looking for more course leaders and course suggestions for the coming spring term. Interested? Call the ASUN office, 472-2581, or write to the Nebraska Free University in care of the Nebraska Union.

The following courses still do not have course leaders. If you would like to be in charge of one or several, or if you know someone else who might like to be, please contact the Free U.

- Rock Music
- Folk Dance
- Foreign Languages
- Applied Music
- Foreign Cultures
- Modern Dance
- Herbert Marcuse
- Camping and Hiking
- Arts and Crafts
- Student Power
- Cheap Means of Travel
- Subsistence Farming
- Skiing
- Contemporary Drama
- Mountain Climbing
- Kurt Vonnegut
- Motorcycle Mechanics
- Multi-media Techniques
- Hermann Hesse
- Chicano Studies
- Black Studies
- Broadcasting
- Breadmaking

Persons who want to lead these or other courses should contact the Free University committee as soon as possible. Call them through the student government office: 472-2581.