

Director sets goal: library to be No. 1

by Bill Smitherman

John W. Heussman has set his goal to make the UNL libraries the number one research facility in the state.

Heussman, who took the director job August 1, said the UNL libraries are now definitely not number one.

"In a survey of 50 leading American and Canadian university libraries conducted by the University of Illinois Dean of Library Administration and myself and published in 1970 by the American Library Association, the library here came in as No. 50 on the number of volumes in the library, and in the lowest percentile on many other factors such as total expenditures for the library, staff salaries and wages, expenditures for books and other materials, and library expenditures per student," Heussman said.

"Significantly," he added, "Nebraska was not one of the smaller universities included in the study. In terms of enrollment, it ranked 20th among the 50 libraries."

Though the library has had trouble with appropriations in the past, Heussman said he was excited about his possibilities as director. "I've had nothing but real satisfaction since I took the job," he said.

The director said he was hopeful because of a great deal of unsolicited support that had come from faculty, students and citizens of the state. He said he had also been gratified by the support of librarians around the state for the effort to make Love a first class research library.

Heussman, who graduated from Concordia Teachers College in Seward in 1950, said the primary need of the library is sufficient financial support. "The citizens of the state

can, and we are convinced will, adequately support its major research library," he said. "Such support will result in better service to all campuses of the University of Nebraska, to outstate agricultural research stations and to all citizens of the state. Citing increasing space problems, Heussman said that building would be a high priority for Love Library.

He said he had visited many libraries and that many of them have poor facilities. "But I think the lack of facilities here has the most detrimental effect I've seen."

If the next legislature approves the funds, an addition to the library may be completed by 1974, he said. This will be a two-floor addition and would serve as phase one of a four-floor expansion plan.

He predicted that the space created by the first phase of this expansion would be filled in a maximum of 10 years.

The new director said the UNL libraries also need to greatly improve their student services. The first of a series of programs to improve students' knowledge of the library has already been produced.

The slide-tape program on the use of Love Library is planned for showing in all sections of freshman English, starting this fall. He added that a librarian will present the program and answer questions.

Phase two and three of this program have been projected, but not really planned, Heussman said. They are to focus on phases of library service and show students how to use them.

Emphasizing that these phases are only in the planning stages, Heussman said that the presentations may be shown in classes or set up for automatic showing. Much of the planning

is contingent on the appropriation of funds, he said.

The 43-year-old director said there are some prospects of better library funding. There is a possibility of more funds from a Library Improvement Program, which the Board of Regents recommended in its budget guidelines adopted at its Scottsbluff meeting during the summer.

The Improvement Fund would provide an extra amount over the normal per cent increase in library funds, he said.

As other goals, Heussman said he would like to see a great increase in the size of the book collection and

coordination of book collections throughout the NU system. "We need to build compatible Lincoln and Omaha collections," he said.

Heussman added that it would be wasting money to duplicate resources between the Lincoln and Omaha campuses. So, he hopes to develop a shuttle service between the Lincoln and Omaha libraries to avoid unnecessary duplication of books.

The budget for the procurement of books and materials needs to be expanded greatly, the director said. Much of the proposed library improvement fund would go

for this purpose, he added.

Presently, the procurement budget for Love Library is about \$825,000 per year, he said. But he estimated that to keep up with the tremendous amounts of new material being produced and to make up for past shortages, the budget should be about \$1 million for next year.

"I realize that this is a lot of money," Heussman said. "But the state can justify one really good research collection."

He said there are also other prospects for securing the money needed to improve the library. Among these are

Turn to page 10.

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Library director Heussman...NU libraries must cooperate to improve research facilities.