

NU begins minority commitment

by H. J. Cummins

The University is beginning to make some kind of commitment to minority students, according to the newly-elected chairman of the President's Advisory Committee on Mexican-American Affairs, but Simon Orta said Chicanos still "suffer from a stereotype at many places, including the University."

Orta also said he thought the University has been "very lax" in preparing teachers to teach minority students. Spanish should be required for all teachers, he added, since Mexican-Americans are the second largest minority group in this country.

"Eighty-five per cent of the

Chicanos in the Scottsbluff high school drop out of school," he said, "because the teachers are very insensitive in recognizing their needs."

The small number of Chicano students at the University, 45, "is proof the University has made no effort in recruiting Chicano students," Orta said.

"They're doing more recruiting from abroad than here in the state," he said.

Orta, himself a doctoral student in the History and Philosophy of Education, said the committee will be primarily concerned with recruiting Mexican-American staff at UNL, curriculum changes "to make education relevant to the Chicano experience," and bringing to the attention of the UNL chancellor any case of racial/ethnic discrimination.

Formed out of a March meeting, the 14-member committee will also "be glad to visit other schools" reporting discrimination, Orta said.

Also out of that March meeting came a list of 10 recommendations, five of which the University has

already acted on.

"We've found new needs," Orta said, "but I think the important things (from the list of 10) were carried out."

The Spanish Department will probably add a Chicano instructor to its staff second semester, Orta hopes, "since the Romance Spanish taught here is somewhat irrelevant to the Chicano's language."

"And President Soshnik had already made a commitment to a 'History of Mexico and the Southwest' course for the history department," he continued.

The committee is also hoping for two new courses patterned after the current "Black Experience in America," one for Chicanos and one for Indians, Orta said.

If offered, Orta added, a Chicano and Indian should be hired to teach the section of their respective minority groups.

The University has hired a counselor for Mexican-American students, Orta said, but he said he regretted that Jo Renteria works out of Student Affairs' Special Services rather than the counseling center.

Since the University's only Chicano staff member, Ralph Grajeda, left to become State Coordinator of the Mexican-American Cultural Program, the committee hopes that by 1972 some Chicanos will be on the full-time staff of instructors—mainly dealing with ethnic studies.

Orta quoted a letter from Arts and Sciences Dean Melvin George: "We now have available some limited funds for hiring faculty members in ethnic studies."

"We will undoubtedly want to use some of these funds to hire a new staff member with a background and interest in Chicano studies."

Orta is meeting with Dean George today to discuss it further.

Born in Poteet, Tx., Orta graduated from Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos, in 1960. While supervising Teachers Corps personnel in Winnebago, Nebr., and later as Superintendent of

Schools at Macy, Nebr., Orta earned credits towards his Masters degree which he was awarded in 1970.

His undergraduate major was Spanish; his Masters degree from UNO was in Urban Education, with "emphasis on Chicanos and Indians," Orta said.

Before he came to Nebraska, Orta taught high school Spanish in his home town, where he participated in pilot projects of Headstart in 1964 and one with children of migrant workers.

Living now at Air Park West with his wife and four children, Orta is going to the University with a full fellowship from Training Teachers of Teachers (TTT) program.

Upon graduation, Orta said he hopes "to work in state departments as a consultant on problems dealing with Chicano education."

"I hope my degree will provide me with a key to open many doors for my people."

Lull before the storm

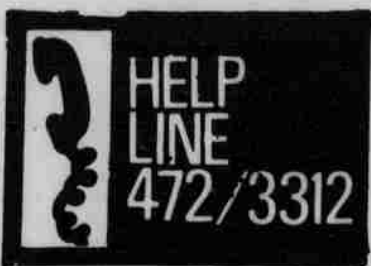
One hundred and eighty-six musician-students of UNL have been selected by Director Jack Snider through auditions to compose the 1971 edition of the Cornhusker Marching Band.

Snider said the band's busy schedule calls for pre-game and halftime appearances at all home football games.

The Cornhusker Band will also host Band Day on Sept. 25; it will appear on national television during the Thanksgiving Day Oklahoma-Nebraska clash on Nov. 25 in Norman, Oklahoma and also during the Colorado game on Oct. 30.

Leaders of the 1971 band are Drum Major Steve Klintberg of Laurel who takes over the post from his brother, Jeff, who has led the band the past two seasons. Assisting Klintberg will be Eric Hornbacher of North Platte and John Crotty of Auburn.

Diane Tangeman of Omaha will be the solo twirler for the third straight season. Wayne Brinkman of Lincoln will serve as Graduate assistant to Snider.



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