

Mixed media university could offer credit to outstate Nebraskans

by Shelly Kalkowski

By the fall of 1973, a Sidney housewife may be studying general psychology in her living room. And a Kearney factory worker could be solving accounting problems on his lunch break.

But right now the two televised college-level courses are still in the planning stage. They are the pilot courses of the new State University of Nebraska (SUN), a federally financed program.

A week ago the U.S. Office of Education announced that it is awarding SUN a \$516,450 grant for the coming fiscal year.

According to University President D.B. Varner, the money should enable SUN to develop a national model for delivering college-level courses to those citizens, who, for a variety of reasons, cannot attend a college or university in the usual way.

In late 1971, the Office of Education provided a \$25,000 grant to conduct a survey of Nebraskans' interests in the program. Another \$50,000 grant from the office enabled a preliminary study on course content to be developed by UNL and other state institution professors.

As originally conceived, SUN would use educational television, radio, correspondence, telephone, cassettes, video-tapes and printed material in teaching college courses.

Resource centers will be located throughout the state to serve SUN students. According to C.C. Eloe, the public information director for SUN, the regional resource centers are necessary so students will not have to drive great distances.

The centers will provide audio and video cassettes, a library of texts and supplementary materials, a

telephone line for students to phone their professors, film projectors, tape recorders and cassette video screens. Eloe said they also are hoping to have tutors available at convenient times.

"One of the things we're thinking of using are 29 minute ETV telecasts of lessons once, twice or three times a week, depending on the course and its nature," Eloe said.

Another innovation under study is the use of video cassettes. Video cassettes look like mammoth versions of the audio cassette. The student just plugs one into a television set and sits down for a lesson. The cassettes are equipped to handle two audio tracks, one for the student and one for the teacher.

The use of video and audio cassettes in conjunction with text materials will enable students to study at their own pace, Eloe said.

Periodic exams probably will be given at the resource centers and will be graded by computer, Eloe said.

Tuition costs for SUN will be comparable and hopefully somewhat less than the cost of UNL courses now, Eloe added. And students also will be saving certain campus fees as well as room and board, he added.

"Our big problem is motivation. Will the student be sufficiently motivated to complete the course?" Eloe said. "He will if the content of the material is prepared in the right way."

Hopefully, the SUN concept will encourage prospective students and might even boost university enrollment, Eloe continued.

G. Robert Ross, executive director of SUN, said the survey conducted earlier in the year indicated high interest in the program among both adults and high school students.



photo by Bill Ganzel

Program Council applications due

Students interested in applying for a position on the Nebraska Union Program Council (UPC) must submit applications by today to the program office. Interviews for the UPC, the organization that coordinates all Union programming (films, speakers, etc.), will be Sunday.

Art Thompson, assistant program manager for the Union, said interviews for Union standing committees are scheduled for Dec. 3. He indicated that there now is an opening for chairman of the recreation committee and urged any interested student to see him.

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Interviews for Daily Nebraskan Editor-in-Chief

Friday, Nov. 17
applications due by 2 p.m.
Thursday, Nov 16
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(interviews for Managing Editor and News Editor will be in early December)

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