

Rental roulette: pay your money, take your chance

You pay your money and you take your chances when you play the apartment-hunting game in Lincoln.

Why not take a chance on "One-room efficiency, share bath, \$60." Depending who you're sharing the apartment with, you might want to move up to a "One bedroom, available April 1, \$145, deposit required." And once you've become accustomed to keeping yourself in that high style, it might be time to move again.

So reach for a rainbow, pal: "Spacious (over 1,600 sq. ft.) & elegant. Three bedrooms, formal dining room, living room, screened-in porch, appliances. Central air. Garage available. \$190."

Sooner or later you'll have a place where you can entertain in comfort and elegance. Or at least a place where the cockroaches are mannerly enough to stay in the kitchen when you have company.

More than a quarter of UNL's 16,859 single students are living in apartments or off-campus rooms, according to statistics from the UNL Housing Office. The percentage of students who hang their hat in an apartment and call it home increases each year.

Only 162 freshmen, 3.8 per cent (excluding those who's home is Lincoln), live in an off-campus room or apartment. The freshman class keeps its slim figure because of at least two factors.

First, University policy states that all unmarried freshmen are required to live on campus. Although some, obviously, get around the stipulation, most freshmen have no alternative but to adhere to the rule. Second, unless they are Lincoln residents freshmen probably have few peers living off-campus anyway.

Five per cent of all male freshmen live off campus. Only 2.2 per cent of women do.

Nineteen per cent of the sophomores exercise their freedom to live off campus. Four hundred twenty of the 643 apartment dwelling sophomores are men.

Juniors really begin to make the move. More than 1,000 of the 3,467 single juniors currently list their dwelling as an apartment. And 50.5 per cent of the seniors have holed up in apartments second semester.

Out of 2,667 graduate and professional students, 1,046 or 39.12 per cent live in an apartment.

The UNL Ombudsman's Office reported no requests from students for help in finding an apartment. Some students, however, have griped to the ombudsman about tenant/landlord disputes.

Although it is effectively impossible to determine the total number of units available in Lincoln, the City Planning Office statistics show 2,163 multiple units built during 1972. When duplex and family dwellings are included the number of units built during 1972 swells to 3,331.

No statistics are available on how many of the units are occupied. However, a housing locator service called Rental Housing reports that it has 150,200 apartments available at any time. The number primarily fluctuates with the time of year.

