

Budgeting process stresses unity

By Wes Albers

A new budget concept designed to improve communications between university officials and legislators was presented Thursday to UNL administrators.

"We're trying to bring together all elements of the University community in the budget-making process," said state Sen. Richard Marvel, Appropriations Committee chairman.

Marvel told administrators and faculty that the concept would have review of department programs by outside visitation teams to develop "quality and accountability."

The concept was developed by Marvel and a committee of University officials. Marvel will recommend the program to the Legislature's Appropriations Committee for consideration with the University's budget.

Marvel said the new budget concept would emphasize defining institutional goals, developing a plan of action and deciding on budget needs.

Under the plan, administrators would coordinate their expectations with the goals and later measure the overall effectiveness.

The evaluation team would be composed of professionals from industry, peers from other universities and concerned citizens, Marvel said. It would meet semiannually for three years and present findings to the Board of Regents and to the Legislature for their recommendations.

Reaction of administrators at the meeting to the proposed approach was largely favorable. UNL Chancellor James Zumberge said adoption of the approach may open a "new road to rational budget making for the University."

Economics Dept. chairman Wallace Peterson called the team's work a "pioneering effort" and said the concept should make "important contributions" to the budget making process.

R. Neale Copple, team member and director of the School of Journalism, said outside evaluation of a department's programs "may be frightening to some people on campus but shouldn't be frightening at all."

Copple suggested that students also might be allowed on the evaluation teams.

"A three-year program makes continuous student participation hard, but it may be possible during the final year," he said.

Members of the University's team were Ned Hedges, assistant to the vice chancellor for academic affairs; Robert Egbert, dean of Teachers' College; Melvin George, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Max Larson, mathematics professor; TTT director Erwin Goldenstein, Hazel Crain, coordinator of vocational/technical education, Copple and Peterson.

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