

Drought damages UNL

Nebraska's June-July drought hurt the University.

No one knows yet how much. But they're sure it did.

Some students just won't be able to attend UNL, Gerald Bowker, director of Academic Services, said.

Traditionally, students who apply but decide not to attend don't notify UNL of their decision, he said. They just don't show up.

Annually about 75 per cent of the freshmen who apply enroll, Bowker said. If a head count the second week of school shows "a measurable drop from that norm, the drought would certainly be a reason," he said.

The Housing Office is closing four dormitory floors because there weren't enough students to fill them. Farm prosperity has affected dorm occupancy rates before, some say. Some blame the drought this year.

The director of scholarships and financial aids said his office has heard from about five students a week in August, who say they need more financial aid than they had expected before the drought.

Jack Ritchie said, he hasn't "come close to talking to all those affected."

He, too, suspected most just won't show up.

The University sent representatives to the U.S. Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare this week to ask for more federally supported financial aid, Ritchie said.

But research by the Nebraska Congressional delegation indicates Nebraska would have a better chance at the aid if the state had been declared a disaster area by the President, he said.

And late August rains make that look doubtful, he said.

Ritchie said he expects a lot of students to ask for more financial aid after school starts. He advises them to come armed with new information to indicate their families' crops and assets aren't as large as they had predicted in spring.

National methods of computing financial need have always worked against farmers, Ritchie said, because the technique counts assets as much as income and farmers' land and machinery make them appear on paper more able to finance a college education than they are.

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Minorities hit harder by money problems

Financial problems take minority students out of the University far more often than they take white students, according to a study done this summer for the Student Affairs office.

Eighty-five percent of the minority students con-

tacted by phone said financial problems were "part of the reason" they left UNL.

Additional reasons: one got married, one moved away, two quit because of "ethnic problems," one for academic problems, and one because of "vocational indecision."

The results are part of a study done by James Pinkney, a counselor and researcher at the UNL counseling center.

He warned against over-emphasizing the study.

He said he received the names of 41 minority students who attended UNL during the past five semesters, then left.

Of those, researchers found only 15, he said. Thirteen of them were willing to participate in the study.

"I am cautious with the results because of the small numbers I'm dealing with," he said.



The National AAU Junior Olympics was one of the largest groups to use UNL dormitories this summer.

Dorms-'summertime hotels'

Large summertime conventions and youth programs would be impossible for Lincoln without a unique innkeeper: UNL.

This summer, as in summers before, UNL dormitories housed parti-

cipants of conventions and programs, according to Glen Schumann, UNL coordinator for residence hall administration.

"No other place in Lincoln could accommodate such large groups,"

Schumann said. "The University offers its dormitories so the city can attract sizable conventions."

First priority are summer school students, he said. Youth programs are second, summertime University seminars and workshops are third. Private conferences are lowest.

Dormitory use provides rooms for conventioners only after local hotels are full, Schumann said. The University does not compete with them for lodgers, he said.

The income also helps defray costs to student lodgers during the academic year, he said.

That is, until this year. Rising operating costs may cut into any profit this year, he said. The Housing Office will know in January whether the practice is still profitable, he said.

The National AAU Junior Olympics and national roller skating contests were two of the largest groups housed in dormitories this summer.

About 1,400 AAU contestants stayed in Abel Hall Aug. 8-12. Some of their families stayed in Harper Hall, as did 400 roller skating contestants.

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Lincoln cartoonist J. Scott Stewart offers his idea of what UNL students can expect this fall.