

## ASUN liaison program revised

By Deb Gray

Last year there was the ASUN Liaison Committee, distributing literature hanging up posters, and listening to complaints of UNL residence hall residents. Each living unit elected a student liaison representative who publicized University programs and gathered opinions from floor residents.

This year the scope of the program has changed, according to students working with the program. It has been renamed the Communications Committee. Last year's staff of about 150 students has been reduced to 15 members. Instead of working independently, the Communications Committee will dispense information to students through living unit organizations, such as Panhellenic, Interfraternity Council (IFC) and Residence Hall Association (RHA), according to those involved in the program.

ASUN senator Chuck Beck who works with the program said this information mainly will be concerned with ASUN projects. Senators also will attend floor meetings, he said, to inform students about ASUN and hopefully to open a channel of student input into student government.

Sharon Johnson, ASUN first vice president, said she thought the Communications Committee will correct what were the Liaison Committee's weaknesses.

"The students didn't understand what the purpose of the organization really was," she said. "It was confused with ASUN's Legislative Liaison Committee, which alerts legislators to student opinions."

Johnson said the ideals of the Liaison Committee became swamped in its own bureaucracy. She said the Liaison Committee created friction between ASUN and other University agencies.

"There are other groups, like RHA, IFC and Panhellenic, that are stuffing student's mailboxes," she said. "It was stupid to be competing with these people instead of working with them."

Beck said the Liaison Committee also suffered from internal dissatisfaction.

"Some of the liaison floor representatives felt that all they were good for was hanging up posters," he said.

Todd McDaniels, last year's Liaison Committee coordinator, disputed some of the criticisms aimed at the committee. He said he believes the new program is a step backwards.

"Last year the liaison program was really a departure from what the university had in the past," McDaniels said. "The Liaison Committee really attempted to divide responsibility between many people, instead of letting one or two people assume all the work."

The Liaison Committee suffered from first-year kinks which plague all experimental programs, McDaniels said.

"This was a new program we were building up from the foundation," McDaniels said. "We had to pay it by ear until we could get the program established."

McDaniels admitted that the Liaison Committee duplicated the efforts of the living unit organizations. But the program did more than distribute material, he said.

"The liaison program offered every floor a student ombudsman," he said. "Students always had someone available to them with whom they could register their complaints."

The Liaison Committee lost ground over the summer, because a new director was not appointed, and the program was not revived this fall, McDaniels said. Although McDaniels criticized dismantling the Liaison Committee, he said he admired ASUN actions establishing a program to fill the vacuum.

"I think it's admirable that ASUN took the initiative to come up with something else," he said. "But I think it was an attempt to make up for lost time to do this (start a new program) instead of starting with the liaison program again."



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