

Legislators preparing for UNL budget fight

By Ron Wylie

Some Unicameral senators are getting ready for the fight over UNL's budget, emerging from the Appropriations Committee later this week.

Committee chairman Sen. Richard Marvel of Hastings said Wednesday he sees some significant changes in budgeting procedures concerning university financing—primarily the consolidation of major areas receiving appropriations.

Many of the recommendations, Marvel said, will put pressure on those who manage to do a better in-house job of allocating funds.

Veto override

Considering the prospect of a veto on an increased university budget, Marvel said, "It's going to be more difficult to override a veto this year."

Omaha Sen. John Savage said he doesn't believe that many Appropriations Committee recommendations will differ from those made by the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, because "we just don't have any money to play with."

But Lincoln Sen. Shirley Marsh has been fighting in the committee for additional salary increases for

faculty members and said Wednesday she believes legislators will support a considerable increase.

"We've been able to pull the bill back once this week already," she reported, "and we've amended it so maybe some of the flexibility for administrators is gone, but this will allow for more support."

Back university

Marsh said there is enough support in the Unicameral to override a veto and that the last amendment vote on the university allocation (35 to 0) indicates that senators are backing the university.

Marsh said she was concerned about the university's Areas of Excellence program.

"I think we made a moral commitment for funding it for three years," she said.

UNL administrators have started their own information efforts to convince Nebraskans the university's budget proposals represent sound economic policy.

Facing major budget reductions as well as a promised governor's veto of any allocation over his recommendations, UNL Chancellor James Zumberge

has issued a policy statement and explanation of fund use entitled "An Open Letter to UNL Friends."

Zumberge letter

Described as an effort to establish credibility, the letter asks Nebraska residents to consider "long-term progress involves more than annual increases in our budget. It must involve trust between those of you who pay and those of us who spend."

Zumberge's letter contends that declining enrollments mean less tuition for the university at a time when inflation costs the system more to do what it already is committed to do.

Nebraska's tax support for major universities has not increased as rapidly as other areas, Zumberge reports. He cited statistics from the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) showing UNL has dropped from a 1970-71 position among Ph.D.-granting institutions, when Nebraska ranked below 71 per cent of the universities to a 1973-74 ranking which shows UNL below 91 per cent of all other institutions.

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Written by Lincoln man

Bill would allow deduction

When you fill out tax returns next year, another item might be added to the tax deductible list—your college tuition.

HR4727, a Congressional bill introduced by Rep. Charles Thone, would allow an educational tuition tax deduction of as much as \$490.

If the bill passes, college students could thank Antony Mark Ruprecht, Nebraska Wesleyan University. He wrote the bill and is lobbying in Washington for its passage.

The need for the deduction is evident from the soaring costs of education, Ruprecht said. Between 1958 and 1968, tuition rates climbed 34 per cent at public colleges and 59 per cent at private institutions. The number of college students tripled in the same period.

Lower income benefits

Ruprecht maintains this tax credit bill meets the resulting needs of most Americans. Two-thirds of the benefits would go to families earning less than \$15,000 a year, he said, and because of a special provision, those with an annual income over \$45,000 are excluded.

The special section was added to the bill, Ruprecht explained, because of objections that the first tax credit bill helped the rich more than lower income families. The new provision outlines a graduated tax scale, in which families earning more than \$20,000 receive lower deductions.

The tax credit formula is also weighted in favor of the public and land-grant colleges, Ruprecht said. "The deduction is based on 100 per cent of the first \$300 of tuition fees and books costs; 25 per cent of the next \$300 and 5 per cent of the next \$1,000.

"The lower-tuition schools get a higher

percentage of benefits," he said.

Passage possible

Finally, Ruprecht said, this deduction allows taxpayers to use part of their gross earnings to pay their own or their children's education.

Since most objections were overcome by the graduated scale provision, Ruprecht said, he sees positive possibilities for the bill's passage.

Ruprecht outlined other factors contributing to the likelihood of the bill's success.

More Democrats occupy Senate and House seats, he said, resulting in a more liberal Congress. The House Ways and Means Committee, where the bill is being discussed, has also gained more liberal members. Finally, Ruprecht added, support from the bill has come from congressmen, college students, college presidents and about 300 schools.

Snag support

To snag their support, Ruprecht sent out letters to various schools which explained the bill and asked for the schools' acceptance. He also encouraged schools to make sure their congressmen receive a copy of the tax credit bill.

This mailing list is paid for by local contributions from Lincoln schools—"\$175 from Nebraska Wesleyan University, \$100 from Union College and \$150 from UNL."

Ruprecht said contributions were only asked from Lincoln schools.

"Since the bill originated here," Ruprecht said, "we want to present a united effort in Lincoln." Time is also a factor, he added, because searching for funds requires too many hours.

Consequently, Ruprecht shouldered much of the lobbying responsibility. He flew to Washington several times.

"Nobody was there to centralize the efforts," he said, "so I decided to lobby myself."



Antony Mark Ruprecht, left, and Rep. Charles Thone in Washington.

Late April Indian pow wow scheduled

Like a light switch, Pow Wow 75 has been on again, off again, and it's finally on again. The pow wow is now scheduled for April 25 to 27.

The pow wow had been shrouded in a dispute between the Minority Affairs Office, the Council of American Indian Students (CAIS) and the UNL administration.

After a series of meetings between the three groups, an agreement was reached which ended the boycott of the Minority Affairs Office by the CAIS and allowed Pow Wow 75 to be a reality.

Began last year

The dispute between the Indian students and the university began last year when Karen Buller, the Indian counselor, resigned. The CAIS began a boycott of the Minority Affairs Office protesting her resignation and asked for certain measures to improve Indian student conditions.

Bad communication, emotionalism and politics between the three groups prevented any positive progress, said Ken Bader, vice chancellor for student affairs.

At a meeting on March 21, the day

before spring break began, the Minority Affairs Office and CAIS signed an agreement.

According to Charles Lapointe, president of the CAIS, the agreement had three points: that Gordon Kitto, the Indian counselor, would not have to sign the CAIS checks; that Indian students would have a voice in selecting Indian counselors; and that an ad-hoc committee would be established between the Minority Affairs Office and the CAIS.

\$5,000 apiece

Bader said that earlier this year he had given \$5,000 to each of the minority-ethnic groups for cultural activities. However, he said a stipulation was added requiring that the CAIS checks to pay for expenses be signed by Kitto.

"The CAIS felt that I was trying to break their boycott of the Minority Affairs Office," Bader said. But the agreement between the groups removed the stipulation that Kitto sign the checks.

The question of Indian student input into selection of an Indian counselor was one of the original CAIS demands when

the boycott began.

The formation of an ad-hoc committee between the CAIS and the Minority Affairs office officially ended the boycott which began in March 1974.

Boycott

According to Lapointe, the boycott is still in the minds of a lot of CAIS members, but through the committee, solutions to some of the Indian students' problems might be reached.

Bader said he has become "increasingly distraught" that the position of the Indian students hasn't improved, but he added that progress now should begin.

The CAIS is continuing to make arrangements for the pow wow, Lapointe said. He said the pow wow will begin on Friday, April 25, with Indian speakers. Over the weekend there will be dancing contests.

In previous pow wows, traditional Indian foods had been prepared by workers in the Nebraska Union. This year, the food will really be "traditional Indian food" because it will be prepared by local Indian women, Lapointe said.