

third dimension

Student expense reflect inflation trend

By Randy Blauvelt

The inflation spiral of the last few years has not been kind to anyone. Many have watched as food and gasoline prices soared out of sight.

College students, just as everyone else, are struggling to keep up with increased prices. The student, however, must also face price hikes in tuition, housing, books and supplies.

UNL tuition costs provide an example. In 1970, a full-time student (12 or more hours), paid a resident tuition bill totalling \$177.50. The same price applied for any number of credit hours between 12 and however many hours the student's college permitted him to take. Student fees were \$51.50.

Charge was \$18 per hour

The next change in the tuition rate occurred in Sept. 1971. Students were charged \$18 per hour thru 12 hours. No additional charges were made between 13 and 16 hours. The regular \$18 per hour was charged for extra hours over 16.

The most recent tuition change came in Sept. 1973. The "free period", between 13 and 16 hours, was dropped. Thus, a student carrying 17 hours would pay tuition costs of \$306, compared with \$234 the previous year. Student fees remained at \$51.50.

Finally, in Sept. 1974, student fees were increased to their present level of \$61.50 per semester.

\$138.50 increase shown

This progression of rate changes shows an increase from \$229.00 total tuition and fees for 17 hours in 1970, to a total charge of \$367.50 in 1975. An increase of \$138.50 within five years.

At the same time, university housing was slowly beginning to hike rents.

Contracting for a dorm room in 1970 was relatively easy on the pocketbook. It was \$880 double occupancy.

For the 1975-76 academic year, the same room (only five years older) will cost \$1,190, an increase of \$310 over five years.

Basics cost more

Although no figures are available, off-campus housing prices also have risen because of increased operating and maintenance expenses.

The basics of any education, books and supplies, also have followed the paths of tuition and housing.

According to John Wehr, Nebraska Bookstore manager, book prices went up "quite a bit" just last year.

"There for awhile, everything else was climbing in price and book prices remained stable," Wehr said. "Then when everything else leveled off, books prices began to go up."

Wehr said basic freshman and sophomore books show only an average price hike of one dollar over the last two years, but noted that senior and graduate students face the largest increase.

"The graduate and serious seniors are paying tremendous prices for books," Wehr said. "For example, a graduate level book two years ago averaged about \$12.95. Now, the same book can cost up to \$22.95."

Wehr attributed the increase to the small quantities of higher-level books that are produced.

The quality of materials and supplies, Wehr said, changed along with price increases.

"Two years ago, the price of paper products climbed higher because of a lack of the capacity to produce," Wehr said. "The shortage was quickly reflected in the quality of spiral notebooks. Thus, we had higher prices and a noticeable drop in quality."

Parking permits increase

Students who wish to park on or near campus are faced with a select piece of inflation. The price of a parking permit has increased from \$15 to \$25. The hike was made last fall.

Even the entertainment that students have relished for years is not sacrosanct from increased prices.

Seeing a movie in 1970 cost about \$1.50 per ticket. Now there are more theatres to choose from, but students must pay \$2.50-\$3.00 to get in.

Popcorn costs rise

"Concessions have really gone up," said Mark Feldman, Cinema 1 and 2 manager. "We used to have candy for 15

and 25 cents. Now the 15 cent size has gotten smaller and the 25 cent size has doubled in price."

Another staple of the average student's entertainment diet - rock concerts - has remained about the same since 1970, according to Ike Hoig, Pershing auditorium manager.

Students getting a break

Hoig emphasized that UNL student concert-goers have it better than others.

"Students here are getting a break compared to students on the east and west coast," Hoig said. "Some promoters come here and say they want to charge the same as on the coast, \$8 to \$9 a head. I just tell them they're crazy."

Students now pay between \$5 and \$6.50 for concerts, depending on when they buy the tickets and who is playing, Hoig said.

Hoig added that concession prices at Pershing had increased during the last couple of years.

Prices for other forms of entertainment, such as bowling, miniature golf, and the ever-popular bar-hopping, also increased over the last few years.

After shopping for \$20 worth of groceries that fill only one shopping bag, buying a pair of blue jeans for \$15 that cost \$5.50 in 1970 and finding the landlord's notice of rent increase and tuition statement in the mailbox, the average student can sit at the bar and drown his sorrows with a pitcher of beer that costs 85 cents more than it did in 1970.



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