

Social work school hearing granted

By Theresa Forsman

A hearing has been granted, but a date has not been set for the School of Social Work's bid to show why its accreditation should not be taken away, according to University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) Chancellor Ronald Roskens.

Last July, the Council of Social Work Education Accreditation Committee voted unanimously to revoke the school's accreditation. Roskens said he has asked the committee for a hearing to allow the school to show just cause for retaining its accredited status. In the interim, the school has been taking steps to correct deficiencies shown in the study, said its director, Ronald Ozaki.

The School of Social Work is administered by UNO, but courses are offered on both the UNO and UNL campuses.

A team from New York which visited the university in May reported to the accreditation committee the deficiencies it found in the school, Ozaki said.

Support cited

Deficiencies stated in the accreditation committee's letter to the UNO and UNL chancellors include:

- overall lack of university support for the school

- lack of adequate faculty resources
- lack of congruity between the missions of the Lincoln and Omaha campuses. (The accrediting team said it did not understand how the school could relate its objectives to the objectives of the host institution when there are two different hosts.)

- a minimal number of racial minorities in faculty and student body.

- curriculum uneven in quality, development and expectation.

The school's objectives and aims now are being revised, Ozaki said, and no written record of the school's goals is available.

The school held a retreat for faculty members and students last Friday and Saturday to discuss revising the goals, he said.

Hubert Locke, dean of the College of Public Affairs and Community Services at UNO, said efforts have been made to increase the percentage of minority faculty members and students.

Two minority instructors have been hired, he said, and the percentage of minorities in the student body will increase next year.

Locke said he does not expect any financial relief for the school.

"No university programs are funded at the level we would like to see them funded," he said.

Locke said it is difficult to know what the accreditation committee had in mind when it criticized the lack of congruity between the missions of the Lincoln and Omaha campuses as being a liability to the School of Social Work.

UNL is a land-grant university, thus its focus is on outstate education, he said, while Omaha is mainly an urban college.

"I don't see this as a conflict in the social work school," Locke said. It is good to have two different vantage points from which to teach social work, he said.

Locke said he did not think the situation warranted loss of accreditation.

1967 warning

The school has been warned by the accreditation commission since 1967 that it faced loss of accreditation if deficiencies were not corrected, Ozaki said. The school has been accredited for more than 30 years, he said.

In 1971, director Theodore Ernst developed a three-year plan to improve the School of Social Work. The plan was approved by the accreditation commission and accreditation was extended until 1975.

"When I became director of the school it was in the same position it is in now," said Ernst, who has been director of the University of Kansas School of Social Work since July.

Ernst said he thinks the plan was not successful because of a "large turnover" in faculty members and administrators at UNO and UNL.

"There was no antagonism or opposition to the school by the administration," he said, "but the new administrators were unfamiliar with the school's problems and budget situation."

Ernst said the accreditation commission's decision did not influence his move to the University of Kansas. He said he had decided to take the new position before he was aware of the commission's report.

Larger budget

"I came to Kansas because the social work school here is three times as large as NU's, the budget is four times larger and there are three times as many faculty members here," he said.

Ernst said he hopes the NU administration in the system and on individual cam-

pus will provide the support needed to maintain accreditation.

Loss of accreditation for the School of Social Work could mean the school's end, Locke said.

No one wants to participate in or administer an unaccredited program, Locke said. "I don't see how we can ask the Legislature or the NU Board of Regents to support a nonaccredited program."

If the school is not accredited, "no one will enroll and the faculty won't have jobs," said Mary Quattrocchi, social work graduate student and chairwoman of a 50-student committee working to gain support for the school.

No federal jobs

Quattrocchi said that according to federal law, students graduating from an unaccredited school may not be hired by any agency receiving federal funds.

The committee has contacted professional social workers in Nebraska to alert them of the school's problems, Quattrocchi said. The students also are trying to get the school's problems into the Regents agenda, and to bring them to the attention of the Legislature's budget committee, she said.

"Right now, we aren't even considering what will happen if we lose accreditation," Locke said, "we are working to retain it."



The Daily Nebraskan gives NU administrators and college deans a "cloak of invisibility" for a special feature on these officials' feelings—good and bad—about the university. See page 6.

Chancellor search group seeks 'champion for UNL'

The search committee appointed to find a new chancellor for UNL Monday established qualification guidelines for James Zumberge's successor.

According to Richard Gilbert, search committee chairman and chemical engineering professor, the group is looking for "a champion for UNL."

Guidelines are:

- Someone with a strong academic record (including teaching and research), wide academic interests and high professional standing.

- Someone who has had successful administrative-line experience in a comprehensive university and a commitment to academic standards and values, including academic freedom.

- Someone who has pronounced ability to represent convincingly and forcefully the programs of UNL to the people of the state, their officers and elected representatives.

- Someone with the ability to reflect both urban and outstate goals and needs back into specific university programs.

- Someone who has those personal qualities (vigor, integrity, imagination and sensitivity to the various interests of all parts of the university and the state) necessary in the leader of a major academic community and land-grant institution.

"Applications and nominations have just started to trickle in," Gilbert said.

The deadline for candidate applications is Oct. 20.

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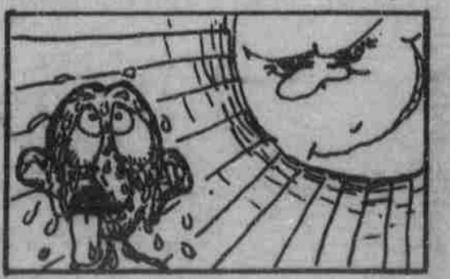
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Weather
 Wednesday: Sunny and mild. Highs in the mid-70s. Winds light and variable.
 Wednesday night: Clear and cool. Temperatures in the low 40s.
 Thursday: Mostly sunny, temperatures in the low to mid-70s.



Photo by Ted Kirk

"And the days dwindle down to a precious few..." The autumn season officially began Tuesday, bringing with it the reminders of nature's changing colors, leaves, and eventually the cold weather ahead. Frisbees, footballs, biking and hiking all will soon yield to the forces of winter. Taking advantage of one of the remaining pleasant days for outdoor activities is Pat Garvey, guitar pickin' on the shores of Lake Herkimer.