

# Discrimination study has 10 remaining days

By Barbara Lutz

Only 10 working days remain for an 11-member chancellor-appointed committee to determine if sex-discrimination exists in UNL programs.

If discrimination is found and not eliminated, some federal financing may be stopped, said Ron Gierhan, assistant to the vice-chancellor for student affairs.

More than 35 UNL departments were required to evaluate their current policies and practices and report discrimination "concerning admission of students, treatment of students and employment of both academic and non-academic personnel," said Gierhan, committee coordinator.

Sex discrimination against students and employees is prohibited in federally assisted education programs by Title IX provisions of a 1972 U.S. Health Education and Welfare (HEW) act which became effective July 21.

#### July deadline

Gierhan said the UNL chancellor's office was told to indicate to HEW that UNL has completed a Title IX self-evaluation by July 21, 1976.

However, he said, because many students and faculty members leave campus by May 10, department evaluations must be reported to the committee in time to compile results.

Failure to comply with HEW provisions could lead to termination of federal financial assistance in research programs or a referral to the U.S. Justice Dept. for possible legal action, Gierhan said.

In a letter to department heads explaining the evaluation process, Gierhan said "Hopefully, the self-evaluation process can be viewed by all concerned as a positive endeavor which will work to demonstrate the university

community's willingness to commit itself to the goal of complete equality of opportunity to woman and men."

He said the UNL committee's only power to force departments to stop discrimination is "reason and persuasion."

#### Judgement issue

Identifying sex discrimination and adopting modifications is mainly a departmental judgment, Gierhan said.

"Much of it comes down to opinion and our interpretation," he said. "But people are pretty reasonable about these things."

However, if a department failed to comply with HEW guidelines, Gierhan said, enforcement would be the responsibility of the college dean or "ultimately, the chancellor."

If a college department still refused to comply, the issue would be resolved with HEW in the form of a complaint and investigation.

"But I hope we can stay away from going that far," Gierhan said.

#### No specific guidelines

HEW did not provide specific guidelines or suggestions for conducting the evaluation, but UNL's committee adopted some procedures outlined by the American Council on Education's Office of Women in Higher Education, he said.

Those procedures include forming a policy committee representative of the campus community, sponsoring public hearings and following a recommended reporting format.

Besides self-evaluation, Gierhan said, departments were told to modify policies which do not meet requirements,

eliminate any discrimination and make evaluation results public for at least three years.

#### Not an approval agency

However, he said, "We are not an approval agency. Our job is to coordinate the task of getting the self-evaluations accomplished."

He said copies of the evaluations will be on file in the University Archives and Special Collections Center at Love Library, 303.

UNL's Title IX committee is conducting public hearings today through Wednesday to hear response to evaluations and other comments about possible discrimination at UNL, he said.

Title IX legislation requires most educational institutions—including elementary and secondary schools—to make a self-evaluation, he said. Schools are exempt only if provisions interfere with their religious beliefs, he added.

Gierhan said the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Lincoln Public Schools also are conducting evaluations.

Because of the committee's work, Gierhan said, UNL department chairmen and administrators are more aware of sex discrimination when considering job openings, salaries and promotions, he said, they ask "have I dealt with the problem with Affirmative Action?"

#### Women and ethnic minorities

Under the Title VI amendment of the 1962 Civil Rights Act, the Affirmative Action plan insures that job openings are available to women and ethnic minorities.

Gierhan said that since Title VI requirements are "duplicates" of Title IX's, if a department follows Title VI, it "most surely has satisfied Title IX requirements."

Plans for modifications resulting from evaluations are "hurt a little by the budget crunch," Gierhan said, and because departments are cutting back, there are fewer job openings and slower personnel changes.

Gierhan said four to five department evaluations still are out despite an April 16 deadline, and no conclusions can be drawn until all are in.

Other members of UNL's Title IX chancellor's committee include: Jayne Anderson, UNL coordinator of sororities, fraternities and cooperatives; Don Bryant, UNL sports information director; Ned Hedges, assistant vice-chancellor for academic affairs; Ely Myerson, dean of student development; Patricia Knaub, assistant professor of human development and the family; Marie Most, from the Personnel Dept. Janette Sayre, associate professor of physical education and recreation; Aleen Swofford, women's athletic director; Joan Wadlow, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and Ruth Spencer, a senior physical education major from Omaha.

## Tower's grass will be greener soon

The grass around UNL's Mueller Tower should be greener—or at least re-planted—by June 1.

That is the word from Jay Schluckebier, UNL assistant director of grounds.

Landscaping of the area, including new sidewalks, trees and an underground sprinkler system, was completed last fall. Last week digging equipment and mounds of dirt, which have become a familiar sight on the UNL campus, reappeared.

Insulation problems with the north and south steam tunnels have caused additional construction work, said Verne Traudt, UNL utility manager. Rain washed loose

dirt around the area into the storm sewers, causing water to back up and leak into the tunnels, he said.

Traudt, who discovered the leak last week, estimated the repair cost at between \$1,500 and \$2,000. T and M Construction Co., of Lincoln, has been hired to repair and waterproof the tunnel, he said.

According to Traudt, the 40-year-old tunnels were not waterproofed, and thus the water could leak through the cold joints (cracks left between blocks of cement for expansion) and rust the tunnels' insulation.

Work on the tunnels should be completed today, Traudt said. The UNL Grounds Department then will re-grade and seed the land.

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