

Fees Board work slowed by appointment delay

By Deb Bockhahn

Fees Allocation Board (FAB) members may have to give up some of their winter vacation because of a one-month delay getting together, said Sherry Cole, FAB chairwoman.

FAB is a committee of administrators, faculty and students. It allocates student fees to campus organizations and student services.

Last year, FAB began meeting Sept. 10. The first meeting this year was not until Oct. 14.

"We will need that month in order to catch up on the time we've already lost," Cole said. "The setback in operation was mainly due to the negligence of ASUN because they should've approved FAB members last spring. But instead, members weren't approved until October."

But according to ASUN President Bill Mueller, it is not ASUN's fault the appointments were approved late.

"Blame should be placed on the late recommendations made by the respective organizations represented on FAB," Mueller said.

Cole said the three FAB representatives from the Council on Student Life (CSL) and one from the Nebraska Union were appointed last spring, but ASUN did not approve the appointments until October.

Late approvals

FAB members representing the University Health Center, the Recreation Dept. and the Publications Board were not submitted to ASUN for approval until this semester. "So it wasn't their fault for those late approvals, but it was for the others," Cole said. The Publications Board member will be approved at the next FAB meeting. "The late ASUN approvals have just added to the con-

fusion of having only three returning FAB members," Cole said. "If a drastic change in the budget would've come up during the summer, I wouldn't have been able to get any members of FAB to meet because none of us were approved."

"If ASUN doesn't follow through with their approval procedures, it will set back any organization. Last year ASUN and FAB worked closely together and that helped both operations. I think this neglect has hurt their credibility this year, not ours," she said.

Cole said that because of the importance of issues facing the board, FAB should always start as soon as possible.

For future appointments, she said, ASUN should approve members immediately after the new senate is elected.

'Setback critical'

Former FAB Chairman Don Wesley said "the set back is more critical than ASUN realizes."

"I'm concerned because after making FAB one of the most respected groups on campus, they're expected to do a good job by coming into the middle of the semester."

Among the decisions facing the late-starting FAB concerns student organizations that received money from FAB last year and did not spend the amount allotted. Those organizations might have to give the money back to FAB, Wesley said.

"Some organizations don't realize it, but they were given money only for specific programs and even if the programs fell through they can't spend it on anything else unless FAB approves," he said.

The organizations which received student fee money last semester will be audited within the next two weeks, according to Cole, "so organizations had better be able to account for all the programs and money that was allocated."

Cole said it has not been decided whether the unused money will be recalled. Although no estimate was available, Wesley said the "extra money accounted for thousands of dollars."

An audit deadline will be established at the FAB meeting Sunday, Cole said. FAB members also will decide whether to recall money after each group is audited. Money either will be recalled or approved for new programs, she said.

New policy spawns controversy

By Deb Palmer

A controversial policy initiated this fall by UNL's Secondary Education Dept. changed evaluation of student teachers from a nine-scale letter grade to a pass/fail, task-oriented system.

For some students, an aura of mystery surrounds the policy because of a lack of knowledge about it. They don't know if they have to take student teaching pass/fail, how to change it to a letter grade, the implications of six to 12 hours of pass/fail on their grade point average and how this will affect their chances of getting a teaching job.

Administrators in Teachers College also seem to disagree about how the policy affects both students and employers.

Before this fall, student teachers received letter grades from A+ to F. The new system identifies 23 competencies—tasks the student teacher should be able to perform effectively to get a "pass" grade.

Under each of the 23 competencies are examples that demonstrate a student teacher's ability to perform the competency. For example, the first competency is "the teacher identifies and diagnoses learner needs", and there are 10 examples, listed underneath. One example is "teacher uses school and subject area goals and objectives as guidelines for identifying learner needs."

Effects graded

Competency effectiveness is evaluated by three persons—the student teacher, a supervisor and a cooperating teacher. The supervisor is a secondary education professor in the student's major and the cooperating teacher is a public school teacher who works with the student teacher in the classroom.

When all three agree that a competency has been met by the student teacher, the competency is checked off with the date it was accomplished.

"It's a bunch of rhetoric," said one student teacher of the competencies.

"I tell her (the cooperating teacher) the competencies I'm shooting for and if she agrees (that she has met them), she checks it off," said the student teacher, who asked to remain unidentified.

Another problem with the new policy is that "we were given the impression we had to take it (student teaching) pass/fail," she said. "But there is so much red tape, it's not worth the time" to try to switch back to a letter grade, she said.

'Caught in middle'

"I really feel caught in the middle," said the December graduate, because "administrators across Nebraska don't understand pass/fail. They would rather see grades and recommendations."

"No two people interpret the competencies alike," said another student teacher, who also asked not to be identified. This presents problems when the cooperating teacher and supervisor disagree on a term and thus disagree if the student teacher has fulfilled it, he said.

The student teacher and cooperating teacher "don't have time" to check off every competency as it is met, he said, so "we just make up dates."

He said this should be a "transition year," and students should be able to take student teaching by either letter grade or pass/fail.

"We were told last spring we could change to a (letter) grade," he said, by petitioning Elbert Alfrey (director of secondary student teaching) and contracting a grade, he said.

Student not informed

Students were "misinformed" when they were told they only had to fill out a drop/add form to change from pass/fail to a letter grade, he said.

He said student teachers with a high grade point average would be "cheated at honors convocation" if they are taking all their hours pass/fail.

"You have to have a number of hours with a grade or you can't graduate with distinction," he said.

Both student teachers said a drawback to the new policy is that there is no student input from individual students or from the Teachers College Advisory Board, an advisory group of Teachers College members.

"Applying the competencies (to teaching) is hard," said Stephen Hamersky, a 21-year-old student teacher with a dual major in math and physics, who is teaching both subjects.

Not evaluation

The competencies should be used "to improve teaching, not to evaluate yourself," Hamersky said.

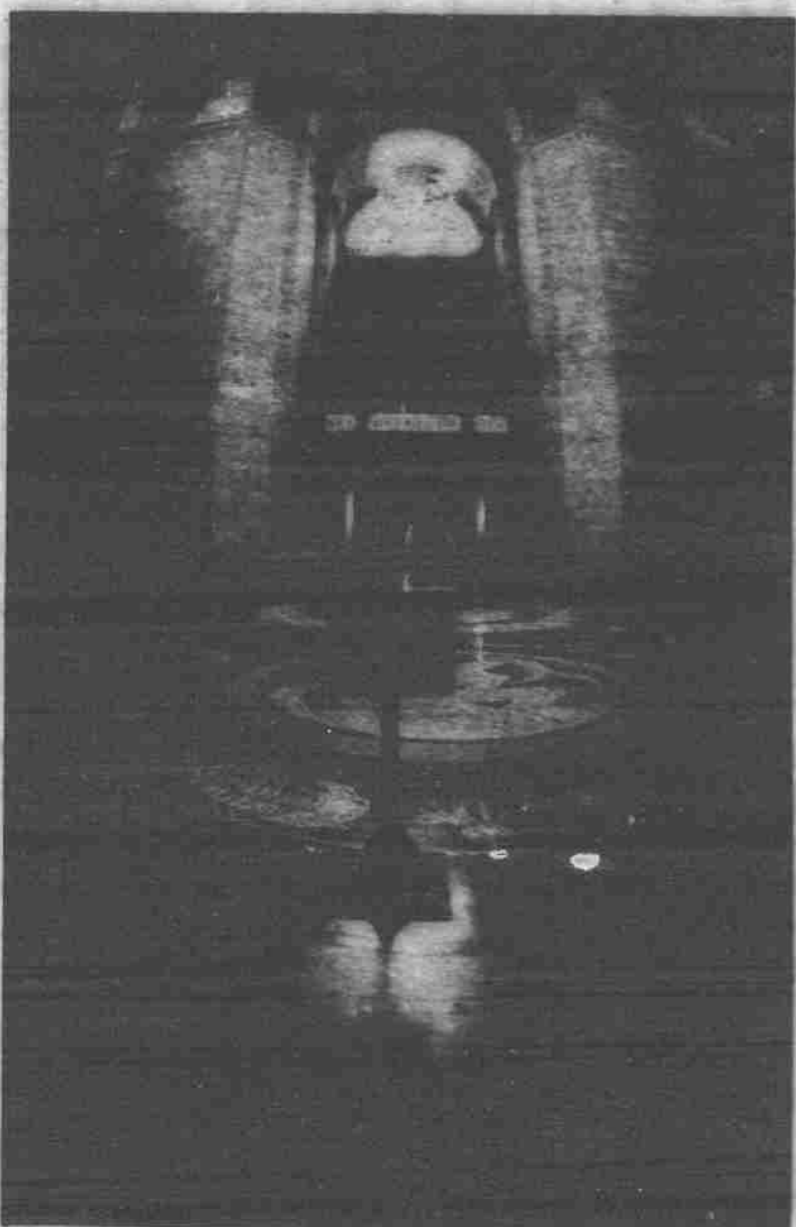
Hamersky said his cooperating teacher expects his advisers to interpret the competencies and that it is "sometimes funny to hear" when they give him two differing opinions how to fulfill them.

"I don't see that it (the pass/fail policy) will affect my getting a job," he said. "Administrators are skeptical about student teaching grade evaluations."

"I am worried about it because it sounds so tentative—we're the guinea pigs," said Charles Enriquez, a 22-year-old senior student teaching in social sciences.

Enriquez said that if one chooses to contract for a grade, it has been implied "they would really grade hard and make it tough on you."

Continued on p. 2



Daily Nebraskan Photo

The Nebraska State Capitol, viewed here in the rotunda, will be designated Saturday as a national historical landmark.

Swine flu seriousness challenged

Two doctors were challenged about the seriousness of swine flu Wednesday at a seminar in the Nebraska Union.

Dr. Paul Stoesz, state director of communicable diseases, and Dr. Kenneth Hubble, director of the University Health Center, told about 75 students about swine flu inoculations. Paula Purviance, wife of a UNL student, questioned Stoesz concerning a study done in Salisbury, England.

She said officials staged a mini epidemic and exposed six men to swine flu.

"I am concerned that these young people aren't taken in by everything that these men are saying. In that study, none of the six men died, or had severe reactions to the flu, and none of the medical attendants contracted the flu while caring for the six men," Purviance said.

Stoesz responded saying the purpose of the seminar was to educate students about the inoculation program.

He said he would discuss Purviance's question after formal questioning was completed.

Purviance declined to stay and left before speaking with Stoesz.

Hubble said the inoculation program must not be turned into a political issue.

"The plans for the inoculation program were established at the contagious disease center in Atlanta and were not presented to the President until several weeks after," he said.

"The President had nothing to do with the establishment of the programs."

"The United States has the technological ability to prevent an epidemic; no other country in the world can say that, and if we did not do this we would be highly criticized."

According to Stoesz, the inoculation risks are far outnumbered by the risks of those students who refuse to take the shot.

"Officials can neither guarantee the severity of the epidemic or the strength of the disease," Hubble added.

See related story on page five.