

YAF's letter campaign prompted by Fonda speech

By Tam Lee

Mandatory funding of campus speakers became an issue for many UNL students after the appearance of actress and political activist Jane Fonda on campus last October.

For other students, the speakers issue was an old problem which never had been resolved. Fonda merely served as a focus for debate on the issue.

Allegations of unfairness and unequal representation by the Nebraska chapter of the Young Americans for Freedom were rapidly disputed by ASUN and the Union Program Council.

In a letter signed by campus YAF chairman Jeff Chizek, the conservative youth group charged that campus conservatives were not given equal time in the speaker program.

"During the last three years, this money (fees) has paid lesbians, Black Panthers, and Marxists for speaking at UNL. Yet, there has only been one conservative during that time," Chizek wrote.

YAF is opposed to paying mandatory fees to support speakers and organizations which its members do not support.

Chizek writes, "we believe it is our God-given right to choose which political groups and speakers we want our money to support. Can it be any other way in a free society?"

ASUN responded that UPC's speaker selection process is open to all students, and widely publicized, but that YAF members had never participated.

It also noted that of 80 speakers in the past three-and-a-half years, 16 were unpaid speakers from NU faculty or the local community while more than 40 speakers dealt with non-political subjects.

The YAF letter encouraged members to write the NU Board of Regents to voice opinions concerning the fees issue.

ASUN recently began a petition drive to prompt student support for mandatory fees.

ASUN and UPC argue that eliminating mandatory fees would eliminate campus speakers because the cost would be prohibitive.

For instance, ASUN estimates that the cost per student to hear a speaker with mandatory fees is about seven cents. The cost under a pay-at-the-door system is estimated at \$3 a person.

YAF State Chairman Terrell Cannon says cost is not the issue.

"It's a philosophical issue. We have great faith in a person's ability to determine what's best for himself," he said.

The organization supports voluntary speaker support and fewer restrictions on

Although the funding of speakers by student fees has raised a great deal of controversy, it is the editorial belief of the Daily Nebraskan that the speakers issues is but a minor part of the larger issue of mandatory student fees.



Daily Nebraskan Photo

student organizations to allow them to raise money for programs, Cannon said.

Cannon, challenging ASUN's contention that elimination of fees would eliminate speakers said students are willing to pay to hear someone in whom they are interested. For example, he said, science fiction writer Gene Roddenberry and Josh, an evangelist, both drew a lot of students when they appeared in Lincoln. Admission was charged for both events.

The Nebraska University Public Interest Research Group, which receives student fees, concluded after studying the issue that student fees should be used to support the programs "that benefit the greatest number of students." It also recommended that the student government, which also receives student fees, allocate fees to those organizations.

NUPIRG recommended a thorough study of Line B funds, which are used to pay the university's contractual obligations.

The NUPIRG study said some of the Line B funds could be eliminated.

Cannon said if there is so much support for the programs, there should be no problem with voluntary funding.

ASUN says with charged admission to speakers, the attendance will go down, and ticket prices will be high.

YAF not only is concerned with mandatory funding of speakers, but with the whole issue of mandatory fees, Cannon said.

Nationally, the group first became concerned with eliminating fees in the 1960s, when "so much of the money was used to support demonstrations," Cannon said.

Their focus is on Line A, or student activities funds, because it is an issue which the students can readily identify with, Cannon said. Students could save money if Fund A was eliminated, he claimed.

Cannon said students will always have to pay the contractual obligations financed through student fees, but he said it should be financed through state taxes or tuition.

"Putting bonded indebtedness under the category of student fees gives the illusion that students have some control over it, and they don't," he said.

YAF has more than 800 members across Nebraska and about 100 at UNL, Cannon said.

Some regents have said they are in favor of eliminating mandatory funding of speakers. Others have said they want to continue funding for campus speakers, even though they may not agree with all of them.

The rest of the regents are waiting until their Feb. 18 meeting to decide the future of student fees.

Omaha campuses also affected by fee recommendations

By Kathy McAuliffe

The recommendations made by the task force on student fees are facts of life for the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska Medical Center as well as for UNL.

The recommendations are designed to standardize the fees policies of the entire NU system. NU President Ronald Roskens will present his recommendations based on the task force report at the Feb. 18 NU Board of Regents meeting.

If approved as policy by the regents, flexibility on the three campuses will be the key word for implementation of the recommendation.

"What we're trying to do here is come up with general policy guidelines and not operating procedures," said Hans Brisch, chairman of the task force on student fees. "At most what we want to do on a universitywide basis is to set some policy and allow the individual campuses to blossom to the best of their abilities."

The effects of the recommendation would differ on each campus. The results of the recommendation which limits mandatory fees to certain agencies would

have much the same effect at UNO as at UNL.

UNO's Student Government Association, the student newspaper, Gateway, and the Student Program Organization would receive continued support from mandatory student fees. All other groups would be eliminated from mandatory student fee support, excluding agencies supported by SGA.

There are some significant differences between the amount and percentage of Fund A money each campus receives.

UNO's Fund A budget for 1977-78 was \$200,500 or 22 percent of the total amount of student fees paid. In contrast, UNL's Fund A budget for 1977-78 was \$158,950 or five percent of the student fee total.

Ronald Beer, UNO vice chancellor for educational and student services, attributes part of UNO's higher Fund A costs to the centralization of the SPO. This programming organization, which received \$74,750 in 1977-78, may require a higher budget because it is responsible for nearly all UNO entertainment events, he said.

In contrast, Beer said, the Union Program Council at UNL, which received

\$55,000 in 1977-78, is supported by other agencies which plan events for students.

UNO offers more support to the campus newspaper than UNL does, Beer said. The Gateway was budgeted \$44,200 in 1977-78 as compared to the \$30,000 budget of the Daily Nebraskan. There are reasons for this disparity, said Beer.

The Daily Nebraskan is able to support itself almost entirely through advertising because it is located next to a business district which depends heavily on the student consumer, he said.

The Gateway is not as heavily in demand as an advertising medium because the college is not adjacent to a business district and the paper serves only a small portion of a large city, he said.

The recommendations of the task force would have the smallest effect at the medical center, said John Aronson, assistant to the chancellor for student services. The medical center's \$25 a semester student fee is not divided between Fund A and Fund B. More accurately called a health services fee, it is used only for funding the student and employee health clinic.

Other programs which require student fee funding either do not exist at the

medical center or use another source of funding, he said. For example, a bi-monthly student news publication is put out by the Office of Public Information. Student Senate expenses are paid by the revenue from certain candy and pop machines on campus.

Neil Vanselow, medical center chancellor suggested that the student government and news publication are much smaller operations because the campus is smaller and serves graduate students.

Aronson said the future may mean a student union and an increase in mandatory student fees at the medical center. But not without seeking the opinions of students who would use and pay for a student center, he said.

"I don't think a fee would ever be established here without a referendum of students," he said.

The Student Senate has prepared a ballot which will be used to poll students on the advisability of building a student center and increasing fees. Rodney Anderson, student body president and student regent, said he expects a negative response to the poll until students become better educated about campus needs.