

Fees question...

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He continues that regents can withhold student fees from supporting speakers without violating the First Amendment. "However, once the Board has allocated the funds for a particular activity over a certain time period, it cannot censor or discriminate by withholding payment without violating the Constitution."

If the regents should decide to withhold student fee support of student speakers this does not mean that speakers would be prohibited from coming to campus. It just means you would have to pay an admission charge.

Supposing the regents do decide to withhold speaker funding, then they have no control over who was brought to campus. If YAF is worried that Talks and Topics Committee is scheduling an imbalanced program now, consider what might happen if the committee had to schedule speakers who would draw a large enough crowd to meet expenses.

The recommendation suggests ASUN, UPC and the Daily Nebraskan continue to receive student fee money. If the regents should ax mandatory student fees these organizations would survive, however their tactics would have to change somewhat. (See column page 4.)

Another thing the regents might do is accept the task force recommendation proposing a combined man-

datory and optional student fees program.

Exactly how this would work is left up to the regents should they approve the recommendation.

The task force recommends that ASUN be granted the allocation function now held by FAB. If this is approved the advisory board responsible for the allocation of funds will be an elected body rather than an appointed body.

ASUN has been asking for this responsibility before the task force was created. The student government already had outlined a proposal concerning a fee allocation council should ASUN be made the official advisory board.

The task force makes three recommendations and in this case the last is not the least. The third recommendation already is drawing fire from administrators. It calls for a student referendum before student fees are increased to cover additional capital construction.

Low voter turnout at ASUN elections seems to indicate students are not interested or do not believe they have a voice concerning university politics.

The referendum would give students the chance to clearly demonstrate their decisions to the regents. But, once again the regents always have the final word.

Any vote would not bind the regents. Hans Brisch, chairman of the task force, said the referendum would serve as a student recommendation only. Administrators

are expressing doubt about recommendation three. Vice Chancellor Richard Armstrong said he would hate for the regents to ask student opinion and then find themselves not taking the advice.

It appears administrators feel safer without the gauge of student opinion that a student referendum might offer. Ironically enough, it was a student referendum back in 1937 that initially approved the creation and collection of student fees.

The second recommendation concerns Fund B. The task force says this fund should be investigated in a matter similar to the study just completed.

Besides the University Health Center and an occasional story about bond indebtedness there is little discussion about the booby fund.

After all, isn't it more fun to talk about Jane Fonda?

Tumultuous...

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Court decisions ruled the regents have control and discretion regarding expenditure of student fees.

In Larson v. Board of Regents (1972) the Lancaster District court ruled mandatory student fees are not private funds but public funds subject to restriction. The Nebraska Supreme Court agreed student fees are public funds under regent control.

In Veed v. Schwartzkopf the Nebraska Supreme Court ruled the regents may allocate funds for the Daily Nebraskan and speakers brought to campus.

As the court cases were being decided, university officials were studying and making decisions of their own. In November 1972 UNL Chancellor James Zumbege created four task forces dealing with a specific area of student fees. These included an administrative force, a users force, a programming force and a University Health Center force.

Kenneth Bader, former vice chancellor of student affairs, used information from the other three task forces for his student fee report which suggested the creation of a Fees Allocation Board.

In July, 1973, the regents issued "Policy on Student Fees" creating FAB and Fund A and Fund B.

Since that time the amount of student fees have

climbed \$15, from \$51.50 per full-time student per semester to \$66.50 per student per semester.

According to Comptroller James Knisely, the increases through the years have covered inflation and expanded bond debts. The latest fee increase of \$3.50 replenished money taken from the Fund B surplus fund to build the East Union.

The number of student organizations receiving student fees was slashed this summer when the Board of Regents refused a proposed \$4 hike in student fees.

FAB met last summer to revise its allocations, giving top priority to organizations that serve all UNL students. Many small international and sports clubs as well as NUPIRG and the Cultural Affairs Center received no money at all.


Budgets of other organizations were cut. The ASUN budget was cut from \$53,000 in the original budget recommendation to \$32,160 in the revised budget. The UPC budget dropped from \$58,142 to \$55,000. The Daily Nebraskan allocation went from \$37,500 to \$30,000.

A task force to study student fees was created last fall and submitted its report last December. The task force studied the possibility of eliminating some mandatory student fees.

Mandatory student fees have come under fire again since the Young Americans for Freedom have been writing letters protesting that their fees support what they term "imbalanced programs." They have criticized the Talks and Topics Committee for bringing too many liberal speakers to campus.

And the seemingly endless discussions about student fees continue.

After paying their share of student fees, UNL students taking less than seven hours are left with more change jangling in their pockets than students carrying more hours. Anyone carrying over 7 hours pays \$66.50 in student fees. Every student, regardless of the number of hours taken, pays \$3.42 to support Fund A. However, anyone carrying four to six hours pays \$48.50 in student fees. None of this money supports bond debts. Students taking less than four hours pay \$21.50. These students do not pay fees to either the University Health Center or bond debts.



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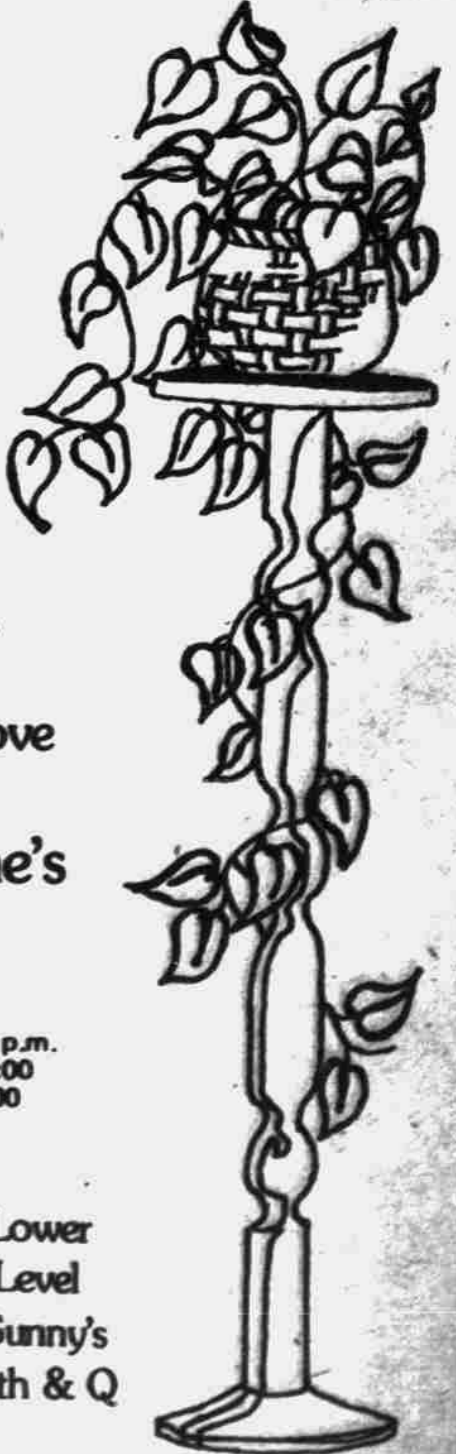
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