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Federal education policies criticized

There is a growing intrusion, most notably by the federal government, into the decisions of colleges and universities, according to the president of the American Council of Education.

Jack Peltason at a press conference at the Hilton Hotel Wednesday, said the foundation of higher education was built by individual colleges making their own policies. He said his organization would resist any centralization of higher education.

Peltason gave as an example a Veterans Administration attempt to insist that instructors take roll every day, so the VA could find out if veterans were going to class.

Another example Peltason cited was an attempt by the U.S. Office of Education to force universities and colleges to adopt a standardized tuition refund plan, so guaranteed government loans could be simplified.

"Those kinds of decisions should be left to the discretion of the schools," Peltason said.

He said it was unreasonable to expect universities to change 20-year-old institutions in 60 days.

While emphasizing the plight of small colleges and state supported universities, Peltason said the problems of higher education have taken a back seat to other problems.

"Now they have other things on their minds, such as welfare and inflation. We're competing our education against more urgent claims."

The costs of energy, supplies and salaries have skyrocketed, while the government and private business have less money to support the colleges and universities, he said.

"The economic health of the country is probably the single most important factor facing us," Peltason said.



Photo by Jerry McBride

Jack Peltason, president of the American Council of Education, called for the federal government to stop interfering in the handling of college and university policies and organization.

Repaving closes lots

Due to improvement (hard surfacing) the area No. 2 parking lots 18th to 19th "Q" to "R" — will be closed and all vehicles moved by 8:00 p.m. Sunday, 9-17-78. All permit holders are advised to move their vehicles to the fairgrounds parking lots on No. 14th St. To reach this area go north on 14th, past fair St. to east of 14th.

If you have any questions, call University Police 472-3555.

Center helps students cope with pressures

During the 1977-78 school year, the UNL Mental Health Center helped 500 to 600 students cope with their pressures and anxieties. This year, staff members hope more students will use services.

Located in the University Health Center, the service offers assistance 24 hours a day. The five staff members are available for individual and group counseling.

Director Robert Heins is convinced that many freshmen would have an easier time facing culture shock and the pressures of school if they knew of the center's services and disregarded old stigmas.

"Some still think it's OK to get a red hot appendix but not OK to get a red hot depression," he said. "Staff members see a higher proportion of students in the higher grades who've had psychology classes and, for them, there's less of a stigma about getting help."

"When they find themselves unable to concentrate or devote their full energy as a student, or are lonely and relieve their anxiety by excess alcohol or drugs, we can help them make decisions, learn how to handle the stress better."

Heins says students in these kinds of crises usually need to make only one to four visits to the center, "therapy is not long term, we do know how to help in a hurry."

There is no fee up to the eight visit. Costs are included in the regular student fees.

Pointing out the recent television documentary, "College Can be Killing," Heins said members of college communities across the nation are learning how to become sensitized to depression. This film is being shown to UNL student residence hall assistants and members of greek houses.

Although UNL is far below other institutions of its size in reported suicides (two in the last three years) and suicide attempts (12 known in the last year), Heins is concerned that increasing pressures for grades will boost those numbers if students don't learn how to handle stress better.

He also said there are between 3000 and 4000 shy students who could benefit from counseling for their lack of self-esteem. The center also offers group therapy, a biofeedback program and relaxation training.

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