

Graduation dreams delayed by work, money woes

By Jeff Unger

If you have ever had the feeling that there has to be an end to it all but it seems like it will never come, don't feel alone.

Graduating in four years seems to be a thing of the past these days for many students, and any number of reasons may be cited for having to take that extra semester or three.

Lyle Young, associate dean of engineering and technology, said that only about one-third of the engineering and technology students graduate in four years.

Nearly another 33 percent take nine semesters to finish school and another one-third are here for ten semesters, he said.

Young said many students need to stay in school longer than four years "because we require 134 credits to graduate." Another reason he cited was that 60 percent of the engineering students work

part time and carry a smaller course load. **Students come and go**

Taking longer than four years to finish school may not be a recent phenomenon, however.

A study done in 1975 on a group of freshmen that started at UNL in 1969 showed that 52 percent of the students were still in school at the end of eight semesters, according to Dr. Lawrence Bundy, director of undergraduate advising.

The informal study, Bundy said, was a "snapshot approach" using limited data. He said the number of students who graduated early and those who quit or transferred were not included in the final figure.

"Because students come and go, you're never sure what percent graduate at one time," he said. "I think if they are taking longer (to graduate), there might be more working and carrying fewer hours."

Stopping out

Bundy said there are programs where

students "stop out," such as in engineering, to do work in their field. He also said it is not uncommon for some students to quit school and then return to school.

There are many reasons a student may stay in school longer than four years. Even with a requirement of 125 hours to graduate, a student taking 15 hours each semester will still be five hours short at the end of eight semesters.

Work is also a factor. Many students find they have to work more hours to be able to cover the costs of room, board and tuition.

This year, tuition was \$22.50 per credit hour for Nebraska residents and \$61 for non-residents. Student fees are \$66.50 per semester.

Tuition increased

In the last five years, tuition has increased over four dollars per hour, according to Bob Clark, director of student accounts at UNL.

Clark said that resident tuition was \$18

per credit hour in 1973, and \$48.25 for non-residents. Fees were \$51.50 that year and they increased to \$61.50 in 1974.

A current student and two former students cited their own reasons for finishing in more than four years.

"Work," said John Sanks, who started in 1973. He said he will be done in December this year and is currently taking three hours at UNL.

Sanks, who works full time, said he worked about 20 hours each week during most of his college years.

"I had to cut down my class hours to balance out my time," Sanks said. "I suppose I averaged 12 or 13 hours per semester."

If you've got the time

Julie Johnson, who is now teaching school, said she took longer than four years because she changed majors in the middle of her college career.

She said she feels that unless a person carries heavy course loads, there is no way they can graduate in four years.

"I don't see how it's feasibly possible to support yourself and graduate in four years," said Johnson, who also said she had to work her way through school.

Rich Meyer, who started in 1973 and finished school in summer 1978, said he took longer than four years because he "had a really good time."

Averaging 13 hours each semester, Meyer said some classes got more interesting and also took more time as he progressed. He said it would have been too hectic to finish in four years.

Innocents learn 'do unto others' lesson Monday

The Innocents Society finally has learned the meaning of the Golden Rule.

What they have "done onto others was done onto them" Monday night when four MECA members "spooked" their meeting.

The 13-member honorary which dresses in red-hooded robes and sashes, periodically mask their faces and interrupts meetings and UNL offices moving around the room and expressionlessly peering over people's shoulders.

Michael Gibson, a member of both groups, claimed responsibility for the idea.

He said that at first the Innocents did not know who the spooks were, but "pretty soon everyone was rolling on the floor with laughter."

One Innocent even tried to sell them raffle tickets, but they didn't respond, he said.

"The spookers did a better job of keeping a raight face than the Innocents have," Gibson said. "Being an Innocent is sort of an ego trip. This was a perfectly ego deflating exercise."

He said one spook wore an Innocents' robe and sash, another a red jacket zipped over his head, another a Dracula cape and one wore metallic sun glasses to mask his appearance, Gibson said.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

School's out, sun's up and it's hot outside. All these two kids have to do is hurry home, check in with mom and then get down to some serious foolin' around.

Flood of tears interrupts Ellis hearing

By Shelley Smith

Through a flood of tears, John Ellis' former wife testified in Lancaster County Court Thursday that she found two butcher knives in her car in 1976.

Ellis is charged with first-degree murder in the death of Debra Forycki, whose remains were found in an old water tank near Elmwood last month.

Martha Dickerson, who divorced Ellis in 1977, told the court she was going through her car one evening in June, 1976 when she found the knives.

In Wednesday's hearing, two women testified that Ellis had attacked them at knife-point.

One alleged attack was in June of 1976. The other was in 1974, not more than 75

feet away from where Forycki's remains were found.

Ron Lahners, prosecuting attorney, asked Dickerson what she did with the knives after she found them.

In a choked, tearful voice, she answered, "I was so upset. I don't remember."

Dickerson then broke down sobbing, and was unable to continue her testimony until after a ten minute recess.

She said she did not know where the knives came from, how they got in her car, or where they are now.

She said she and Ellis were the only people who ever drove the car, although she said she believed Ellis' brother borrowed the car once.

Under cross examination by Steve Berry, Ellis' attorney, Dickerson said her car was not cleaned frequently, but she

said she does remember cleaning it that night because Ellis had been hospitalized following a motorcycle accident earlier in the day.

Lahners said after the hearing that Dickerson was upset by the accident when she was cleaning the car, and when she found the knives, she was even more upset.

Judge Jeffrey Chevront asked both the state and the defense to prepare reports concerning the alleged attacks on the two women.

He said it would be premature to decide whether to dismiss the case or have it bound over to the District Court without first reading these reports.

He said if the defense had any new evidence to present they could do so when the hearing reconvenes at 3:30 p.m. October 25.

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