

Tuition refunds available sooner

By Tom Prentiss

When generalizing about college students, it is safe to say they like their beer cold, their exams next week and their financial aid money immediately, if not sooner.

Because of the questioning of a female UNL student, eligible financial aid recipients will be able to get an advance on their tuition refund the first week of school, rather than waiting until mid-semester.

Debra Knight, assistant director of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aids said a female student was unhappy about the way tuition refunds were doled out in mid-semester, instead of the beginning of the year when expenses are high. The student, who Knight said didn't want her name released, contacted Sen. Chris Beutler of Lincoln.

Beutler sponsored LB 243, which called for an increased cash balance and earmarked \$50,000 for the cash advance for books program.

Knight said, "Students who have been awarded grants or scholarship funds in excess of their tuition will be eligible." She emphasized the program is only for people who already have received aid. Loan money will not qualify a student, she noted.

THE PROGRAM IS very simple, she said. If a student has been awarded \$500 a semester, and only owes \$325 of it for tuition, then that student has \$175 still coming to him.

Under the old system, that money would not be sent until October or November, Knight said. Now, by going to

the financial aids office during the first week of school, students will receive their excess aid money in the form of a voucher or a cash award.

The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aids will only be working on the program during the first week of school, Knight said.

Office hours will be 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

STUDENTS WILL EITHER be given a direct cash award or a voucher to be used at the University Bookstore in the Nebraska Union. Each student will be limited to \$100.

Knight said the financial aids office was in favor of the program because, "It helped get students the money when they needed it most."

The past two or three years have had something like this available for students, Knight said, but this will allow the office to disperse money around between the cash awards and the vouchers.

She said the office estimates 1,000 students will apply. A special section of the office will be arranged to accommodate the high flow of students in the office.

"The whole process won't take much time at all, because all we have to do is check the records and if the student is eligible, he or she gets the money," Knight said.

The cash awards are intended to be used for books but Knight said there is no way of checking up on the students.

"And we wouldn't want to, really," she said. "Books are an expense, but so is living and eating too. We think the students will use their best judgment."

Dormitories overflow again

By Toni Trujillo

Students will be living in the lounges of UNL's residence halls again this fall.

An estimated 300 of 5,239 residence hall students will be assigned to temporary housing until rooms are available, according to housing director Doug Zatechka.

Enrollment is up at UNL again this year and Zatechka said he does not expect a decline in the near future.

"I haven't seen any decline in the enrollment at major universities," he explained.

More UNL students are looking into residence hall living, according to Zatechka. He attributed increased interest to cheaper living facilities, convenience, and a guaranteed price that doesn't change from contract-signing to fall semester, even if costs to the university increase.

LATE ENROLLMENTS also add to the number of students to be housed in residence halls and to overcrowding, Zatechka said. Late housing contracts are not turned down, but are added to list, he said. Students with a contract after April, usually end up in temporary housing, he said.

Temporary housing is only one of the solutions to the overcrowding problem, Zatechka said. He said he thinks it is the best one. He explained he would rather see students living in lounges than being refused space.

The housing director rejects the idea of a new residence hall because of high cost, and the chance of it not being used in years to come.

"Either way, Nebraskans and their children will have to pay for it, although I know that in the meantime this means a crunch on students," Zatechka said.

Zatechka also has looked into what other universities are doing to ease overcrowding. Many of those contacted are using temporary housing. Colorado University, for example, is renting a gymnasium.

ZATECHKA HAS referred students looking for alternatives to fraternities, sororities and co-ops, although he said there is not a lot of space available there either.

To ease the situation at UNL, new furniture has been bought to make temporary housing "more acceptable," Zatechka said. The housing director also has contracted the local YMCA in case extra room is needed, although he said he doubts the situation will reach that extreme.

Zatechka said he hopes students understand the reasons for the inconvenience.

"I think it's better to provide temporary housing than none at all. I can't refuse housing to students who need it. That would be like saying, 'Sorry the inn is full.'"



DN wins again

The Daily Nebraskan was selected an All American college newspaper for the sixth consecutive semester last spring receiving five marks of distinction.

Judged by the National Scholastic Press Association and the Associated Collegiate Press, the Daily Nebraskan received top honors in all five possible areas. They include: Writing and Editing, Editorial Leadership and Opinion Features, Coverage and Content, Physical Appearance and Graphics.

The 17,000 circulation UNL paper will expand to a five-day publication this fall printing on Tuesday for the first time in the history of the paper.

The Daily Nebraskan will be under senior Amy Lenzen's direction as editor-in-chief. Anne Shank will replace Jerri Haussler as business manager and Denise Jordan will return as advertising manager. Kitty Policky will return as production manager.

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