

UNL educators say they lack teaching assistants

By Tom Shelton

Lack of funds, an attractive outside job market and difficulty in getting quality students to sign up are factors causing a shortage of teaching assistants in several departments of the university.

Salaries for teaching assistants in seven departments and colleges range from \$3,500 for an academic year in the Teachers College to \$6,500 in the Chemistry department.

Lyle Young, associate dean of the College of Engineering and Technology, said teaching assistants are hard to come by.

"We're competing with industry," he said. "When a student with a bachelors' degree is offered \$24,000 by some corporation, it's kind of hard to keep them around."

Teaching assistants in the engineering college are paid about \$5,600 for an academic year, depending on experience, he said.

In addition to competition from outside interests, Young said an increase in students majoring in engineering has caused problems.

"We've had a shortage of teaching assistants for the last five years," he said. "It's mainly because we've had a 78 percent increase in students. There are not enough teach-

er assistants to take care of all the students."

Young said toughening of academic standards is one of the methods the department has had to use to diminish the number of its students.

Robert Egbert, dean of the Teachers College and past president of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, said his department has not gone untouched either.

Egbert said the college has suffered shortages of funds to get the number of teaching assistants needed and the money to pay them to be competitive with other schools.

Egbert said all seven departments of the teachers college are having difficulties. He said the salary range for teaching assistants in the college was from \$3,500 to \$4,500 a year, depending on experience and skill.

Egbert said the salaries paid to teaching assistants throughout the university are determined by the skills, experience and demand for people to fill assistantships.

He said the money granted for teaching assistants comes from the Legislature. The money is distributed to the colleges of the university, then goes to the department deans, who appoint the teaching assistants. The number of assistants is determined by the funds allotted to each department.

Egbert said teaching assistants help themselves and students.

"They help students to learn and the teacher assistants learn to teach at the same time," he said. "They are a good internship for would-be professors. We get excellent instruction from them."

However, Egbert said, it's not easy to pay them enough, or hire enough of them when there is a lack of funds, or when an outside job market beckons them to leave.

James Carr, associate professor in the Chemistry Department, said his department also could not lure enough qualified applicants to become teaching assistants.

We have 23 new graduate teaching assistants when we hoped to bring in about 35," he said.

Carr said there was a terrific demand for teaching assistants by other universities. He said the competition has prompted the Chemistry Department to pay higher salaries — beginning at \$6,500 for an academic year — to entice applicants to stay.

The chemistry department also has seen an increase in students. In this case, the increase is in non-chemistry majors taking freshman level classes.

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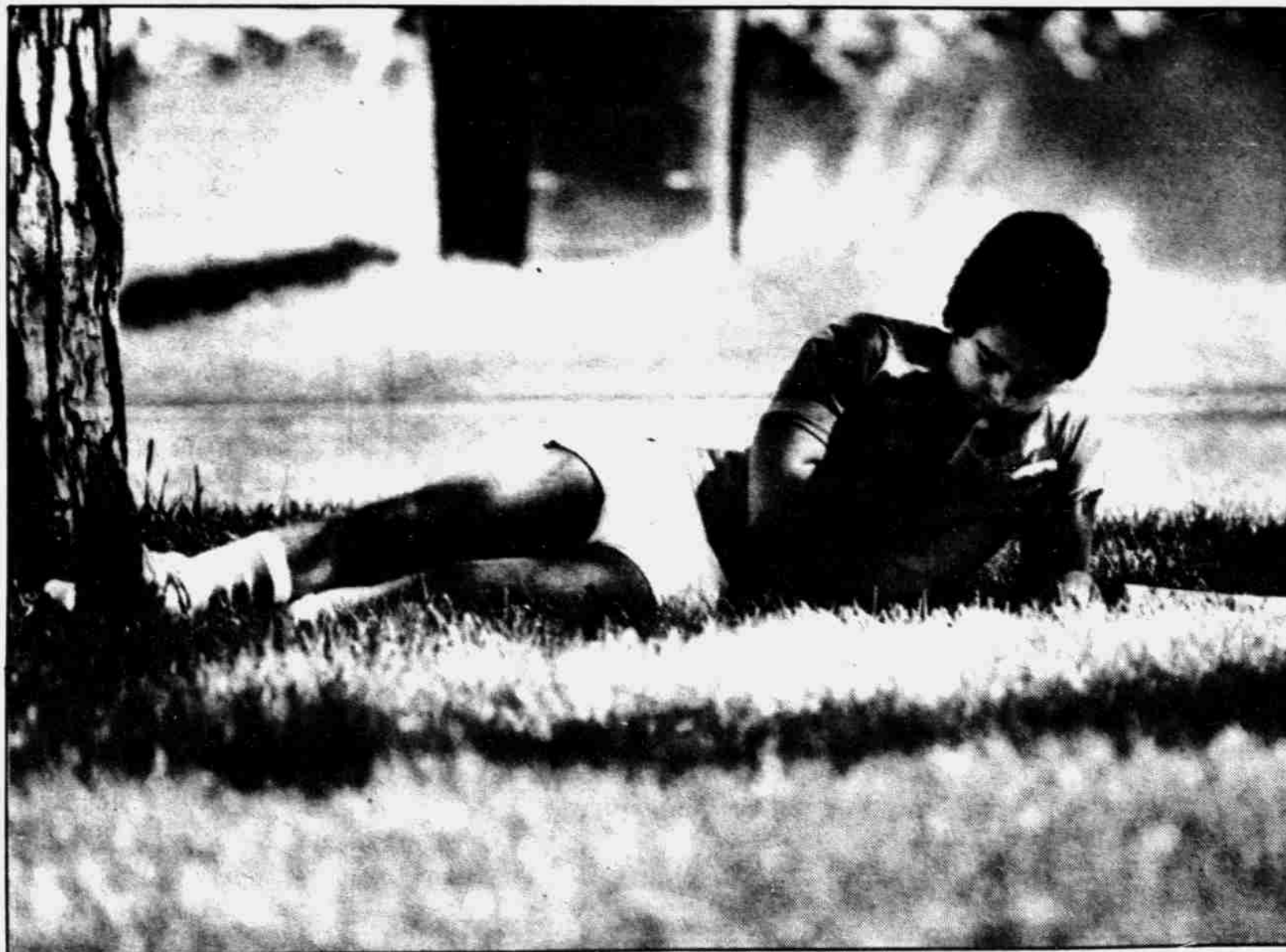


Photo by Kent Morgan Olsen

Mike Levin, a first semester graduate student in architecture, makes studying bearable as he reads a book hidden in the soft fall grass between Architecture Hall and Sheldon Art Gallery.

Social Security cuts anticipated

By D.L. Horton

Social Security benefits for college students will be eliminated over the next four years, Social Security officials said.

Joyce Crow, assistant director of the Social Security Administration, said the elimination of benefits is part of President Ronald Reagan's budget cut proposal. She said students often get a duplication of aid money, such as federal student loans and other available financial aid in addition to their benefits.

Carol Barry, a claims representative for the Social Security office, said there are about 1,500 Nebraska high school and college students drawing benefits. She said about 500 UNL students are receiving benefits.

Barry said students eligible for benefits as of August 1981 will receive normal benefits through May 1982. She said benefits will no longer be paid for May through August even if the student is in summer school.

Students must be full-time and less than 22 years old to be eligible to receive benefits. If students turn 22 during a semester, they may continue to receive benefits until the end of the semester.

Beginning in the fall of 1982, benefits will be cut by 25 percent each year until the program is eliminated. Only those eligible as of August 1981 will experience the cuts. Students ineligible at that time will receive no benefits,

Barry said.

However, she said if a student applies for benefits before May they can get full benefits through July. No more students may apply for Social Security payments after May 1982.

In the fall of 1982 that amount will be cut by 25 percent, 50 percent in 1983, and 75 percent in 1984 and eliminated in 1985.

Don Aripoli, director of UNL Scholarships and Financial Aids, said the elimination of Social Security benefits will have an impact on the aid his office can offer. He said affected students should apply for other forms of aid. He said that in addition to the Guaranteed Student Loan and Basic Grant, there is a new program called Auxiliary Loan Assistance Support Program. Under this program the parents of a student can borrow money from a bank at 14 percent interest for the student's education.

Aripoli said the elimination of benefits could put strain on the financial aids office if the amount of money they receive stays the same and they have additional students who need aid. If this happens, he said, either the amount of money to each student will be less or those who are receiving marginal aid will no longer receive any aid.

Aripoli said the university's request for more federal appropriations will automatically be higher next year than ever before. He said every other school will also increase their requests for National Direct Student Loan money.

UNO professors receive donation

By Charles Flowerday

The Nebraska State Conference Executive Committee of the American Association of University Professors voted unanimously Saturday to contribute \$500 to the UNO AAUP chapter. The money will help defray legal expenses incurred during the recently resolved collective bargaining dispute with the NU Board of Regents.

The Regents voted 8-0 Friday to accept the contract settlement proposed by negotiating teams representing the two parties.

Because negotiations failed to produce a contract within what the UNO chapter of the AAUP considered a reasonable time, the chapter filed two suits regarding the impasse. One, in District Court, seeking interim raises and the other with the Commission on Industrial Relations seeking a judgment on disputed economic matters.

Suzanne Moshier, president of the UNO chapter, said the chapter will drop the suits when the settlement terms are accepted by the Commission on Industrial Relations. She said she expects that process to run smoothly.

Moshier said the AAUP state executive committee's contribution, was "a very fine gesture of support." Although not all chapters of the AAUP have collective bargaining stipulations in their contracts, all maintain an ongoing relationship with the Nebraska State Conference, Moshier said.

"What we have tried to accomplish (through collective bargaining) is to get specific legal guarantees of the goals pursued by the state conference," Moshier said.

The \$500 was allocated out of a state conference fund of membership dues collected from college and university chapters throughout the state.

Evelyn Haller, state conference president, said, "All AAUP chapters in Nebraska uphold similar standards and goals for the professoriate. Collective bargaining is but one means to that end. By this contribution we are demonstrating in a concrete way our support of our colleagues at UNO."

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