

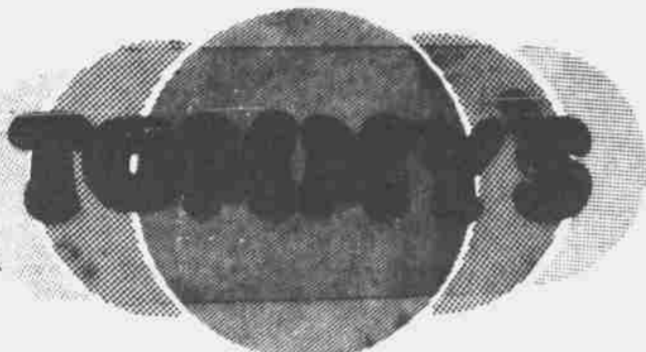
Daily Nebraskan

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Decrease in research grants seen

By Jim Anderson

UNL's College of Engineering and Technology received less in research grants for the 1981-82 academic year than in previous school years, according to an associate dean of the college.

Edward Anderson, also director of the Engineering Research Center, said the decrease is primarily the result of the economy and the attitudes of the federal and state governments toward research.

"Rather than the federal government wanting to be the primary supporter of research," Anderson said, "the federal government is trying to get the private sector to help more."

Anderson said that if the college can attract private sources of funds, the federal government will make money available also. Traditionally he said, grants have come in relatively equal proportions from state, federal and private sources. In the past two years, support for engineering research nationwide has decreased by between one-fourth and one-third, he said.

Private support increasing

During those years, however, the amount of support for research in the private sector has greatly increased, he said. The partnership between government and private funding should exist, Anderson said, but added that the private sector doesn't have the resources to provide as big a share as the federal government wants it to.

Anderson said private grants should increase in the

future but eventually will level off.

An encouraging trend, he said, is that granting agencies, which traditionally have granted funds for specific projects or specific equipment, are now beginning to award more general grants, such as those for graduate assistants or equipment. He said this is an attempt to deal with the American engineering crisis — a situation brought on primarily by an economy in which fewer engineering graduates are becoming teachers. Teaching positions are left unfilled and engineering laboratories have been allowed to fall behind current technology levels, he said.

Active grants lower

Until the 1981-82 academic year, the college had received larger amounts in active grants each year (total amounts granted as opposed to pro-rated funds, the amount spent in any given year).

In 1980-81, for example, the total active grants received by the college amounted to \$2,261,809. In 1981-82, the amount was \$1,553, 231, according to the college's October 1982 newsletter. Anderson said the effects of the decrease will begin to be noticed this year.

The center's director said he's optimistic about the future of engineering education as a whole, both nationwide and at UNL.

"If you're an educator today," he said, "the best place to be is in engineering."

Crises in the engineering field are beginning to be addressed, Anderson said, adding that he foresees an upswing in the economy before too long.

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