

Teachers College earns accreditation

By Tish Mockler

UNL's Teachers College received its seven-year unofficial accreditation two weeks ago when a 15-member committee from the National Council for Accreditation of Teachers reviewed UNL's

Teachers College curriculum.

The college will receive its official accreditation in June after the National Board has reviewed the committee's report, James O'Hanlon, dean of the Teachers College, said.

The 15-member team was composed

of faculty from other universities, school systems and UNL. The student teaching practicum was commended on its organization and preparation of students for teaching, O'Hanlon said.

The committee praised the advisory programs because of their commitment the teachers hold toward students, O'Hanlon said. It also rated UNL high in its quality and enthusiasm of communicating information to students.

The committee commended the ability of students to be able to teach music, art and physical education on a primary and secondary level. It also said the college prepares students well for work with handicapped students and its general readiness for students to teach after graduation.

Teachers College sophomores initially come into contact with students by working with the students and getting to know them as individuals. They also learn how to get students to respond to them positively, he said. In their junior year, students serve as teaching assistants and lead small group activities. In their senior year, they actually student teach.

The committee was impressed by the Design Center, where the computer center is located. The computer center was started in 1979 and it teaches students how to use computers themselves and as teaching tools in the classroom.

Currently, all Teachers College Students are required to take an audio-visual course, which includes a unit on computers, Dorothy Stevens, assistant professor in the curriculum and instructional department, said.

An "Instructional Computing" class, which is optional, is now taken by quite a few students, Stevens said. "I think it should be mandatory," she said, "but a lot of factors needs to be taken into consideration."

Students are now so aware of the needs for computers that it becomes an automatic part of their schedule, she said. O'Hanlon said UNL has the most extensive computer program for teachers in the country.

A negative comment received about the program was its lack of multi-cultural education on the graduate level. O'Hanlon said the graduate program is very individualized, which is a strength of the program. But in the process, the students sometimes do not get the required education in that area, he said.

O'Hanlon said they will have to check their coverage of multi-cultural affairs more carefully. He said part of the problem in giving a multi-cultural education is that Nebraska is lacking in an ethnic mix of teachers and students. The undergraduate program has multi-cultural education structured into its program.

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