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Nebraska state colleges plead budget case

By John Meissner

The Nebraska state colleges presented their case before the Legislature's Appropriations Committee Tuesday, asking for reconsideration of proposed budget allocation.

In requests which mirrored those made by UNL earlier in the week, the four state colleges gave top priority to increasing faculty salaries and upgrading departments.

Keith Kemper, speaking for the Board of Trustees of the Nebraska State Colleges, said additional funds are necessary to preserve institutional vitality. Kemper outlined the five goals of the board:

"We want to provide students with the opportunity to get an education of the highest quality," Kemper said. "We want to recruit faculty and staff by reaching the average salary levels of comparable institutions, and increase staff benefits to the average levels enjoyed at comparable institutions."

"In addition, we want to increase the purchasing power of our colleges, especially in the library departments, and secure funds to replace worn-out equipment," Kemper said.

Jerry Gallentine, president of Peru State College, said salary increases for faculty and staff are a critical issue.

"The devotion of our staff has been tested," Gallentine said. He mentioned a report which places Nebraska state colleges 41, 43, 44, and 45 out of 48 regional colleges with respect to average faculty salaries.

"Kearney State is suffering from 'brain drain.' We're losing our top professors," Kearney State President Bill Nester said. Allan Cramer, a state college board member, pointed out that higher-paying universities were not the only institutions enticing professors away from present jobs.

"With Gov. Kerrey's proposed \$25 million enhancement for secondary school teachers' salaries, we

may be in the unique position of losing teachers to high schools," Cramer said. "The teachers that teach the teachers will earn less money. The way I heard it, the horse pulls the cart, not the other way around."

Capsule budget requests from each state college: Peru State — \$40,000 to renovate Education building, \$27,827 for one full-time teacher.

Chadron State — \$27,295 for a Center of Innovative Programs, \$29,523 for a Center for Education in the Scottsbluff-Gering region, \$20,000 to convert 200,000 library records presently stored in card catalogues to computers.

Kearney State — \$156,000 for 4.5 full-time teachers in the computer science and business departments, \$35,000 for 11 additional graduate assistants, allocations to add on to Cushing coliseum and repave parking lots.

Wayne State — General allocations for addition to the Fine Arts Center, improvements to the auditorium and street paving.



Chris Medley/Daily Nebraskan

Fair or foul, forecasters try to make 'best' weather prediction

By Jay Mulligan

It's student against student, faculty against faculty and man against nature in the UNL geography department.

This semester, more than 50 geography students and professors are pitted against each other as they try to predict Lincoln's weather.

Geography assistant professor Jay Hobgood, who started the contest four years ago, said the idea of the program is to get students familiar with the maps used in forecasting.

"Students forecast every Monday, Wednesday and Friday for the next day in Lincoln," said Hobgood.

Hobgood said a running total is kept for both temperature and precipitation. The results are posted in the map room so students know where they stand, Hobgood said.

"The competition is friendly and usually faculty against faculty or student against student," Hobgood said, "but mostly you're competing against yourself."

The rules are minimal. Competitors turn in their forecasts by 5 p.m. and do their own work. Beyond that they can use anything they want, Hobgood said.

The only prizes are bragging rights and a spot in the "Forecasters Hall Of Fame," which goes to the top five forecasters.

This semester's contest is the largest ever, with

more than 50 people participating, Hobgood said. Randy Cerveny, a UNL graduate student and most successful competitor, was last semester's winner. UNL undergraduate Rick Chermok also did well last semester, Hobgood said.

"Faculty members don't do as well usually, because they don't have the time to look at the maps as much," Hobgood said.

Julie Winkler, UNL assistant geography professor, has been the most accurate of the faculty, Hobgood said, possibly because she teaches both forecasting classes that are applied most in the contest.

"The local weather service has been very accurate," Hobgood said. "Every person in the contest is also doing quite well."

"Persistence, which refers to the fact that weather may be the same for two consecutive days, is considered 'no skill' forecasting," Hobgood said.

"It doesn't take any skill to say that the weather is going to be the same tomorrow," Hobgood said. "We figure persistence in to make sure everyone is doing fairly well."

Steve Welch, a junior meteorology major, said he participated in the contest to gain experience.

"The reason I do it is because I like it and that is why everyone else does it too," Welch said. "It is good camaraderie between fellow geography majors. It helps having the faculty in the contest because you can ask them more questions."

Board approves renovation

By Jonathan Taylor

The Nebraska Union Board passed a motion Tuesday to advise union Director Daryl Swanson to proceed converting the women's first floor lounge into a computer terminal area. The board also passed an amendment to this motion requiring the room be accessible outside regular union hours.

Matt Wallace, ASUN president, presented the board with a resolution passed 15-8 by the ASUN Senate in support of placing computers in the union. He said the senate supported 24-hour accessibility, since the union is "the hub of the campus."

Stacy Scott, vice president of the Panhellenic Association said approximately 1,330 association members were also in favor of the lounge renovation. She said in addition to the vote conducted in each of the 14 sororities, she and association President Laura Williams monitored the use of the first and second floor lounges. She said at the random times they checked the lounges between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., the number of occupants in the first floor lounge never exceeded 12 people and averaged about seven people. The upstairs lounge occupation averaged about one person each time it was monitored, Scott said.

Almost an hour and a half was spent discussing the amendment proposed by board member Robert Stowers to use the women's lounge space only if it was to be used 24 hours.

Swanson said if the computer room was not to be used 24 hours, several other spaces in the union

such as the television room, student lawyer space, or third floor study lounge could be considered for computer terminal placement. No matter where the terminals were placed, Swanson said, students will be displaced. "No places (in the union) are standing open," he said.

Patrick Meister, union board vice president, opposed Stowers' amendment and said the lounge should be converted into a computer terminal area regardless of what hours the terminals would be used. Meister said since there is a lounge on second floor, people would not really be displaced by eliminating the first floor lounge.

It is now up to Swanson to make sure the renovation proposal is "a viable plan." He said he will consult an architect to determine the most inexpensive method of creating a hallway from the south entrance entryway into the lounge.

Finance Chairman John Leif reported the union's budget request was approved by the Committee on Fees Allocation. This was attributed to the clarity with which the managing staff presented the request, Leif said.

Programs and Activities Committee Chairman Todd Knobel requested all student organizations to return adviser surveys to the Campus Activities and Programs office as soon as possible.

New board members will officially preside at their first meeting, Feb. 28. Board President Sid Pinney will retain his position until new chairmen and executive members are elected following a retreat this weekend.

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