

# UNL's drop/add compared to plane trip

By Jay Mulligan and Mark Tolfa

Drop/add is one of the most feared experiences at UNL. The process has been described by some as having all the finesse and timing of the Bay of Pigs Invasion. Horror stories abound of endless lines, mass confusion, frustration and near-fatal anxiety attacks. All to drop or add a few classes. Whatever people call it, the only obvious alternative to drop/add is to mindlessly take whatever courses the registration computer doles out.

Another exists, fortunately. People can avoid the most heinous experiences of drop/add by knowing what to expect and how to use the system and by thinking of it as a trip out of the country.

First a little background: Drop/add happens in two phases. The first, and easiest, happens before the new semester begins. It is also free.

Free drop/add takes place at Window 5 of the Administration Building, west of the Nebraska Union. Remember those buildings — they are the airport terminals that you travel through.

The second, and most confusing, phase of drop/add takes place in the Nebraska Union Ballroom after each new semester begins. It costs \$5.

Some people have been seen there weeping uncontrollably, as if left in the baggage check-in stands by the people who go through the process without even breaking into a sweat. The cool ones are the ones that are ready for it.

To get ready, people should know their college's requirements. Study the college's course bulletin. Know what courses are required, their prerequisites and alternatives. Make a list of these courses with the information in the schedule of classes. It's all a little bit like getting a super-saver ticket.

While students contemplate their schedule changes, they go to the main concourse of the Administration Building to get a time appointment card.

The card is the only ticket that will get anyone in to drop/add in the ballroom. (Don't worry, it's not a one-way ticket.) Those without a time card will be verbally abused and, worst of all, sent back to administration to get one. Missing this connection can throw the whole trip off if someone who got there sooner with a ticket gets the course first.

Prepared travelers have their drop/add forms, their passports through customs, filled out with first priority changes as they arrive at the aircraft's ballroom door. The form can be changed as needed through the flight. Prepared students also have their checks made out or their \$5 ready. Doing these two things alone will save drop/adders up to 15 minutes in customs.

The attendant at the door takes time appointment cards and sends people to the check-in-desk. The person there will briefly look over the drop/add forms and send people to the cashier. The cashier validates the drop/add forms for the small fee of \$5.

The next layover is when travelers pick up their computer bubble sheets, where yet another friendly attendant will hand out instructions for filling in all the little dots.

Most of the UNL colleges will have advisors on duty (sort of like in Central America) in the ballroom concourse to answer any last-minute questions. If the advisors can't help, consult the walls as you would flight schedules. The walls will be papered with computer printouts that list open classes by department.

Travelers who can't find the classes they need on the printouts shouldn't despair, for their flight may not have taken off yet. They only have to check in with one of the friendly CRT operators to see if there are any last-minute openings. If not, it's back to the alternative course.

Next, have all forms checked by one of the computer operators. If everything is all right, the computer forms go in the correct slot to be mysteriously digested as the drop/adders waltz into the baggage checkout room.

While they wait for their new schedules, students relax, revel in how well they handled their travels and laugh at the people still in the cashier's line fumbling with their checkbooks.

In a short time, if flights are on time, yet another friendly attendant will begin calling off names of the latest batch of processed computer forms. This means the revised class schedules showing all changes made are ready.

Students who came through perfectly next go to the final customs desk for an entry authorization slip, which

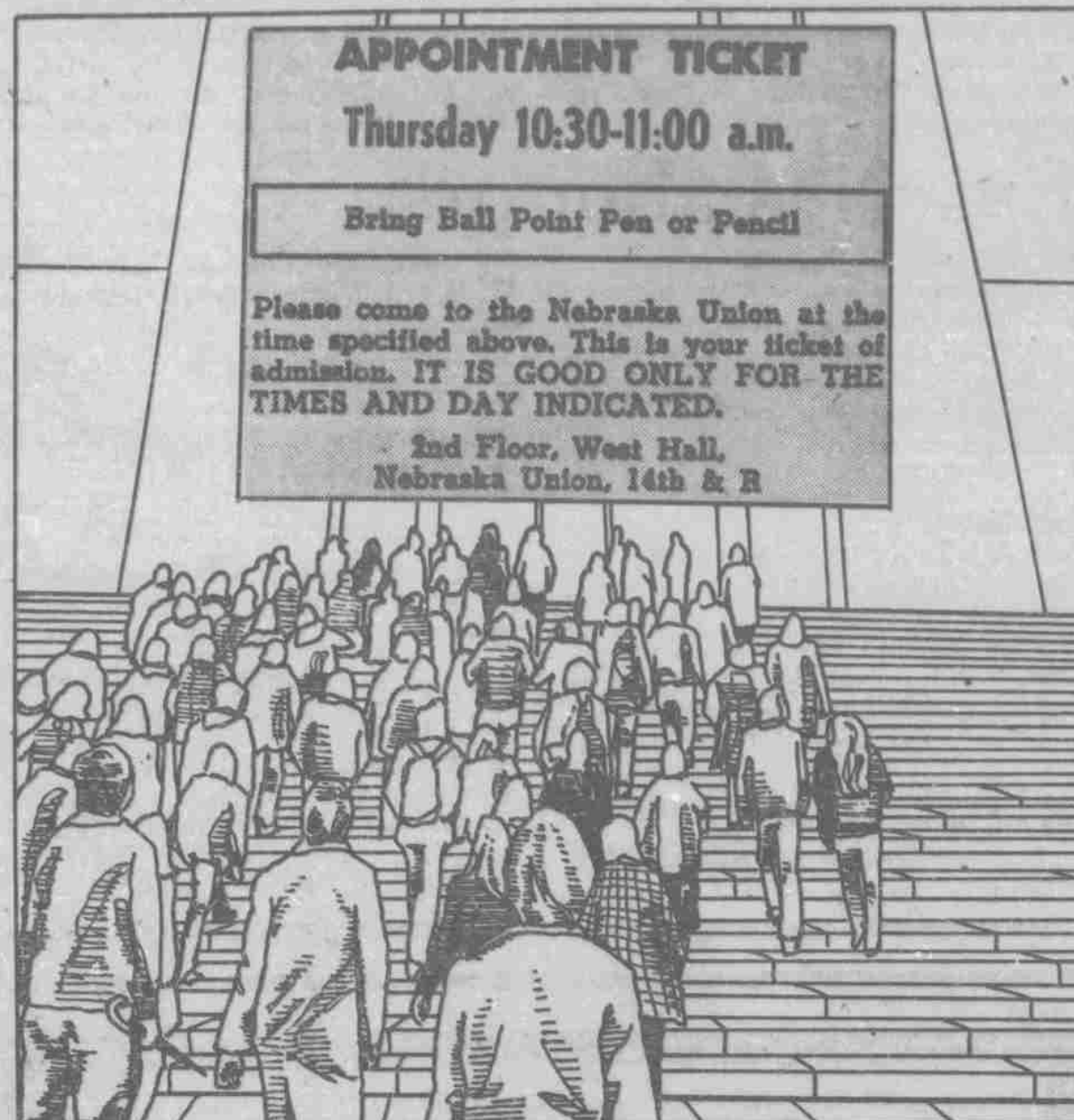
essentially is a ticket to class.

Next, students go to the checkout station and have the nice person there check everything over. Get copies! Just in case.

Now, after all that, you've arrived.

Free drop/add dates include: June 12 to 15, 18 to 22, 25 to 29; and July 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 to 11. It will take place at Window 5 in the Administration Building from 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and by phone from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The free drop/add phone numbers are 472-2094, 472-2093, and 472-2086.

Fall drop/add will begin Aug. 28.



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