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Counseling on campus

### Programs help minorities adjust

By Jana Pedersen Staff Reporter

Minority students who need help adjusting to campus life don't have to go far to find it.

The Multi-Cultural Affairs office provides the Minority Assistance Program and Student Opportunities Services, which are minority student

To be eligible for the state-funded Minority Assistance Program, students must be undergraduates and U.S. citizens.

The main emphasis of the program is to provide counseling services for personal problems to career choice problems, according to Vaughn Robertson, assistant director for

multi-cultural affairs He said most of the students who need his help have financial aid problems or tutoring requests. But, Robertson said, he also deals with students who have problems with roommates or homesickness. He described his counseling work as "trouble-shooting."

"I try to help the students make the adjustment from high school to college," he said.
Student Opportunities Services is a federally-funded program for 350

UNL students who have a belowaverage GPA or ACT score. Preference is also given to low-income, physically handicapped or first-generation students, and applicants are interviewed before they are accepted to the program.

The focus of this program is to help students to succeed academically and "to teach them how to help them-selves," according to Jimmi Smith, director of multi-cultural affairs.

Services offered through the program also include academic, personal and career counseling. Many of the minority students who seek counseling feel tike they are alone in their problems and, according to Smith, it is the job of the program to help them realize that they are not unusual.

One of the ways Smith helps mi-norities combat loneliness is to convince them to become involved in

campus activities.
"We try to advocate for more involvement for the racial minority student and for the lower income white student within the entire community," he said.

Robertson agreed that students need to become involved in other

"I try to remind them that they

should have balance," he said. "Out of the classroom activities are just as important."

Additionally, the student program provides special counseling for first-generation students. Because the parents of these students have never received a four-year degree, they may not be able to understand the problems their sons and daughters face.

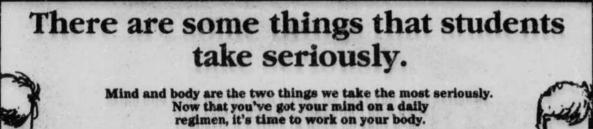
"If there's a communications barrier, it's our job to expose the first generation student to different support bases," Smith said.

Special sections of University Foundations, Math 100 and English

150 are also offered through the program. In developing the program, Smith said 100-level math and English composition courses were identified as areas which were causing minority and low-income students stress. These special sections were

created to help alleviate the problem.
"All of the students in our sections are capable. We just bring it out of them," he said.

"The basic goal is to keep them in school," Smith said. "The key to growth is wanting to change and then taking the steps necessary to help you grow in a constructive way . . . if we get people trying, something's going



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