

Financial aid process to be quicker

By William Lauer
Staff Reporter

Students who apply for financial aid for the 1989-90 school year will not suffer the same anguish from delayed award notification they did this year, according to John Beacon, interim director of the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid.

"If they (students) do what they need to do, they should have their award notices around the time the spring semester (this year) ends," Beacon said.

Students need to complete their financial aid applications by March 1 to be considered "priority" students, Beacon said.

Priority students are considered for all forms of financial aid including Pell grants, scholarships and student loans.

Processing of some students' aid applications for the 1988-89 school year was not completed until November.

Delays were caused by a new computer system with flawed programming that required a lot of testing to correct, Beacon said. That problem, coupled with major changes in federal laws regulating financial aid, had the office bogged down for months, he said.

There will be few regulation changes this year, he said, and with the new system fully operating, the time to process aid applications will

be reduced greatly.

"I'm really optimistic about next (1989-90) year," he said. "Last year was a learning process for the office. We understand the system now."

"My biggest concern is getting the award letters out much earlier than last year. We've got what we need to do it."

But not all the delays of award notification are the fault of the office, Beacon said. If students do not complete their applications properly, give incorrect information or do not answer all the questions, the application could be processed incorrectly, he said.

A question that is left unanswered by a student can cause months of delay, Beacon said.

"We find that a number of the problems we see and deal with... are simply because students don't know how to fill out the forms correctly or (they) make mistakes," he said. "We think we can help them to avoid those problems."

Students who have questions about filling out financial aid applications can get answers at the Nebraska Union. Graduate assistants will be located at the north entrance of the union from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays, Jan. 16 through Feb. 22.

"We want to make this process as clean and as simple as possible," he said. Students sometimes make the

form more complicated than it actually is, Beacon said.

Beacon said students can complete their applications with the help of the assistants or can ask questions and finish them on their own. A video explaining the application, section by section, also will be shown.

"I think it (the assistance) is going to help tremendously to avoid some of the most common kinds of problems that ultimately cause delays for students," he said.

The financial aid office is a service, he said. The students are the customers.

"We want to help them," he said.



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NOTICE TO STUDENTS

All students are eligible to apply for a refund of their "A" portion of student fees during a period beginning January 16, 1989 and ending February 17, 1989. Students claiming a refund will lose benefits provided by Fund "A" users during the Spring semester 1989.

Application forms are available at the Student Activities Financial Service Office, City Union; ASUN Office, 115 Nebraska Union; or the East CAP Office, Nebraska East Union and should be returned by the applicant in person to 222 Nebraska Union or 300 Nebraska East Union. Students must bring their student I.D. cards at the time of application. Students who are unable to personally return their application to the Student Activities Financial Services Office should contact Kim Underdahl, Room 222 (phone 472-5667) before February 10, 1989 to make arrangements.

Students who have completed a refund application and returned it on or before February 17, 1989 will be mailed a check for the amount of the refund claimed. Refund checks will be mailed between the dates of February 20 and March 3, 1989.

Fund "A" refund amounts are as follows:	
A.S.U.N.	\$3.15
Daily Nebraskan	.94
University Program Council	\$3.72
Total Refund	\$7.81

Students claiming a refund will lose certain benefits provided by the above listed Fund "A" users. For details on which benefits may be lost, please refer to the cover sheet on the refund application.

Drop/add draws high turnout

By Larry Peirce
Senior Reporter

About 7,700 University of Nebraska-Lincoln students used free drop/add in December -- one of the highest turnouts the Office of Registration and Records has ever had, Director Ted Pfeifer said.

Many classes were filled during early registration, Pfeifer said, leaving some students scrambling through free drop/add for classes.

Pfeifer said some classes were filled when students were given alternate classes which they put on their registration forms but didn't want. Since students will drop some of these, openings may appear during drop/add, he said. Students may drop classes Monday or Tuesday, but the openings might not appear until Thursday, he said.

Some of the classes most in demand during December drop/add were business administration, art, economics and English. Classes involving writing were among those filled in early registration. Several business and agriculture communication classes were filled, with many students unable to get in. For example, 14 sections of Agriculture Communication 200 were filled, excluding 36 students.

Economics 210 and 211 were also in high demand. Four sections of Economics 210 were full, with 98 students left out. Economics 211 had eight full sections, which denied entry for 59 students.

Pfeifer said there were a few seats left in freshman English classes such as English 102, 118 and 150. One surprise in the English department was the increase in students taking 200 and 300 level courses, Pfeifer said. The only section of English 303, a short story class, was filled with 35 students trying to get in. English 332,

a class about Mark Twain literature, filled one section with 33 left out.

Students who have trouble getting into a class should first consult the instructor or the dean of the department in charge of the class, Pfeifer said.

Pfeifer said he didn't expect class availability to be a problem for new freshman and transfer students, since most of those students enter UNL in the fall.

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