

SUMMER Daily NEBRASKAN

THURSDAY
JULY 23, 1992
VOL. 91
NO. 161
UNIVERSITY OF
NEBRASKA-
LINCOLN

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Students taking longer to receive four-year degree

By Sam S. Kepfield
Staff Reporter

Traditionally, college means the first taste of freedom for most students as well as encountering new ideas, meeting classmates from other states, or countries, big-time athletics and a new vista of social activities. It also means doing it all in four years.

However, this pattern is fast disappearing according to a study released by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), which was reported in the July 15 issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

In a study of full-time freshmen entering 297 institutions in the fall of 1984, the NCAA surveyed graduation percentages as of the fall of 1990. Overall, only 53 percent of the half-million freshmen had received their bachelor's degrees.

Numbers from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln mirrored the study. Total graduation rates for women were 51 percent and for men 46 percent. Rates were higher for Asians and

whites, while being lower for blacks, Hispanics and American Indians. More women than men graduated in all racial categories at UNL.

According to studies done by the office of James Griesen, vice chancellor for Student Affairs at UNL, only 17 percent of traditional students entering in the fall semesters graduated within four years. After five years, 43 percent received their degree, and within 10 years, 60 percent graduated.

Griesen said Nebraska's numbers are low, considering the school's open admissions policy. Others, such as Ivy League institutions with higher standards, have higher graduation rates.

Raising graduation rates is one reason the NU Board of Regents will be debating proposed changes in Nebraska's open admissions policy this fall.

"The more selective you are in admitting people," Griesen said, "the more students you will have graduating."

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Teachers' standards rise

By DeDra Janssen
Staff Reporter

A higher level of computer literacy is just one of the new requirements students must meet to gain admissions into the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Teachers College.

Margaret Sievers, director of the Teachers College Student Services Center, said because computers are now so common in the classroom, teachers need to learn to use them.

"They (computers) are an excellent teaching tool," Sievers said. "All schools have PC's. Teachers need to know how to use them so they can teach kids how to use them."

"The new requirements are important because more and more goes into teaching. It's more important for teachers to know a foreign language. Many students will speak a native language other than English," Sievers said.

"Teachers need to know more these days." Current admission requirements include four years of English in high school, two years of math, social sciences and natural sciences and one year of fine or performing arts.

According to Sievers, the new requirements include four years of English and math in high school, three years of social sciences and natural sciences, and beginning in 1994, two years of a foreign language in high school or two semesters of a foreign language at the college level.

In addition, the Teachers College requires students to be in the upper half of their high school class or to have scored a 20 on the ACT. The college also will not accept students who have high school deficiencies in these requirements, Sievers said.

"We've been criticized for making the college exclusive, but eventually enrollment will go up. Better quality students will be coming in and better quality teachers will be coming out," Sievers said.

"We'll probably see a reduced number of dropouts," Sievers said. "Retention rates will be higher. We'll attract and hold better students."

She said that out of almost 2,200 students in the Teachers College, 20 are dismissed a year.

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Staci McKee/DN

Ted Sehnert (left) and Tom Price, both of Lincoln, celebrate together as they cross the finish line after the 77-mile road race at Branched Oak Lake Saturday. Price finished second and Sehnert placed third, both with a time of 3:29. See related story on page 6.

Regents to discuss changes in overall budget process

By Andrea Kaser
Staff Reporter

Lack of time and uniform budget criteria at the last University of Nebraska Board of Regents meeting on July 12 has led regents to call for a budget subcommittee meeting to discuss possible changes in the budget process.

Budget guidelines for the 1993-95 biennial were approved at the last regents meeting in Scottsbluff, but only because regents felt they were "under the gun," said Regent Rosemary

Skrupa of Omaha.

Skrupa said regents felt required to have the guidelines submitted to the Nebraska Legislature by August when they then must be approved and turned over to the governor by Sept. 15.

The first budget proposal presented by University President Martin Massengale was turned down by the regents, and so was his second alternative request. Five minutes later though, the alternative plan was approved.

Some regents had misgivings about approving the plan, not because they objected to the

guidelines, but because they were uneasy about the process, they said.

Individual campuses did not have standardized lists of expenses to include in their guidelines, so there were inconsistencies in the total budget, Skrupa said.

For example, Lincoln, Omaha and Kearney campuses listed what came to be a total of \$3.04 million for new faculty, where the medical center did not include such a figure.

Lack of standardization across all campuses, Skrupa said, was like comparing apples to oranges when the board should be comparing

apples to apples.

The budget subcommittee will meet July 31, and will discuss in detail the approved guidelines and consider changes in the overall budget process.

But even so, Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo had mixed feelings, and said she would rather have had the meeting before the 1993-95 guidelines were approved.

Along with uniform criteria for each campus, O'Brien said she would like to receive budget proposals one year instead of one month in advance.