

Fraternities adjust to summer rush, '98 style

BY TIM KARSTENS
Staff Reporter

At first glance, little seems to have changed for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's summer fraternity rush.

The only thing to distinguish the 1998 rush from those in years past is a new rule that requires a parent's signature on bid cards — the greek system's version of a letter of intent.

According to Ryan Buschkamp, the overall recruitment chairman who monitors UNL's summer rush, the 1998 rush is different but the changes are not procedural. What makes this rush unique are evolving philosophies, the addition of two new fraternities and an unusually high number of applicants.

"There have been more rush applications this year than in previous years," said Buschkamp, a senior agribusiness major. "There has been a big publicity push."

Rush begins with a student's application for admittance to UNL. All applicants receive a greek system brochure and rush application, Buschkamp said. After a student registers and pays a \$20 registration fee, the completed rush applications are distributed to every fraternity. Rush chairmen review the applications and choose applicants they want to recruit using criteria such as grade point averages and high school activities.

During the summer, rush chairmen may contact recruits at home or during the rush functions to which rushees have been invited. During this time rushees may be extended invitations to sign bid cards.

Before any of this can be done, fraternities must first submit plans for summer functions to the Interfraternity Council during the spring semester preceding rush, Buschkamp said. One of the major tenets of IFC rush policy is the strict adherence to a ban on alcohol at summer functions.

Caleb Jensen, a rush chairman for Sigma Alpha Epsilon, said the ban on alcohol during summer rush events shows a change in the priorities of fraternities. And in light of the death of a fraternity pledge at Louisiana State University in 1997, the attitude change is important to prospective members and their parents.

Many men primarily join fraternities for camaraderie and academics, not just social events, Jensen said. And, he added, recruiting members is easier when parents see that fraternities are concerned for the student's well-being.

"There are a lot of positive things going on," Jensen said. "Many houses are going dry. Parents like it."

Another change in rush is the emergence of two new fraternities at UNL. With the colonization of Pi

Kappa Alpha and Sigma Lambda Beta, a traditionally non-exclusive Latino fraternity, the UNL greek system has taken a step forward.

"I think it is a positive addition," Buschkamp said. "Anytime you can add new members, it is positive."

Although the new fraternities have been incorporated and the number of rush applicants is higher this year, Jensen said more could be done to find those who might not be aware of what fraternities can offer.

"(Fraternity life) needs to be more publicized," Jensen said. "There needs to be more applications sent out. We need to find those who fall through the cracks."



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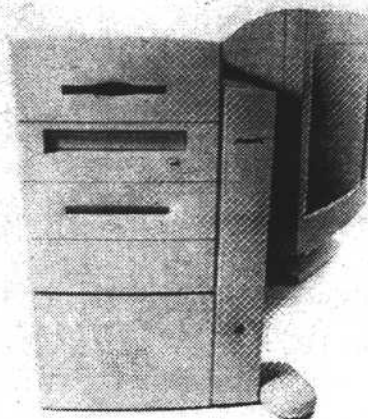
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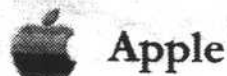
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