UNP



UNL looks at program cost Administrators examine distance education tuition BY LINDSAY YOUNG Senior staff writer The university wants to reduce the cost of education for students who take classes outside the physical university

boundaries. University of Nebraska-Lincoln administrators are comparing the tuition rate for distance education and on-campus courses

They hope to make the two rates more comparable and fair, making distance education more accessible to all Nebraskans, university officials said.

UNL's distance education program teaches students all over the world through the Internet and mail or via satellite and video-conferencing.

The program also teaches students at learning centers throughout the state either with a traveling professor or through various types of computer technology, such as teleconferencing.

Distance education this year costs about 50 percent more than on-campus tuition rates. For engineering and business courses, it costs twice as much as on-campus tuition.

The NU Board of Regents approves the rate of tuition for distance education every year as part of the base cost for oncampus tuition, Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said.

But at the regents' July meeting,

some regents, including Don Blank of McCook, said the cost of distance education may be too high.

Blank said much of distance education hasn't been state-subsidized in the past because it has been considered a program that would pay for itself.

Students who take courses on campus pay only about one-third of the actual cost of the course, Vice Chancellor for Extended Education Irv Omtvedt said. State and external funding provide the rest

Students who take the courses off campus pay much more, Omtvedt said.

But at a time when distance education is becoming more commonplace, the university should reconsider how it pays for those services, Blank said.

"I represent a part of the state that many times access (to the university) is a problem," he said. "They don't always have the ability to go to a campus."

A task force is working at making distance education more a part of NU's core mission, which means making it more affordable, Omtvedt said.

We're in a society where education and continuous learning is a higher priority than it was in the past," Omtvedt said.

From June to July. Omtvedt said, a committee worked on a report that compared the cost of on-campus tuition to report at the regents' July meeting.

That report concluded that distance education cost 130 percent to 192 percent above the cost of the same course on campus.

Regent Drew Miller of Papillion criticized the report, saving it included fees that only on-campus students benefit from, such as University Police.

Omtvedt said the report attempted to determine the best estimates of actual costs for five graduate-level courses offered both on campus and through distance education.

The task force chose graduate-level courses because most courses taken off campus are at that level.

Since the July meeting, the task force has been working on a new plan to present to the planning committee Oct. 23 to pay for distance education to make it comparable to on-campus tuition, Omtvedt said.

To help make it part of the mission of the university, in the past two years UNL has made more money available to distance education by reallocating university funds.

As a result, the program has been able to increase the number of course offerings each year.

Reallocated funds also contributed to enhancing facilities, including a new multimedia laboratory in Scottsbluff, a video conference classroom in North distance education. It presented the Platte and equipment for a new learning center in Norfolk.

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UNL Leadership Circle joins honorary society

By JOSH NICHOLS Staff writer

The UNL Leadership Circle is about to move into a bigger sphere.

The group will change its title to Omicron Delta Kappa when it becomes part of the national honorary society, a move tentatively planned for sometime in November.

Omicron Delta Kappa was started in 1914 at Washington and Lee University in Virginia and recognizes achievement in superior scholarship, leadership and exemplary character.

The society has 267 chapters nationwide, including Nebraska chapters at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Hastings College and Creighton University.

Once accepted into the society, the Leadership Circle, formed last October to gather students with vast experience in leadership, hopes to play an integral role in decisions made by the university.

Members also want to develop programs for leadership development and perform an increased amount of ties service projects. Alli Walters, a senior management major, said once the group receives its charter into the national organization, it plans to recruit members outside the university who have positive leadership roles in the community.

What makes ODK stand out is it tries to be as diverse as possible." KAY KWANG Leadership Circle president

College

Kay Kwang, senior finance major and Leadership Circle president, said the purpose of the visit "was to give (Hoover) a better feel of the support ODK would have on our campus.'

Larry Routh, adviser for UNL Leadership Circle, said talking with Hoover gave Leadership Circle members a clear idea of what the group is all about.

"We were stimulated by what other chapters have done in their universities," he said. "Many are active in decisions made by faculty in their universi-

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Walters said such recruitment is what will make the group different from other organizations on campus.

'We take into our group not only members on campus but faculty and adult community members also," he said.

The Leadership Circle has 15 members. The Students Affairs office selected them based on their involvement and leadership roles in other organizations on campus.

was visited by Richard Hoover, Omicron Delta Kappa national president and president of Hastings ers."

The UNL Leadership Circle fits the Omicron Delta Kappa criteria well, Kwang said. The group tries to include members from a wide variety of departments and interests.

"What makes ODK stand out is it tries to be as diverse as possible," Kwang said.

Members of the Circle include leaders in fine arts, athletics, agriculture, the greek system and many oth-

Because the group is so diverse and represents many aspects of university organizations, Routh said he thought it would represent students well in helping with decisions made by

the university. "I hope ODK truly brings together Sunday and Monday the group leaders from all parts of the university and brings them into contact with other university and community lead-

