

Renovated lab brings students new technology

Students make use of 28 machines

BY KIM SWEET
Staff writer

While the grand opening of the union computer lab was Monday, it didn't take a formal ribbon-cutting for students to discover the addition of more than 20 new computers to one of University of Nebraska-Lincoln's most popular meeting places.

The completion of the lab in February prompted students to line up to use the 28 new PCs and Power Macs to check their e-mail and search the Web not long after the doors opened, said Linda Roos, manager of user education and technology support.

The popularity of the lab has not diminished in the time it has been open, said Janice Cheng, one of the lab's computer consultants.

Students still have to wait in line to use the computers, especially during the lunch and afternoon hours.

While Cheng said she observed students using e-mail and the Internet the most, some students use the computers' word processing capabilities to

do their homework in the lab.

Thea Tracy, a freshman whose major is undecided, checks her e-mail at the six stand-up computers located right outside the computer lab in between her classes.

Tracy said she was happy with the convenience and number of computers, which makes access to e-mail easy.

"I think it's great," Tracy said. "It's not too busy and I can do it right on campus."

Along with e-mail and Internet access, the computers contain a variety of software students can use, Roos said. Pagemaker and Freehand are just some of the programs students can use in the lab.

Because the copy center is located right next door to the lab, Cheng said, printing out papers or projects was convenient.

Four of the computers are connected to the copy center. Students can pay to receive color copies or black and white copies.

Along with a variety of programs, the lab also complies with the



CHRIS KEETLE, a senior business major, writes e-mail in the new computer lab in the Nebraska Union. Keetle said he mostly uses the new computer room for e-mail.

RYAN SODERLIN/DN

Americans with Disabilities Act.

The lab contains a station with zoom text – a piece of software that people who are visually impaired can use to better see the words.

The table the computer sits on also has a crank so students in wheelchairs can use the lab, Roos said.

While 24-hour access to the lab

was planned, Nebraska Unions Director Daryl Swanson said because of delays, the identification card swiping system that will allow students that access will not be running until fall.

Swanson said he had hoped to have the access available this semester before dead week and finals, but

delays foiled his timeline.

But even with the anticipated west entry incomplete, Tracy said, the lab was a good addition that benefited students.

"I think it is really convenient," Tracy said.

"It would be even more convenient for me if I didn't live on campus."

Student Involvement office expands to meet needs

BY KIM SWEET
Staff writer

Students looking to use the services of the union's Student Involvement office a few years ago would have found a similar staff and commitment the remodeled office contains today.

But instead of walking into a spacious, open air room where the employees of the office mill around, students experienced a surprise – hitting the desk with the front door.

The problems of closet-sized offices, not much room for students to congregate and a generally uninviting atmosphere were solved this January when the office opened the door to its renovated office on the union's second floor.

After expansion, the amount of resources and services available to students and student organizations increased along with the size of the office.

"We had really nothing before," said Marilyn Bugenhagen, director of Student Involvement. "We had information distribution racks."

With the information racks moved to the wall outside the office, the room now contains mailboxes for student organizations, meeting tables, a creation area for organizations to design event banners and staff to assist them in event planning.

The resources offered will continue to expand as the office adds computers for student organizations to design their own Web pages and as a calendar system is added to let all students know what is happening.

Bugenhagen said that because students are just discovering the new space, traffic flow is light.



LORI SIMPSON/DN

STUDENTS AND STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS can use the new Student Involvement office, located on the second floor of the Union, to meet and plan events.

But once fall rolls around and the office begins its full-fledged advertising campaign, Bugenhagen said, she expected the office to be an active place.

"In the last month and a half, people have been discovering their mailboxes," she said. "We're expecting to see the full increase in the fall."

While work to improve the exterior of the

office began months ago with the union renovation, the improvement in assisting students and student organizations began six years ago, Bugenhagen said.

Beginning with changing the name of the office from Campus Activities and Programs to Student Involvement, the office has worked to fulfill the vision it created when the name changed.

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MARILYN BUGENHAGEN
director of Student Involvement

Reshell Ray, assistant director of Student Involvement, said the vision became establishing programs, encouraging students and ultimately preparing them for life after the university.

"When we sat down and began to envision what our office could be, we began to think bigger," Ray said. "The new space fosters and establishes where we are going."

Besides assisting student organizations, Ray said, the office would hold consultations with students looking to get involved in the university by helping them get connected with organizations that match their interests.

Student organization leaders and members who are strangers to the office can also come in for the first time to find out the broad variety of services available, Ray said.

"By becoming familiar with our offices, people can see the breadth of services we offer."