

# NCAA proposes freshman ineligibility

BY BRANDON SCHULTE  
Staff writer

In an effort to boost falling graduation rates, an NCAA regulated commission, the Working Group to Study Basketball Issues, has proposed to reinstitute freshman ineligibility in men's college basketball.

Based on statistics released by the NCAA that reported graduation rates had fallen to 41 percent following the 1997-98, the 27-member organization is considering the proposal.

Made up of presidents, athletic directors and faculty members, the

committee suggested that making freshman ineligible will bring rates up to satisfactory levels and stop the annual flood of underclassmen to the NBA.

Nebraska Basketball Coach Danny Nee said he thinks it's too early speculate on the proposal, yet believes that it won't be enacted.

"I don't see how men's basketball players can be singled out," Nee said. "It's ridiculous to think that freshman will spend more time in the library if they are ineligible. It's kind of floating out there, but their intentions are good."

Nee also offered that in discus-

sions with other Big 12 coaches and with Jim Haney, director of the National Association of Basketball Coaches, that both groups overwhelmingly are against the measure. All of the Big 12 Conference coaches against it and 95 percent of the NABC opposed.

Factors that are against the action include possible lawsuits, something which the NCAA isn't keen on after the restricted earnings decision that cost them millions.

Scholarships may need to increase and with Title IX a large factor many universities would have trouble making ends meet financially

thus hindering competition and increasing the gap between large and small schools.

Many schools routinely count on newcomers to step up immediately and Nebraska is no different.

"We have six new players coming in next year and if we couldn't get contributions from them it would be tough to even field a team," Nee said.

Nee said Nebraska is well above the national graduation rate with approximately 70 percent of its players graduation. This rate does not include transfers.

"Our university has done a tremendous job academically for ath-

letes," Nee said. "The is a real sensitivity here and kid with the right attitude can be successful."

Other counter proposals offer making freshman ineligible for only the first semester and tying scholarships to graduation rates.

NBA Commissioner David Stern is also trying to establish and age requirement of 20 before an individual can play in the NBA.

As Nee says there is no quick fix. "We all need to work at it because its a complex problem but to single out mens' college basketball is the wrong way to go about it," Nee said.

## Governor's office holds conference to fight violence

■ The conference will allow people across the state to discuss the repercussions of the epidemic of violence in schools.

BY NICOLE HALL  
Staff writer

Seven years ago on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, 37 students could have been killed all too easily.

A UNL student sat in his car and slid a magazine clip into his semi-automatic assault weapon and walked into a first-floor room in Ferguson Hall.

The 37 students sat and watched as he aimed his weapon at them and pulled the trigger. Thankfully the gun was jammed and the students were left scared, but alive.

In an effort to stop events like this from happening in the future the Governors office, along with the Department of Education, is holding a statewide conference on violence tomorrow at the Hardin Center for Continuing Education, 33<sup>rd</sup> and Holdrege streets.

More than 300 Nebraskans are registered for the conference, which will emphasize all aspects of school violence, particularly what legal action can be taken to stop it.

"I want to stress how important it is to have a conversation about these legal issues," said Mary Ann Losh, one of the conference coordinators. "Teachers have to know their legal options. Teachers and students deserve to have school safety."

The conference attendees will be divided into panels to discuss their experiences and knowledge of school

violence and the practices that have proven effective.

"It will be an opportunity for the best practices to be shared," said Chris Peterson, Press Secretary for the Governor's office.

"We tried to arrange the panels with diversity in terms of East, West, urban and rural," he said. "Following the shooting incident at Columbine we wanted to bring together teachers, students, policy makers, legislators and elected officials."

At the end of the day, the panels will come together to talk to the rest of the guests about the developments of that day.

Many Nebraska communities and citizens have responded to the national violence by enacting preventative measures in their communities.

Last year former mayor Mike Johannes started a program in which police officers were put in each Lincoln high school. In Fremont a father recently purchased and installed a security system for his children's grade school. Fremont Junior High School is installing a security camera with grant money. The Millard Superintendent is pushing to have surveillance cameras in all of the Millard schools.

Despite the surge of security measures taken in Nebraska schools, the conference will stress early detection of troubled students and creating a better awareness for students who witness suspicious activity. Possible measures include phone numbers for students to call if they have information or concerns about their school and increased law enforcement at the schools.

For Peterson, it is better to be safe than sorry.

"Nebraska school's are safe, but we need to be vigilant, prepared, and watch for warning signs."



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