

# Mail pick-up and delivery slowed

■ **Reallocated funds have led to big headaches for UNL's on-campus delivery system.**

**By KIMBERLY SWEET**  
Senior staff writer

A measure taken to increase administrative efficiency and decrease costs delivered a surprise to many university faculty and staff members last week.

On Wednesday, mail delivery and pick-up services decreased from two times a day to one.

Along with the decrease in delivery times, the number of the department's employees was also cut.

The changes were part of a plan to deal with a budget shortfall that resulted in a more than \$4 million reallocation for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for the 1999-2000 fiscal year.

Before the changes, mail and distribution services employees delivered and picked up mail once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

After last Wednesday, employees began picking up and delivering mail only in the morning, said Ken Holm, Interim Director of Mail Distribution Services. Faculty and staff received notice of the change.

Larry Routh, Interim Director for Admissions, said the once a day pickup will delay the time it takes to get information to prospective UNL students.

"Is that critical?" Routh said. "Not all the time, but some of the time."

The office is beginning to explore the options it has to get the information out, Routh said. That may include sending staff members to the post office to send the information out themselves.

In Career Services, where Routh serves as the director, future teachers rely on quick delivery to get their credentials out to potential employers. Employers also contact the office to get resumes out.

"Another day delay can make a difference," Routh said.

Craig Munier, director of Scholarships and Financial Aid said that delivering mail only once a day means it is no longer possible to take care of business in one day.

That means delays in responding to students' needs.

"In essence, it means we've had two days added to administrative turnaround," Munier said. "It's no longer possible to turn around business in a day."

Staff members from Scholarships and Financial Aid have resorted to taking the mail down to mail and distribution services, Munier said. While it may help in getting the letters delivered, it makes for lost staff time in the office.

Forcing off-campus departments to pick up their own mail is another change offices are dealing with, Holm said.

In the Athletic Department, mail is now delivered to a central location, said Craig Busboom, business services

## UNL is adjusting to budget cuts

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Wasser predicted that with fewer personnel and a new accounting system, paid for in part with reallocation funds, people will begin to feel the effects soon.

"I think it's going to be a ripple effect," Wasser said. "Some of the cuts haven't hit home yet - we'll know more by Christmas."

Academic Senate President Gail Latta said she is still trying to gather feedback from faculty members on how reallocation affected them.

"Clearly there are a lot of impending changes that we are facing as a campus as a whole," Latta said. "Because of increased demands on faculty time and energies, the feedback that I get is that it is a difficult time for people."

Latta said some faculty members have accepted increased teaching

loads to make up for vacancies left during the reallocation.

While some faculty are feeling the pangs of reallocation, others are excited about new initiatives on campus, Latta said. Those include the Freshman Experience Task Force - which is looking at ways to better retain freshmen - as well as research projects proposed by Vice Chancellor for Research Marsha Torr.

"There are also faculty who are enthused with the steps we are taking, despite the fact it is challenging," Latta said.

The faculty senate will continue to look for feedback and ways to demonstrate what impacts the cuts are having throughout the year, Latta said.

While dealing with the realities of reallocation is hard, it is something that has happened in the past and will continue in the future, Moeser said.

UNL also faced a budget reallocation during the 1997-1999 biennium. A recent decision by the regents to start identifying academic priorities across campus will result in continuing reallocations to different areas of strengths on each NU campus, Moeser said.

"I think (academic prioritizing) will in fact set in more reallocations," Moeser said.

Latta said because of this year's reallocation, faculty members are already looking ahead to determine what they can do to make another reallocation less painful.

"What I have heard people saying is that if we have to undergo another cut of the magnitude we took last year, we will have to do it differently," Latta said.

"I think the faculty agree that we have to start planning now, not in the spring."

manager for the Athletic Department. Office personnel must pick it up each day.

It costs staff time to pick it up each day, but Busboom said he is unsure about whether it will affect office efficiency.

"It is hard to tell if it will have any effect right now," Busboom said. "We would prefer twice a day, but we can get by with one."

Holm said Mail and Distribution Services is trying to adjust to delivering the same volume of mail it delivered twice a day before the change.

In order to deal with increased volumes, mail and distribution services will begin to crack down on non-university-related mail traveling through the system.

The department will give employees time to get their addresses changed,

Holm said, and it will stop delivering items not related to university business, such as magazines and catalogs.

Holm said he has received complaints about the decrease in delivery times, but, he said, he is hoping the situation will improve.

"If people could be a little patient, we're going to try to provide as best service as possible."

## Students, staff rally for more parking

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es to pave the way for a number of new buildings.

Four new parking garages also would be built to help compensate for the lost stalls. The stalls would be built on university perimeters.

"We'll take the perimeter parking," Shambaugh-Miller shouted with his megaphone. "Just give us a better shuttle system in the meantime."

By beefing up the transit system, Shambaugh-Miller said, students would have an alternative to trying to find a parking space after construction begins.

According to UNL's master plan, the shuttle system will be improved.

As it stands now, students arrive late to classes because they're unable to find parking, he said.

If plans continue to be delayed, one option would be to encourage the thousands of students to park in administrative lots, he said.

"They can't tow all of us."

Sherryl Chamberlain, Parking and Transit Services director, said she was confident her staff could handle such a situation.

"We probably would follow our normal procedures and tow the cars we had to," Chamberlain said.

Todd Tripple, a junior secondary education major who attended the rally, said he was irritated by the parking situation at the university.

"Parking sucks," said Tripple, who was upset after learning parking services had lost his permit application despite his mailing it in early.

Gregory Theriot, a graduate student who was also on hand for the rally, said he was perturbed by UNL's efforts to establish a feasible solution to campus parking problems.

"The administration has their heads in the clouds," Theriot said. "They're creating a crisis with parking so students and faculty will be forced to accept any proposal in a few years."

## A credit lesson learned

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apply for a credit card, budgeting and where to turn if you are already in credit trouble.

But having that plastic in your wallet isn't always a bad thing - it can be a good way to establish credit, said Shelley Stall, attorney at law and director of UNL Student Legal Services.

"The key is not to have too many cards," Stall said.

Stall also said tactics some students may think are saving them money are really just getting them in more credit trouble.

"The game of shopping for a low interest rate, then transferring the balance to another card after six months when the rates go up is just an illusion that you're not incurring debt when really you are."

Stall said about eight to 10 students come into Student Legal Services each semester singing their credit card woes or wondering if they should declare bankruptcy. Some even worry about being sued, she said.

"One couple a few years ago had accumulated a debt of more than \$50,000, so in that case I'd say bank-

"Everywhere you looked T-shirts, candy and gobs of crap were being pushed at all the freshmen. A bag of M&M's is not worth becoming an indentured slave for five years."

**JILL DICKEY**  
senior theater major

ruptcy is the option," she said.

Students can be particularly vulnerable because a bad credit rating can affect their application for a student loan, Stall said. A student will still have to pay off loans even if he or she has declared bankruptcy, she said.

"Credit cards are pure evil," said Jill Dickey, senior theater major at UNL. She got her first card at Big Red Welcome when she was a freshman.

"Everywhere you looked, T-shirts, candy and gobs of crap were being pushed at all the freshmen," she said. "A bag of M&M's is not worth becoming an indentured slave for five

years."

She said she was tired of paying for a pair of shoes five times over - referring to the finance and late fees incurred when she didn't pay the bill on time.

And coupled with all the other costs college students have to worry about, such as tuition, car insurance and student loans, credit card debt is at least one cost that students can control.

"You have enough in student loans. You might as well not have to deal with credit cards, too," Dickey said.

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