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The Student Newspaper of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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CCSN's new computer lab a threat to UNLV?

BY APRIL PARTRIDGE
 CONTRIBUTING NEWS WRITER

The two new computer labs at campuses of the Community College of Southern Nevada have raised questions concerning the quality of computer equipment at UNLV.

According to Bill Robinson, assistant professor of economics at UNLV, the money available for computers fluctuates from year to year.

"We replace equipment a piece at a time," Robinson said.

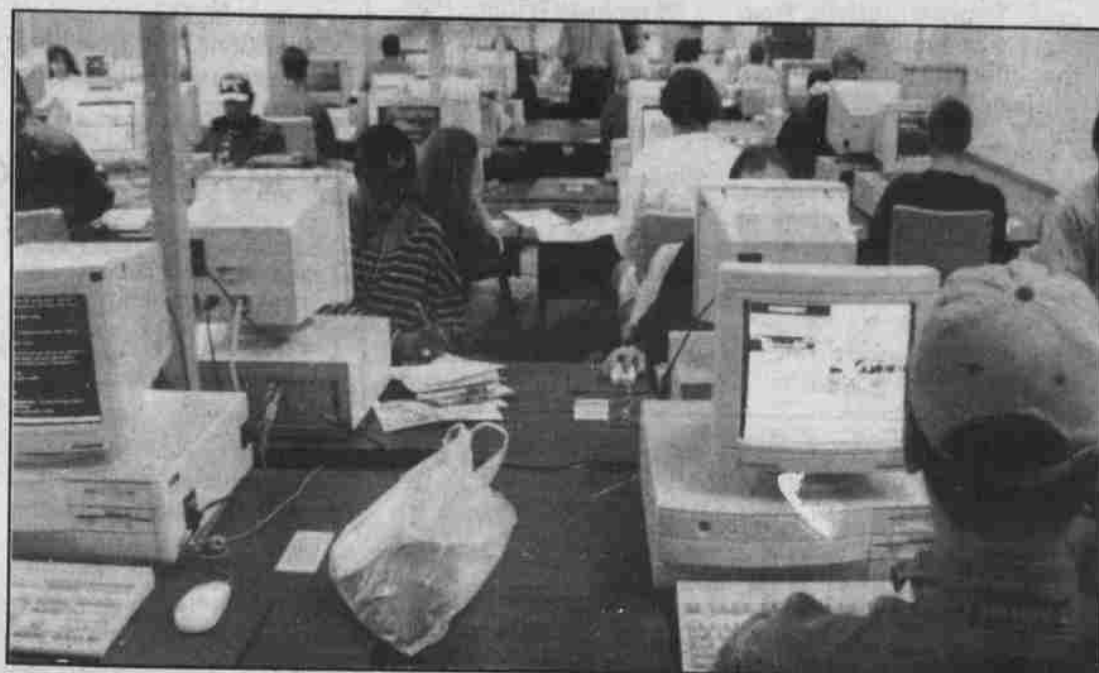
Each campus in Nevada's higher education system has wide discretion as to how the money allocated to them by the state legislature is spent, according to Robinson.

"The equipment fund covers everything from lawn mowers to computers," Robinson said. "We need commitment to technology."

There are tentative plans to build a new computer lab at UNLV within approximately two years, according to Robinson. A portion of the first floor of the "B" building in the Classroom Building Complex is being considered for the new lab, but money and other factors may delay the process.

"We need more machines, and more state of the art," Robinson said.

The oldest computers in UNLV computer labs are seven to eight years old, according to Robinson. Improvements have been made periodically in memory, power and other areas since the time of purchase.



UNLV students disappointed with campus computer facilities

PHOTO BY VASNA WILSON

Robinson rates the computer resources available at UNLV "below average, but not the worst." Some local high schools have more up-to-date computers than UNLV, Robinson said.

Daniel Mazzella, UNLV's library lab coordinator, agrees. The resources available for students are "slow, ancient and very limited," Mazzella said.

UNLV's James R. Dickinson Library has received three new computers this year, only one of which is the state-of-

the art Pentium model.

The Pentium has such stringent security precautions that "you practically have to sign your life away to use it," Mazzella said.

Netscaping, color scanners and multimedia capability are only available on the Pentium, according to Mazzella.

"You can only do so much with these old computers," Mazzella said.

UNLV senior LaTomya Glass, a communication major, uses the computer lab at CCSN regularly. She describes the facilities as being "absolutely wonderful, very different from UNLV."

Glass noted that CCSN's lab has equal numbers of IBM and Macintosh computers, and each has its own laser printer.

UNLV alumni Dave Lovci agrees that UNLV's computers are not up to par. "The computers available for student use (at UNLV) are substandard," he said. "For a school of 20,000, these facilities are ridiculous. Many of the computers at any given time don't work."

According to Mazzella, UNLV students are sometimes forced to wait in line to use outdated computers, especially in peak times during the semester, such as finals week.

week.

Paul E. Meacham, a UNLV professor of education and former president of CCSN, says that each campus submits requests for buildings that are considered by the state legislature. The Cheyenne campus of CCSN submitted a request for a building dedicated to computer facilities.

"It far surpasses anything we have at UNLV," Meacham said. "The building was built with computers in mind, so everything is perfect for them (CCSN) as far as wiring and structure goes."

Meacham doesn't feel that the CCSN lab was built at the expense of UNLV, but admits that an "intense, friendly competition" exists between the campuses. "It is a matter of determining the strongest need."

Meacham also stressed that CCSN has surpassed UNLV as the largest institution in Nevada's higher education system.

In addition, CCSN "set the climate for computer technology 11 years ago by recognizing the need for computer literacy in higher education," Meacham said.

"The goal was to accommodate every discipline in the college with the lab computers," Meacham said.

The new CCSN labs are open to the public.

Extended library hours in effect

BY CHRISTOPHER REITMAIER
 CONTRIBUTING NEWS WRITER

The James R. Dickinson Library has extended its hours to accommodate student concerns over weekend accessibility.

The library and computer lab are now open Fridays from 7 a.m.- 6 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m.- 9 p.m. and Sundays from 10 a.m.- 12 a.m.

The funding for the extended hours grew out of the \$3 tuition rate increase implemented by the Board of Regents for the 1995-96 school year.

Student Body President John Pida and Graduate Student Association President Ken Harlon met with members of UNLV's Presi-

dent's Cabinet to determine which university programs would receive funding. The amount of money each would receive was also discussed.

Of the allocated \$790,000, the library received approximately \$284,000. Other programs receiving funds include The Department of Public Safety, Student Financial Services, Tutoring Services, and Multicultural Student Affairs.

"Many students have expressed concern over the fact that the library was not open late enough during the weekend," says Matt Simon, dean of libraries. "Thus, we felt one of our primary objectives should be to extend those hours with the money we were allocated."

"At this point it's too early to tell what kind of increased traffic the library has experienced as a result of the new hours, but the

See Library, pg. 2

UNLV's Writing Center helps students make the grade

BY TREVOR HAYES
 CONTRIBUTING NEWS WRITER

Do you excel in math, biology and computer science but feel intimidated when it comes to writing essays for your English class?

If so, don't waste your money hiring a tutor. Instead, visit UNLV's Writing Center where you can get the help you need at no cost to you.

Graduate students from the English department help students enhance their writing skills by focusing on improving the structure and development of essays. The Writing Center staff answers questions regarding proper grammar and punctuation usage and assist students in getting started on their essays.

"Our focus is on helping students to find problems in their own writing, rather than on correcting their papers," said Tracey Schwarze, director of the center.

Schwarze emphasizes that proofreading is not the function of the Writing Center.



PHOTO BY VASNA WILSON

Asst. Director Joseph Csicsila helps Sophomore Holly Bjorgen.

Instead, tutors are available to aid students in finding and fixing structural errors and problems in their essays.

Sophomore Holly Bjorgen, Spanish, has utilized the services available in the Writing Center. "The Writing Center (staff) helped me correct and revise my essay for English class," Bjorgen said Monday.

The Writing Center is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and Fri-

day from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Hours of operation Monday through Thursday will be extended after Jan. 29 to 7 p.m.

Appointments are recommended and must be made in person. Walk-ins are welcome and will be assisted on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Writing Center is located in the Student Development Center, Room 103, in the Student Services Building.