

# No more refunds for classes dropped after first day

By Corie Light  
Contributing News Writer

There will no longer be a 100 percent refund for dropping a class after the first day of school starting this fall, according to a new policy from the UNLV Bursar's office.

Courses dropped this week without an offsetting course added will receive a 90 percent refund. There will be no refunds after Friday.

The Board of Regents approved this policy last January when they saw over registering as a problem for the university.

The old policy allowed students to register for classes, then pick and choose the classes they wanted to keep and still receive a 100 percent refund for the classes they decided to drop during the first week of school.

"The difficulty is that students tend to oversubscribe to more classes than they intend to keep that semester, limiting the class selection for other students," said Juanita Fain, dean of Enrollment Management.

"Then they end up dropping what they don't want to take after attending the first week of school. This becomes a problem in the fact that these students are holding slots others could use.

"Up until now, there has never been a consequence or punishment for students that are over registering," said Fain. "With this new policy in effect, we hope it will be an incentive or disincentive on the negative to make students register only for the classes they plan on keeping throughout the semester."

Students were notified of the new policy by a newsletter from the

Bursar's office which was sent to their home during the summer.

"I am unsure why the new policy was created and taken to the Board of Regents," said Sharon Coomes of the bursar's office.

"The money gained through the new policy will be distributed throughout the university just like the rest of the tuition," said Coomes.

Although the UNLV administration is hoping the policy will eliminate over registration and help students enroll in classes that would otherwise be full, UNLV students do not share the same positive attitudes towards this policy.

"I understand their point that many students overload classes, but I don't think they understand exactly why people overload," stated UNLV senior Steve Abbs.

"I've dropped classes after the first day many times either because of my compatibility with the instructor, or I just felt like the class was going to be too difficult," said Abbs.

"For example, you really don't know if you will be able to handle six classes, 18 units, in a semester until you have been to the class and have had a chance to look over the syllabus," he said.

"I am so upset by this new refund policy that I am thinking of transferring to a college back home," said UNLV junior Shane Kelly.

"I am currently paying out of state tuition and owe \$4,150 to attend six classes next fall. With the costs of tuition increasing every year, it is becoming quite costly to attend this college, and frankly my parents just can't afford all these increases," Kelly said.

"It's upsetting for me to think the university will now be able to keep 10 percent of my money if I attend a class just once and find out it is not what I expected," he said. "I can just imagine how my parents will react when I tell them about the new policy."

Abbs was likewise upset.

"I plan on going on to graduate school, but with the debt I have been accumulating just to get my four-year degree and the continual tuition increases, it might be impossible. I am just glad I don't have to pay out of state tuition," explained Abbs.

Kelly has a younger brother who was thinking of attending UNLV in the fall, but because of the complaints and price increases, he and his family are having second thoughts.

# UNLV among lowest tuition in nation despite increases

By Royal Hopper III  
Staff News Writer

Students at UNLV can find some relief in the fact that their tuition is among the lowest in the nation.

That was the conclusion of a 1996 study done by the General Accounting Office, an accountability agency connected to Congress.

At the time of the report, only three other states had lower tuition rates.

During this period, average tuition at Nevada colleges was \$1,830. The high was in Vermont and the low was in Hawaii.

According to *Selected Institutional Characteristics* published by the Office of Institutional Analysis and Planning, UNLV's tuition for the 98-99 academic year will be \$69 per credit with a \$71.50 per credit rate proposed for 1999-2000 and \$74 per credit for the 2000-2001 school year.

The cost of tuition has gone up \$2.50 per credit, bringing the amount to \$69 per unit for undergraduates. For graduates, the cost will be \$93, an increase of \$3. Non-residents will now pay \$75 per unit if registering for less than seven units. They will pay \$2,885 per semester plus \$69 a unit if registering for seven or more.

Further information can be accessed from the web site maintained by the office at [www.nscce.edu/unlv/Analysis\\_and\\_Planning](http://www.nscce.edu/unlv/Analysis_and_Planning).

	In-state \$/credit	Graduate \$/credit
1996-97	64	87
1997-98	66.50	90
1998-99	69	93
1999-00 (proposed)	71.50	96.50
2000-01 (proposed)	74	100

The administration does not see the increases as overbearing.

"Actually, tuition increases at UNLV have been very modest," said University President Carol Harter.

"Yearly tuition increases instituted since Dr. Jarvis took over as university chancellor have been 3 to 4 percent," she said, "which is about the rate of inflation and far less than tuition increases at comparable institutions.

"UNLV has asked for and received greater funding from the state for access based financial aid and private funding for merit based aid programs," she said.

Juanita Fain, dean of Enrollment Management, echoes the president's comments.

"I would say these are very average increases, comparable to

the rise in the cost of living," said Fain.

"I don't think it is due to an increase of student enrollment," she said. "I don't know of any specific programs that would have caused the raise.

"The Board of Regents determines the tuition costs and they are very, very sensitive to rising costs of education," Fain said.

She was certain the new law school did not affect the raise since it is funded from a different source.

Nationwide figures are not as mild.

College tuition is increasing at a rate nearly four times faster than household income, according to the 1996 General Accounting Office study.

The study concluded that

over a 15 year period from 1980 to 1995 the cost of college tuition at state run universities has risen 234 percent.

In that same period, the median household income has only risen 82 percent. The rise in tuition also far outgrew the 74 percent increase in the price of consumer goods for this period.

The report catalogued two primary reasons for this discrepancy.

One was increase in expenditures by colleges and the other was a greater dependence on tuition as a source of revenue.

The primary reason for greater dependence on tuition as a revenue source was an average 14 percent drop in the portion of the budget provided by the states.

In low tuition states like Ha-

waii, tuition was just 8 percent of the budget while in high tuition states like Vermont, it provided 44 percent of the budget. In Nevada, tuition provided a moderate 15 percent of the budget at the time of the report.

The increases in spending at colleges is caused by a variety of sources.

Two-thirds of the increase can be linked to instruction, administration and research costs.

More money for scholarships, fellowships, student services and plant operations and maintenance were also a culprit. All of these increases were greater than the rate of inflation.

Some of the increases were related.

As more professors gave an increasing amount of time to research, less time was given to teaching, requiring universities to hire more staff. Spending on faculty salaries accounted for 97 percent of the increase in instruction cost.

Average in-state tuition nationwide ranged from a low of \$1,521 to a high of \$5,521.

An odd coincidence was that higher tax rates in a given state generally correlated with high tuition in that state's colleges.

The study found that nine of the 10 states with the highest tax rates had tuition above the national average and that nine of the 10 states with the lowest tax rates had tuition below the national average.

## GRADUATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE: "We wanted to make it realistic."

ered by Jones and three friends from the College of Education.

Jones enclosed the signatures in a letter to Provost Douglas Ferraro stating, "UNLV should follow the example of leading universities that have rightfully established a way of rewarding those who complete their education in the winter."

Student Body President William Price, a member of the Commencement Committee, said that the committee agreed to initiate a winter graduation ceremony for December 1999 until President Carol Harter pushed for a 1998 winter ceremony.

Price said, "This is a perfect example of a student who took on the administration and won. She did things the right way."

Jones and three friends, Kim Campbell, Kim Sloan and Cynthia Marlow brainstormed for strategies to make it work, including gathering

signatures. They called for prices and looked at several options.

"We wanted to make it realistic," Jones said. "It does not have to be a big production."

Campbell, also a winter 1998 graduate, volunteered her efforts for personal reasons as well as for the good of the campus.

Campbell said, "We need to bring UNLV up to date with other universities."

The University of Nevada, Reno also has a fall semester commencement. However, it is scheduled just before finals for facility reasons.

"I think it is sad that the university has not done this for 40 years," Jones said. "Look around. The campus is changing."

"Just since I arrived in 1993 we have a new architecture building, a new law school and lots of changes in the School of Education. The ad-

ministration is working very hard to make changes happen.

"I am not prepared to take something on unless I will fight it to the end," said Jones. "If there is a cause big enough to care about, take action."

The Thomas and Mack is unavailable on the 19th, so in case of bad weather, attendees will have to make due in the cramped quarters of the Artemus Ham Concert Hall with closed circuit television at another location for the overflow.

According to Registrar Jeffrey Halverson, an estimated 800 to 1,000 students will be in attendance to the winter commencement although approximately 1,700 students will be eligible.

"Students who graduated in August and those who expect to graduate in December will be invited," said Halverson.

"Of course, not all those invited will actually attend," he said. "Historically, only about 60 percent of graduates attend commence-

ment, and we can expect even fewer since many August graduates walked in the May commencement ceremony.

"From experience, we expect about six guests per student," he said, which indicates an audience of family and friends of 4,800 to 6,000 people.

According to Halverson, the number of caps and gowns purchased at the bookstore give an indication as to how many students are planning to attend.

"If a week before commencement only 400 students have bought caps and gowns, we're okay. If 1,200 have, then we need to order more chairs," said Halverson.

Several details remain undecided.

The Commencement Committee has yet to decide the location of the reception and other details, such as the stage size, the music (organ, orchestra, pre-recorded, etc.), and how many faculty should attend.

"There are several big issues we are faced with," said Ackerman, "especially how to get the word out to students."

"This is a first-time experience for us. Hopefully we will learn a lot, and next year it will be easier to organize."

The Commencement Committee will initiate a search for a student speaker for the ceremony.

Last May, students were nominated by faculty or self-nominated and submitted an outline of their speech.

Three or four finalists were chosen, then they presented a pre-speech to the faculty to demonstrate their delivery. From that group, one speaker was chosen for each commencement.

For more information, the College of Education will have a dedicated phone line with an informative recorded message. Messages will be returned by student volunteers, including Jones and Price.