UNKmart

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UNKmart To Have Anchor Location at Higher Education Mall

Mr. Bruce Stall, executive director of the Coordinating Commission for Higher Education, announced plans for a Higher Education Mall to be located at the Grand Island Center. "A Higher Education Mall is consistent with the philosophical approach of the Coordinating Commission because it provide the widest range of offerings and yet ensures that there will be no overlap among the functions of the participating institutions."

Mr. Stall unveiled the floor plans of the newly-designed Mall which shows that the University of Nebraska at Kearney and an upscale, down-sized branch of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln will hold the coveted "anchor" positions. UNL is presently planning a catalog outlet, but may in the near future expand to offer services. Other institutions, such as Hastings, Doane, Wayne State will have smaller sites. Chadron State has purchased an option for a third "anchor" position. Since there are no sites with hydraulic lifts, the Community Colleges are not included in the present plans.

"A unique feature of the Higher Education Mall is that competition for students will be the driving force. If an institution cannot offer unique programs that attract a sufficient number of students to turn a profit, it will be eliminated. The competitive nature of the Mall will ensure that a wide range of different programs will be offered at bargain rates." said Stall.
UNKmart plans to offer courses that will support their general studies program, and a variety of majors, such as Elementary Education, Travel and Tourism, Human Relations, Accounting, and Criminal Justice. UNL will offer televised satellite classes in support of their Ph.D. program in Astrophysical Engineering. Other institutions have not yet announced their planned offerings.

Mr. Stall also described sections of the mall which will be devoted exclusively to student support services. UNKmart has reserved four of these for Student Advising, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Learning Skills. Other institutions are expected to follow suit by opening various student service offices. UNL has tentative plans for at least two such offices, including Alumni Affairs and a Weight Training Room.

While long-range plans will restrict occupancy to accredited institutions of higher learning, the Mall will temporarily include businesses “whose mission is most congruent with the goals of Nebraska higher education,” according to Mr. Stall.

UNKmart will open their student service units in six months. Until that time, UNKmart officials said that an electronic, interactive kiosk will be available to the public for academic advising, registration, some limited-enrollment classes, and institutional assessment. The kiosk includes a holographic filmed interview with the Dean of the College of Education. According to UNKmart officials, “A hologram adds the personal touch that many other campuses lack when putting together their recruiting materials. Many potential students won't even see a hologram of a graduate assistant much less a Dean.” UNKmart is also planning a series a video tapes that will feature the Deans narrating catalog descriptions of their programs.

Mr. Stall made his announcement at a meeting of the Unicameral Appropriations Committee. He argued that the institutional savings from the Mall can be used to supplement the operating budget of the Coordinating Commission. He can also announced other plans for higher education in Nebraska, including Higher Education Home Shopping Network in conjunction with the NebSat network, Higher Education KOA Campground, and the Higher Education Mail Order Catalog Service.