

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Contact: Emily Martinez
(214) 648-3404
or e-mail: emart2@mednet.swmed.edu

UT SOUTHWESTERN PIONEERS USE OF COMPUTERS FOR SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

DALLAS — April 3, 1996 — UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas has become the first university in the state to offer a computerized application process, saving staff members nearly 200 hours of work, said Charles Kettlewell, registrar and director of student financial aid.

Kettlewell likens UT Southwestern's new computerized application process to a lifeboat that came to the rescue of an overburdened staff that was "sinking fast" beneath a mounting number of applications. By asking potential students to enter transcript information on diskette instead of filling out paper forms, the nearly one hour per student that used to be required to enter the data has been reduced to approximately 90 seconds for a batch of 50 applications.

Kettlewell said he can't yet estimate how much money will be saved by the computerization.

"We're the first to do this in Texas, but quite a few schools around the country already have applications by computer," he said. Currently, the application-by-diskette option is available only to individuals interested in the Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School and Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Applications to the medical school are processed centrally in Austin by the UT System for all component campuses.

Students applying by diskette supply detailed transcript information on the diskette. Previously, each course was entered by the registrar's office's staff from the original documents. The registrar's staff members still carefully verify transcript data to correct applicant entry errors. "By largely reducing our application handling to transcript verification, we've addressed the most time-consuming process," Kettlewell said.

The time savings in the registrar's office means academic departments usually will get

(MORE)

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS — 2

the applications to review much earlier than in the past, Kettlewell said.

Dr. Gordon Green, dean of the allied health school, believes the new system will not discourage talented students from applying. "I think it might limit the pool of applicants a bit more to students who are computer literate," he said, "but then it is likely to be a necessity in the future for people in many allied health fields to be able to work with computers."

Paper applications continue to be available upon request.

The Office of Student and Alumni Affairs, in conjunction with the allied health school, will be offering the school's new catalog and additional information on the Internet for the first time next year. Green said he is pleased that the catalog and its detailed descriptions of programs will be available to a wider audience. Information about programs such as clinical nutrition and medical laboratory sciences, which would benefit from more applicants, now will be accessible to more potential students, he said.

Kettlewell said they will soon make admissions applications available via the Internet as well.

###

This news release is available on our World Wide Web home page at
<http://www.swmed.edu/news/newspubs.htm>