

## Abortions added to student insurance

Tina Cardinale is considering leaving her university's health plan this fall because of a \$3 increase in her insurance fees.

The extra money, of course, is not the real issue. She is upset because the fee increase will provide abortion coverage in Northeastern U.'s student health plan. "I would be opposed to paying for it even if it was a nickel," says Cardinale, an MBA student and a member of Northeastern Students for Life.

Northeastern, Louisiana State U., the U. of Florida and Florida State U. have recently joined an increasing number of schools which are expanding student health insurance to include abortions. Both moral and financial concerns have surfaced as a result.

At Northeastern, for example, the Women's Law Caucus spearheaded the movement to offer students coverage for elective abortions. The coverage began last September, but the insurance fee increases won't take place until this fall. "We feel that it's part of reproductive health care for women," says Susan Cieutat, a third-year law student and a member of the caucus. "The idea that a woman should pay for it herself is a punitive attitude. We don't have that type of attitude about other medical needs that college students have."

But opponents at Northeastern object to paying insurance fees for a procedure they morally oppose. "It's not the amount that bothers me, it's what it's for that bothers me," Cardinale says. "Paying for something that is in my mind the act of committing murder, that's the problem."

The same coverage has been available to faculty and staff for almost a decade. It will cover up to \$250 for an abortion, which would be performed off campus. According to Planned Parenthood, an average abortion in the first trimester ranges from \$200 to \$400.

Because of the moral significance of abortion coverage, some schools have made more insurance options available. At Harvard, students who object to abortion can deduct the coverage from the cost of the plan. At the U. of Florida, students have two options: a \$96-a-year plan which only covers basic infirmary services or a \$507 comprehensive plan which includes up to \$300 abortion coverage.

But for many colleges, no moral debates are necessary; their schools can't afford the added cost of elective abortion coverage. At the U. of North Florida, for example, only about 150 out of 9,000 students purchase the school's insurance package, making the added coverage prohibitively expensive. ■ **Kimberly Chrisman, *The Stanford Daily*, Stanford U.**

**T**he Mojave Desert north of Death Valley, Calif., is not your average college town. There are no bohemian hangouts, no ivy-covered buildings and no football stadiums amidst the vast desert and local wildlife — it's not the kind of place you'd expect to find a prestigious college.

But that's exactly what mining mogul Lucien L. Nunn intended when he created Deep Springs College in 1917.

This all-male school, located on a ranch with monastic conditions, operates on Nunn's vision of "removing the nation's brightest males from the temptations and distractions of civilization and providing them with an abundance of heart."

It has been described as one of the nation's most unusual academic experiments.

Twenty-six mostly middle- and upper-middle-class members of the nation's academic elite attend Deep Springs in almost complete seclusion. The students possess a couple of radios and one television that doesn't work well, but they have discussed getting rid of even those distractions.

A strict isolation policy forbids students from leaving the 2,500 acre ranch while school is in session. Rarely, exceptions to the policy are granted. One student needed to have his braces tightened every two weeks. Another wanted to attend Catholic Mass on Sundays. They were given permission, but only after the entire student body agreed.

Attendance at the two-year college is free — all acceptances come with full scholarships. The only requirements: exemplary academic achievement and a desire to transfer to an Ivy League school.

"There's no one thing that is attractive about this college," says second-year student Hank Hancock. "The best way to describe this place is with our name for the program. We call it the 'Deep Springs Experience.'"

As a crucial part of the experience, students spend about 20 hours a week doing assigned duties on the ranch such as milking cows and pitching hay. Hancock, a Houston resident, is responsible for washing pots and pans. On the rare occasion when there's free time, he and his classmates hike and go mountain climbing. The rest of the time, students delve into the liberal-studies curriculum that they help to devise.

Hancock stays in touch with friends from high school who went on to more traditional schools, and he says, "I think the education is a lot more here. I'm more satisfied with what I'm getting."

One way Deep Springs maintains fresh ideas is by frequent faculty turnover. The college president's term is limited to three years and faculty



Deep Springs students Noah Hamm and Damon Rich help with the annual potato harvest.

## En route to the Ivy League Desert college recruits academic elite

By Phillip W. Browne, *The Daily Titan*, California State U., Fullerton

members may stay a maximum of six.

First-year student Noah Hamm says Deep Springs places more of an emphasis on the learning process than other colleges. Recently, one of his teachers received a call from an alumnus who had moved on to an Ivy League school and complained that he couldn't get good grades unless he simply memorized material. "The problem the Deep Springs alum was having was he was trying to learn too much," Hamm says. He compares that to the way Deep Springs students are encouraged to challenge ideas: "The learning here doesn't stop. It's not just in classes."

Pat O'Connor, dean of the college, says, "There is a certain type of psychological consciousness which brings students here. Some want to be cowboys, some like the rural atmosphere, some like the communitarian aspects of the campus — and some just don't know exactly what attracts them."

About one-third of Deep Springs' funding comes from an endowment of \$4.5 million. The other two-thirds come from donations. "The college is substantially funded by alumni, so alumni are very important to us," O'Connor says.

These days, though, the alumni are pushing for some radical changes at their alma mater. "A large number of them would be very happy to see us go co-educational." Maintaining financial stability could cost Deep Springs its 77-year policy of not admitting women. "If not, our sources of funding may dwindle," O'Connor says. "As an alumnus myself, I wish this college would have been co-ed in 1975, but I'm only one voice. This would be a wonderful experience for both men and women."

The Board of Trustees will decide on the issue of co-education in May. If they rule in favor, the first female class will be admitted in July. Now, O'Connor says opinion is divided on the issue. "The grounds are really rocky among contributors and the trustees, but the campus will live on if and when this happens," he says. "When it happens, a new era will begin."



Students work the ranch 20 hours a week.