Students awaiting millions in aid

By Ian Musil
Staff Writer

Because of problems with a new computer system, the Office of Student Financial Aid was scrambling late last week to distribute millions of dollars in financial aid and scholarships to students who still need to pay for tuition, books and other expenses.

By Aug. 21, the financial aid office had distributed $21.7 million in scholarships and financial aid. That number was $8 million less than the $30.1 million doled out at the same time last year, said John Nametz, director of financial aid.

Officials at the office said problems implementing and using a new computer system called Matrix, which coordinates financial aid and scholarships, caused the unexpected delays.

“Matrix is having problems with the aid distribution problem, specifically linked to the general questions not being answered by the office Thursday afternoon. Officials at the office said they were seeing about one-third more students than usual. Most students had general questions not specifically linked to the aid distribution problem, but some, particularly graduate students and undergraduates on scholarships, were confused by the delays in their accounts. Nametz said.

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“Development and implementation of any system is a difficult process, especially difficult in this kind of effort,” said Booker. “Union construction was inevitable.”

Cadet named Distinguished Graduate

By Cara O’Connor
Senior Writer

Approximately 300 students are breathing sighs of relief after late cancellations and no-shows have taken them off the Residence Life waiting list and into permanent housing.

Although most of those who were on the waiting list have been placed in one of the 5,500 permanent spaces, some are still living with resident assistants.

For those who are still sharing rooms with RAs, Director of Residence Life Jim Van Arsdale said he hopes to find them permanent housing in the next few weeks, anticipating that some new students will choose to move out and free up spaces.

About 300 of the nearly 800 housing-applicants were placed on a waiting list after the May 1 application deadline. All of those students were offered housing before summer’s end, Van Arsdale said.

Some of those students were assigned to temporary spaces at check-in with the expectation that no-shows and last minute cancellations would open up permanent residence hall spaces.

“This is the second year that incoming freshmen have not been guaranteed on-campus housing. The first-come, first-serve policy was put in place last year following a serious residence hall shortage during the 2001-2002 school year. ‘We were extremely full,’ Van Arsdale said. ‘That kind of crisis was inevitable.’

Despite the lack of space, Residence Life was forced to put nearly 200 students on alert for card scams

By Brent C. Gambrell
Contributing Writer

As the fall semester begins, UAPD is reminding the campus community that a credit card fraud alert is still in effect.

The UAPD’s Crime Prevention Office issued the alert on Aug. 12, warning the campus community of a possible credit card scam that may target UA students, employees and visitors.

Sgt. Eugene Mejia, who coordinates crime prevention programs on campus, said the alert was issued after a single incident in which a man told police he started receiving credit cards in his name at his home address. The man said he did not remember applying for the credit cards, saying he only remembered supplying his personal information.