



President Nedderman tries to exit through a door . . .



. . . with other administrators he crosses the mall with some assistance . . .

# Officials struggle with barriers

## Administrators experience blindness, wheelchairs

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Staff Writer

Seven campus administrators learned first hand last week what it's like to cross crowded streets in a wheelchair and negotiate stairways in darkness.

As participants in the Handicapped Students Association (HSA) "Handicapped Administration Day," the policy makers struggled with doors that wouldn't open, ramps that were steep and restrooms that were too small.

"I gained a new perspective from the vantage point of a wheelchair," said President Wendell Nedderman.

Two different routes were followed by the wheelchair participants. Dr. Wayne Duke, dean of student life, followed a separate route as a "blind" administrator.

The administrators were voluntarily participating in a continuing program to improve campus facilities for handicapped students. Extensive renovations have been made during the past year.

Led by Bob Hulla, a blind student and Garland freshman, Duke said he was very disoriented most of the time.

"We sent to parts of the campus that Bob had never been before and he was supposed to be leading me," said Duke. "At times we both had to just grope around."

"Blind since birth, Bob could tell when we were getting close to

buildings just from the sounds," Duke said. "Most of the time, though, we had to ask someone where we were."

One part of the "blind" tour was to find the elevator in University Hall and ride it to the fourth floor. Duke said braille numbers on the elevators would have made it a lot easier.

The wheelchair administrators were followed closely by HSA members who gave them pointers in difficult situations.

Kris Kirkpatrick, assistant dean of student life, found that wheeling up ramps and going the long way around buildings to find curb cuts was very trying business.

"I could hardly get up the ramp at the Engineering Tech Building," Ms. Kirkpatrick said, "and coming down it was worse. It's so steep you don't have any control."

"Other students," she said, "should have the opportunity to experience confinement to a wheelchair so that they realize that the handicapped person really needs to be helped and not ignored."

HSA president David Brock said, "We feel the day was a success because the administration saw some of the things we have been trying to explain for a long time. I think we got our point across."

Other participants included Dr. Bill Baker, vice president of academic affairs; Elwood Preiss, assistant to the president; Wylvan Parker, assistant dean of student life, and Gary Foster, coordinator of student organizations.



. . . learns how to operate the wheel lock on his new mode of transportation . . .

Photos by Charles Davis



. . . encounters difficulties in maneuvering in a too small restroom . . .



. . . only to run into more problems inside.