

ASUN defends action on recall and closed meeting

Editor's note: This guest opinion was written by Ken Marienau, ASUN president.

Students' opinions on our campus' politics and actions are expressed by a diffused conglomeration of committees that lack a unified purpose. Recognizing the inherent nature of this structure, ASUN—your student government—took action last Wednesday night to help alleviate this problem.

Temporarily, appointments to 27 committees were suspended to allow re-evaluation and restructuring of student input. On Oct. 11, a new proposal will be submitted to the ASUN Senate following its formulation by all who express interest or concern.

After strong unified student efforts yielded significant gains in the university community in the early 1970s, student leaders were disbanded into an array of advisory committees.

Minority status

In nearly every case, student representatives held minority status on the committees established administratively or by the

Faculty Senate.

While it could be declared that student "input" existed, student "impact" had been minimized by a system that nurtured very little communication and even less coordination.

guest opinion

Some people felt shocked at ASUN's action to reevaluate this ineffective structure. It was not a newly formed idea, however. Candidates for student government office for the past few years have all directly or indirectly recognized the faults of a decentralized system of committees without a coordinating body.

Direct voice

The party with which I ran last spring, Students Organized for Active Representation, stated in its platform, "that UNL students should have a direct voice in the occasions which affect their money, their educations and their lives."

Furthermore, we proposed to work towards revising that structure. We were rebuffed in a *Daily Nebraskan* editorial as "idealists" with the statement, "You'd think that if these issues were important enough to be talked about every year, something would be done. But the point is that there is nothing to be done. At least not within the structure of UNL student government." It is the intent of this senate to follow up on its promises to provide student impact in university decision-making. Without exception, every ASUN senator present at last Wednesday's meeting boldly voted to reaffirm their intentions of initiating a more effective system of expression.

Executive session

The senators did so with the courtesy of an executive session, so that public criticism of an individual or committee would not be made without the right of reply. In addition, the *Daily Nebraskan* was notified hours before the meeting on the action to be considered, and the fact that an executive session would be held.

Public discussion by senators and

all present was allowed before the vote, too. And following notification of the action to all appointments, the minutes of the entire meeting were made available to the public. To those that we have offended, we sincerely apologize, but ask that they not let the course of action affect their fair consideration of the proposal.

We ask that anyone who has suggestions or interest in the subject to please contact us. To facilitate this we are holding a public hearing on Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the Nebraska Union. Following this we will take all of the suggestions and try to devise a structure that will be most effective, by Friday. After revisions are made from suggestions on the preliminary draft, a proposal will be offered to the ASUN Senate on Wednesday, Oct. 11 for consideration.

Strong communication

The most desirable structure should incorporate strong communication and coordination of efforts in all areas of decision-making. It should offer any student the opportunity to work for needed change in his/her area of interest. Finally, it should have greater impact upon decisions that are made.

The success of this proposal will depend on the determination and effort of the students involved. ASUN, as your representatives, need your support and help in affecting change. Please stop into our office (room 115, Nebraska Union) and visit with us.

Editors note: Even though ASUN notified the *Daily Nebraskan* about senate bill 23 before the meeting, the *Daily Nebraskan* supported and will continue to support the concept of open meetings.



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