

Editorial

A few stiff cuts better than overall squeeze

UNL administrators are to be commended for the detailed list they released of programs being considered for reduction or elimination under the university's 2-percent budget reallocation program.

The list, released last week, gives students and faculty members a chance to study the proposals and prepare arguments for or against them before public hearings begin Thursday.

The proposals, which were developed by UNL's vice chancellors for academic affairs, business and finance, agriculture and natural resources and students affairs, promise to create controversy, but, as a whole, they seem reasonable.

The majority of the cuts are in services. While many of them will go unnoticed by some students,

they will be devastating for those directly involved.

Nobody wants to see the Sheldon Film Theatre closed or the Bureau of Business Research and the Bureau of Sociological Research eliminated. But the alternative to cutting deeper into academic programs is even less desirable.

It would be ideal if we could avoid cutting anything. But that option seems to be out of the question and the university is correct in trying to strengthen some programs at the expense of others.

The university has tried to squeeze too much out of its budget in recent years. It simply cannot continue down its present path of cutting a little from each program and expect UNL to remain a respectable institution.

Many classes are overcrowded and some students

are unable to obtain the courses they need to graduate on time.

Still, we don't envy the administrators and regents who have to make the final decisions on what gets cut. They have a tremendously difficult task ahead of them, one that promises to be unpleasant.

It is essential that students and faculty members have a chance to voice their concerns and it is even more important that those concerns are taken seriously.

We must remember, however, that no plan is going to be acceptable to everyone.

But if these cuts allow UNL to strengthen some of its high-priority programs, both students and faculty members will come out winners.



Wishing for someone to come home to

This curious thing happened. Last summer I wrote a column about a career woman in her 30s who had a good job, a nice apartment, fine friends — but who was miserable because she had no husband. She said that, even with the rest of her life in precise order, she was unhappy every day because she had no one to come home to.

She was afraid that people would think her attitudes were outmoded and behind the times, but that's not how readers reacted. Many business and professional people — men and women — wrote and called to say they felt the same way.



Bob Greene

Among the responses were a number of letters from men who said they wanted to meet the woman in question. I had not printed her name; the men sent me long letters directed to her, and asked me to pass the letters along.

As I was reading the letters from the men, I couldn't help but wonder what kind of fellows would express such longing toward a woman they knew almost nothing about. I suppose I was envisioning sad, lonely men who had never been part of the so-called "good life."

And then one of the letters stopped me cold. I read it — it was as lonely and poignant as any of the others — and I got to the signature, and I couldn't believe it.

I knew the man.

I knew him from college. Back at Northwestern, he had been one of the freewheeling, good-looking fraternity studs who ruled the campus. He had been in one of the best houses; he was well-known as an ace intramural athlete; he ran with the most desirable crowd at the university.

And here was his letter. He wrote to the woman: "I come home at night to my small studio apartment and fix myself a tuna sandwich with melted cheese, and I sit down to eat it and I look across the table and there's no one there."

I must have read the letter a dozen times. More than any of the others, it affected me. I read the words, and I thought of his happy-go-lucky face as he jauntily strode across the Northwestern campus in the late '60s.

I sent the letter on to the woman, but I kept thinking about it. Finally I sought him out; we talked. He is 36 now. After college he tried to become a part of the business world, but didn't fit in. He does manual labor for a living.

I told him what my impression of him had been back at college.

"I know what people thought of me," he said. "But that image really wasn't true. I never even dated that much in college."

I said I had remembered seeing him and his friends at fraternity-sorority exchanges; they had always been surrounded by the most attractive women from the best sororities.

"I was fairly shy," he said. "I suppose you could say I was kind of afraid of women. You talk about the exchanges; do you remember..." Here he named some of the best-known fraternity men and athletes at Northwestern. I said that I did, indeed, remember them.

"They were my roommates," he said. "If there was going to be an exchange at a downtown hotel with the Kappas or the Thetas, we would go down there early in the afternoon before anyone else got there, and start drinking beer. That's how we got through the exchanges. At 6 o'clock, when everyone else was heading back to campus to get ready for their dates, we'd go to the Toddle House and that would be our evening. I remember one Homecoming when I spent the evening doing my laundry."

He said he sometimes worries about the way things have turned out. "Everyone around me, all my closest friends from college and high school, have successful careers in corporate America," he said. "They have families and everything you're supposed to have. They must be pulling down \$100,000 plus."

"I don't know anyone who, like myself, has failed to make any money. All my old friends have nice homes; I live in this crummy little studio apartment. That's a hard notion to live with. You wonder, why haven't you grabbed the brass ring?"

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Columnist gives advice Landers can't

This paper needs an advice column.

Not one about marriages and abortions and salad forks, or pintails, duck tails or black tie and tails.

You can read an etiquette book about such matters, or write a letter to one of the plastic-hair sisters whose columns appear in almost every major newspaper.

Christopher Burbach

No, what this paper needs, and what I (surprise!) can supply it with, is an arduously and meticulously researched piece which will provide its readers with the resources and know-how to successfully combat the daily rigors of American existence and be victorious in life-or-death struggles.

Some of this advice has been plucked from my own stores of wisdom, some was blatantly stolen from others.

Here goes.

Eat tomatoes when you're drunk. Alcohol depletes the sugar in your blood, which is one major reason you feel so dabburn bad the morning after a night of unjudicious carousing. Tomatoes are the ticket to raising that blood sugar level and preventing those morning after blahs.

If you're in the middle of the desert afoot, neither car nor camel in sight, and you have just a half canteen of water left to drink, drink it. Don't sip mouthfuls at a time, hoping to conserve your reserves. Most of a mouthful is wasted; it never gets to your thirsty cells. It just evaporates out of your tongue.

Drink heartily, drink until your cells are saturated with life-giving water, and then hope.

Don't eat raw carp. Ever.

If, perchance, you are walking down the street and an automobile veers off course with the obvious intention of striking you, run toward it and yell, "AAAAAAUUUUUGGGGGHHHHH!" The would-be murderer at the wheel may instinctively react to this show of attack by shying away. If he/she does, grab that spare moment to dive out of the vehicles path of destruction. If the driver remains undaunted and bent on his/her diabolical task, so what? You were a goner anyway.

Do not, I repeat, do not sit on a bus stop in Lincoln to watch the sun rise. This is viewed by municipal authorities as a serious crime and as sufficient reason to hurtle at least two police cars the wrong way down a one way street and advance on the perpetrators with night sticks raised.

In addition, when a Lincoln police officer says the words, "for your own safety," run. Your physical well being is in jeopardy.

In times of severe depression, watch any of the local Omaha news programs. You can chortle along with cheery chats between anchorpersons and glad tidings from smiling reporters about murder convictions, battle casualties and the pollen count. If they can smile about it, you can, too.

In case of nuclear war, stand in front of your house and watch. If you're lucky, a bomb will strike near enough that you'll have the opportunity for the first time in your life to fly, unaided, at speeds of up to 60 mph. Nifty.

And don't take yourself so seriously.