



Scott Robertson, student member of Nebraska Wesleyan University Board of Governors.

Student governor helps both sides

By Wes Albers

Mix two students with 16 university governors, let them govern a campus for a semester or two, and all come out learning something.

"I've learned mainly that social issues which seem to have obvious answers to students may not always be possible administratively," Scott Robertson said Tuesday. He is a 21-year-old student member of Nebraska Wesleyan University's (NWU) Board of Governors.

Robertson said he has contributed by "interpreting students' feelings for other governors who don't necessarily get to see students the way I do."

Robertson, a junior majoring in economics, is one of two NWU students serving on the 18-member Board of Governors. First elected a year ago by the student body, he was re-elected last spring.

The student posts, along with two faculty positions, were created last February. Students were given four positions on the university's Board of Trustees with the two highest vote-getters also having Board of Governors' seats.

Robertson said he thought similar moves by other universities would be beneficial, but was "not sure of their workability" elsewhere.

A bill to create a student regent at NU (LB323) is being considered by the Unicameral today. Sen. Richard Marvel of Hastings introduced the bill.

According to Robertson, NWU's early acceptance

of the idea was because the school's small size and lack of political pressure that might have held the governors back.

"We couldn't have been accepted better by the board," Robertson said. "There are differences of opinion, of course, but our input is respected."

The NWU students are full voting members of the board.

Robertson said Wesleyan's community concept of government extended decision-making power to students so they have "both a voice and responsibility."

"We can't just yell and scream for an idea to be adopted anymore," he said. "If a proposal we called for fails, we share the responsibility."

Robertson said a student governor has advantages because he has closer contact with students.

"On the other hand I'm limited because I lack experience," he said.

Robertson said he's at his best when student interests are being discussed.

"When they start discussing something like a financial campaign I'm in the dark. All I can do is listen and try to decide what's right," he said.

Robertson said being both governor and full-time student keeps him busy but still fits into his schedule.

"I can't afford not to fit it into my schedule," he said. "This has probably been one of the most valuable parts of my education."

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Fines...

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Kansas' reserve book fine is perhaps the steepest: 30 cents each hour, with a \$10 maximum.

Iowa State charges 50 cents the first hour and 25 cents each additional hour, on a 24-hour basis, for reserve books.

Also at Iowa State, any fine is doubled if it is not paid when the materials are returned.

Several schools have changed their fine policy in recent years, although some have been around for at least 10 years.

The University of Missouri decided in 1970 to rigidly enforce its fines for regular books, which are 25 cents a day with a \$5 maximum.

On the other hand, Oklahoma cut its daily fine last June from 10 cents to 5 cents and the maximum charge from \$10 to \$5.

UNL last changed its policy in 1967, when fines had been 5 cents daily. According to public service librarian Mary Doak, returns have been much better since then.

"The whole purpose of fines is for their (students') own good," she said. "We're not so much interested in the fine itself as in getting the materials back."

To back this goal further, all Big 8 schools may hold graduating students' grade transcripts, or pre-registration if he has unpaid fines at the end of a semester.

In most schools, except Iowa State and UNL, faculty members are exempt from any fines or penalties.

At Kansas State, the faculty can check out materials for indefinite periods, and Oklahoma reports most overdue books belong to faculty, not students.

UNL faculty, although allowed longer loan periods, are subject to the same overdue and lost book charges as students.

According to UNO's library director John Christ, individual circumstances often are considered when charging fines to students.

For example, they don't charge students for lost books the library staff doesn't intend to replace. They also will allow students to work to pay their fines. In one case, the library accepted an original painting from an art student for a \$15 fine.

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