

Academic acclaim in NU's reach

The University's road to excellence could be a rocky one, especially if the Legislature won't pave it with dollar signs.

Nonetheless, NU officials are right in striving to shed the University's mediocre image.

This week, faculty, staff and students have discussed the recently announced second-year strategy of NU's five-year "Toward Excellence" plan. Adopted in 1973, the plan aims to improve the quality of education at NU.

However, some changes in the proposed second-year strategy are needed. Several revisions suggested at the Faculty Senate meeting and the open hearing this week seemingly would improve the plan.

One suggestion would assign priorities to all the recommendations made in the five-year plan. The plan suggests improvements in the areas of agriculture, the life sciences, environmental and resource management, the performing arts and Love Library, as well as in such areas as graduate education and teacher evaluations. However, these areas are not ranked in order of their importance for obtaining "excellence."

It is doubtful the Unicameral will appropriate the desired funds for every suggested improvement. Legis-

lators should know what areas are most crucial to improving education so, if they must cut funding, they can do so in other less-important areas.

Another suggestion made at the Faculty Senate meeting would "define the missions" of the three NU campuses to avoid unnecessary duplication of programs.

By eliminating unneeded overlap, the University could put more faculty and more money into departments needing improvement.

A third recommendation would standardize the method of counting enrollment on the three campuses. Currently, UNO uses "head count" enrollment figures.

UNL uses a division process instead, to obtain the number of full-time student credit loads (12 hours each) as its enrollment figures.

These figures often determine how much money the Unicameral will allocate to a campus. If campus figures are based on different standards, the appropriations cannot possibly be fair.

The Board of Regents will meet Saturday to consider these and other recommended changes in the "Toward Excellence" plan. By adopting these three suggestions, the regents could push NU one inch closer to academic acclaim.

Jane Owens

Graduates, take heart: professions are a 'waste'

Graduating seniors this December, worried about the latest unemployment figures at home—despair no more. **Somewhere**, there's a job waiting for you.

Just last week, 1,500 Ph.D.'s congregated in New York for a "stimulating" international conference on their new trade.

Their scholarly paper, "The Scientific Inefficiencies of the Present System of Waste Collection and Expulsion," concluded enthusiastically: "There is a growing, urgent demand for advanced interdisciplinary scholars in our field. We urge the college graduate to consider a career in waste."

Some people, of course, would consider the career itself a waste.

"We used to be bitter about it, sure," admitted the conference chairman, who studied 12 years for a doctorate in marine biology. "But we can't see keeping it under the lids any longer. We're proud to contribute our brains, too, to society."

"Right now we need an architectural engineer," he said, "to design the 'perfect, clang-free, eye-pleasing garbage can.'"

Elsewhere the story's the same. The mentality of the average street sweeper, bellhop, chauffeur, waiter and milkman climbs ever higher as these fields open up to promising young college grads.

But most do not feel they are overtrained—and are anything but ashamed of their jobs.

nancy stohs

second thoughts

"I'm just doing what any great philosopher is trained to do in life," said an ex-philosophy professor, "make the best of my lot." He pours asphalt.

As more Archie Bunkers share shovels with the Joneses, and white collars fade into blue, understanding and cohesion between classes is increasing.

A nuclear physicist, once intending to send floating skylabs to Jupiter, now stuffs toy spacemen into cereal boxes.

"I figure half of what I learned in college will be obsolete in a few years anyway," he said. "And this way I'm helping to feed the starving millions, right here on earth."

"Some students think they can beat the flooded markets by joining a field that is publicizing a work shortage," said one Harvard Law School alumnus. "But by the time they get in and out of school, it's too late. They meet 50,000 other students at the employment office who had the same idea."

So, the message for next week on campus is fairly clear: study diligently for finals, lose sleep, worry about grades and in the process ignore the more pressing problems of the world outside and ruin your health.

In other words, keep on truckin', and someday you may do just that—if you're lucky.

"Now that I'm committed to my waste profession, I've found the real value of my diplomas and certificates"—the keynote speaker at the conference said emotionally. He turned, pointed to a garbage can and smiled: "Waste. Recyclable waste."

Now that's job satisfaction.



to the editor

Dear Editor,

Throughout the recent articles on Campus Life Insurance sales practices (*Daily Nebraskan*, Dec. 4 and 5) a running battle has developed between Leonard Berekson, a UNL professor of insurance, and Charles Severin of Fidelity Union.

I strongly object to Severin's efforts to skirt the basic issue by attempting to discredit Berekson.

I have taken three classes from Berekson, and the only statements I have heard that could be interpreted as a "specific charge" against any life insurance company of the life insurance industry as a whole are his statements concerning the failure of some agents to take the time to analyze a student's actual need for life insurance.

Although I suspect Berekson's opinions may have become an economic issue with Severin, they are not the real issue. The real issue is Severin's product and the methods used to sell it.

The product marketed by Fidelity Union and other companies in the field very rarely meets the need of the college student, if indeed a need exists.

The real conflict is between the students of this University and campus insurance salesmen who are out to make as much money as possible. The salesmen exploit a basically uneducated market (with respect to life insurance) under the guise of performing a vital service.

A good life insurance agent will take the time to sell a student the amount of insurance he needs, not the amount the agent needs to sell.

I invite any interested persons to an open meeting on this issue to be held on Thursday at 3 p.m. in the Nebraska Union Small Auditorium.

Kevin Sullivan



"Whatever in the world possessed poor Wilbur?"