

Reduced faculty tenure sparks attempt for union

By Randy Blauvelt

UNL faculty members soon may have the chance to choose a union to represent them as a collective bargaining agent to the university.

As soon as the State Court of Industrial Relations decides what sections of the university will be included in the bargaining unit, it can approve an election to determine who will represent the faculty, according to Nels Forde, local president-elect of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP).

The drive for collective bargaining started because of the regents' temporary policy to block tenure awards last May, he said.

"When the regents decided to stop granting tenure," Forde said, "the drive to begin collective bargaining was activated. If they wouldn't have done it, the idea wouldn't have gotten off the ground."

Since their decision, the regents have accepted a plan that will insure that the number of tenured faculty members will not exceed 75 per cent of the total amount eligible. They also granted tenure to 85 of the 89 professors who originally were blocked.

Other complaints that helped in the drive for collective bargaining, according to Forde, were the lack of faculty participation in university government and the level of faculty salaries. Sometimes, he said, the university administration ignores faculty committees.

Signature cards

AAUP took the lead in the drive in May by collecting signature cards on which faculty members indicated if they were in favor of calling for an election to establish collective bargaining. According to Donald Haack, engineering mechanics professor

who tabulated the findings, about 60 per cent of the UNL faculty members were in favor of the election. He called the figure "very conservative."

Before an election can be called, Haack said, the court will have to decide what parts of the university will be represented by the bargaining unit. The court can accept or reject the proposals or develop a bargaining unit, he added.

Although AAUP has submitted a proposed unit, they would not necessarily become the representatives of the faculty, he said. Other unions, such as the American Federation of Teachers, could be elected as the bargaining agent.

Groups wishing to appear on the ballot must do so by petition, Haack said.

According to Patrick Healy, lawyer for AAUP, the proposed bargaining unit consists of all full-time members of UNL who have academic rank and are not administrators. The College of Law and College of Dentistry asked to be excluded, Healey said.

Regents object

"The Board of Regents has objected to the proposed unit because they think UNL, the medical center and the others out west should be included," Healey said.

Adam Breckenridge, vice chancellor for Academic Affairs, said he has "no idea" of what effect the collective bargaining process would have on the university.

Franklin Eldridge, animal science professor and Faculty Senate president, said the issue has not been discussed at any senate meetings yet, but said local AAUP president, John Robinson, will give a progress report at the senate's Sept. 9 meeting.

After the report, Eldridge said, a motion could be made to act on the matter and then an official opinion would be made.



Photo by Steve Boerner

A cigarette doesn't seem to bother this intent fiddler at the Brownsville Country Music Festival. Story and more photos on p. 16.

Committee seeks standard occupational training

By Ann Owens

Beginning this fall, a legislative interim study committee is "attempting to determine the proper roles for postsecondary schools in Nebraska," according to Sen. Jerome Warner of Waverly.

The committee of nine state senators will attempt to increase efficiency and eliminate duplication in occupational training offered by the University of Nebraska, state colleges and technical community colleges, according to committee chairman Warner.

"What we have now is duplication in academic and vocational technical training offerings," Warner said. "The result is mediocre training in both areas due to financial overextension."

Acting chancellor selection

Vice chancellors said likely choices

By Rex Seline

An acting chancellor for the Lincoln campus may be named as early as the beginning of next week, according to NU President D.B. Varner.

Varner declined to discuss individuals being considered for the position and said campus leaders will be consulted before any decision is made.

"The decision hasn't been made yet, and it won't be until after I've had the chance to consult with the present vice chancellors, the ASUN president, the president of the Faculty Senate and the NU Board of Regents," Varner said.

He also said final responsibility for the appointment will rest with the regents, who will meet this weekend.

"Best bet"

According to ASUN President Jim Say, "probably the best bet" for acting chancellor is one of the present vice

Action taken by the committee includes talking with governing boards and administrative officers, according to Warner.

Reviewing information

"The Legislature is reviewing information they have on the situation," he said, "and will probably come up with some firm suggestions in the next year."

Public understanding of the committee's study and goals is important, Warner said. "Some people believe the committee's purpose, to coordinate postsecondary schools, boils down to proposing an independent board with authority over the situation."

"Rather," he continued, "the coordinating process should take place through the Legislature because all colleges

depend on the Legislature appropriation process for funding," he said.

Voluntary organizations

Whereas the Legislature deals with policy changes, voluntary organizations in various postsecondary institutions have sprung up throughout the state to discuss career training and course credit exchanges, Warner said.

"Administrators and governing boards are responsible for that sort of thing," he said, "but state-wide policy dealing with post secondary education must be handled by the Legislature."

If each institution's role in postsecondary education is determined when the study ends, it is feasible that their governing boards can remain unchanged, Warner said.

Along with the legislative interim study committee—a commission appointed by Gov. J. J. Exon, the 1202 Commission—is investigating the possibility of unnecessary career training duplication, he said.

"The 1202 Commission, with representatives from each institution, has minimal authority," Warner said. "They can't pass legislation themselves, but are able to make recommendations."

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Weather

Wednesday: Sunny and cooler with highs in the mid to upper 80s. Winds northerly from 5 to 15 mph.

Wednesday night: Clear and cooler with lows of 55 to 60.

Thursday: Mostly sunny with highs of 85 to 90.

everything is real tentative," he said.

Among those who have been rumored to be in consideration is Steven Sample, NU vice president for Academic Affairs, according to Say. But Sample's candidacy reportedly has its drawbacks.

"Somebody has mentioned Sample, but there still are glimmerings of autonomy between the campuses and the system's administration (of which Sample is a part)," Say said. "Apparently some of the faculty would be perturbed at the idea and think it appears they're trying to centralize things even more."

Other vice chancellors that might rate consideration as acting chancellor include: Adam Breckenridge, vice chancellor for academic affairs; Miles Tommerrassen, vice chancellor for business and finance; and Ken Bader, vice chancellor for student affairs, according to Say.

Candidate comments

He has yet to make up his mind for his suggestion to President Varner but

commented on potential candidates:

"Breckenridge has only been vice chancellor a month after serving as acting vice chancellor. It wouldn't seem logical to have him named acting chancellor only one month after he was acting vice chancellor."

"As far as I know, everybody has been satisfied with the job Bader is doing now. I don't think they've been looking for someone to replace him."

"I don't know Tommerrassen well enough to know any sort of good points or bad points about him."

Chancellor input

A permanent chancellor will be named perhaps by the end of the year, according to Varner.

Varner characterized the system's "track record" in the search for administrators in the past as "good."

"I was very enthusiastic about Chancellor James Zumberge. What we have to do is try to strike a balance of qualities in our selection of chancellor," he said.