

## Minus budgeting creates deficit, bittersweet effects

It's a mathematical fact that a negative plus a negative equals a negative. This mathematical tidbit applies not only to the classroom, but to the UNL budget as well.

For the past six years, UNL's minus budgeting—building a deficit into the budget to allow for more spending—has accumulated a \$1.5 million deficit. That's quite a big minus sign, and one we hope to never see again.

As Ned Hedges, vice chancellor for academic affairs, explained, this type of budgeting is perfectly normal and a common business tech-

### More RHA power could improve clout

The author is Mike Gibson, a junior journalism/political science major from Omaha. He is 1977-78 RHA president.

The Residence Hall Association was created to coordinate hall activities so that two halls didn't schedule their formal on the same night. But halls need not inform RHA of their activities, so coordination is slight.

RHA also was to be a communications body, passing good ideas from hall to hall. But again, the halls need not inform RHA of those ideas, so halls with problems suffer.

## opinion<sup>guest</sup>

Most importantly, RHA was to be the spokesman for the halls, flexing the muscle that only 5,100 residence hall students can exert when acting as one. The RHA Council, made up of representatives from each hall, would decide what policies to lobby for, what actions to take on behalf of residence hall students.

But someone forgot to give RHA the power to enforce those decisions.

For example, last month we voted to put up signs announcing the ASUN elections, but not one sign was posted. It was a good decision, but a toothless one. Like all our decisions, the only way to implement it was to recommend to an administrator that he adopt it.

In short, RHA can do nothing but recommend, request, suggest, advise, try to persuade, convince, cajole, entreat, beg, and plead—especially plead.

The result? RHA is straight-jacketed, unable to stand up and fight for student rights; we are paralyzed, unable to protect residence hall students and their interests.

Why not liberate RHA from its handcuffs and give it the power it needs to help students—the power of the purse.

Every semester, \$3.50 of every student's room and board rate goes directly to hall government. Why not combine that money with the \$5,000 RHA receives annually from renting refrigerators and make one large pot, from which the hall representatives would allocate money to the halls and RHA?

The advantages? For the first time in years, both RHA and the hall governments would have to justify their budgets and prove they planned to use student money wisely.

Also, with a hall's budget at stake, it would send its best people to defend that budget by serving as RHA representatives; with better people in it, RHA can do more for students.

Third, interhall coordination would improve. If five halls wanted to show a movie, RHA could pay for it with one check; currently, five people must fill out five vouchers and write five checks on five accounts—a bookkeeper's nightmare.

But those benefits are small compared to the main one: power. RHA, now the largest single group of students on campus, would, with a strong government, become the largest single organized group of students on campus. Instead of 11 sticks unable to bear more weight than that of hall matters, RHA would be able to unite its 11 halls, tie them into one thick club able to wield a mighty blow.

And the weight of that club would add immeasurably to the punches RHA has been able to land this year on parking permit prices, floor lounges and student fees and speakers.

Of course, this proposal is not a cure-all nor is it perfect, and I urge you to let your hall governments or myself know what you think of it.

I should mention that the plan does have one huge disadvantage: once given power, we might misuse it. We might make a mistake, which I can honestly say we haven't made this year.

nique.

By budgeting more than the actual money allows, UNL colleges and departments are able to plan for long-range programs and goals that may be limited by the actual dollars in their coffers. In other words, they can reach for the stars even though they may be standing in a trench.

But this fine budgeting technique has gone too far—to the tune of a necessary \$800,000 cut in planned budget expenditures. This does not mean that actual expenditures will be axed by \$800,000—only that next year \$800,000 cannot be budgeted. By paring down the budget a little here and a little there, UNL colleges and departments must cumulatively eliminate \$800,000 from next year's budget proposals.

So, although the repercussions of this \$1.5 million deficit won't be felt immediately, its long-range effects might rate a couple readings on a seismograph...but that doesn't necessarily mean bad vibrations.

Colleges and departments are going to have to

find the least harmful way to cut their budgets. Classes may have to be expanded to allow more students per section, or sections may have to be cut. Teachers may be burdened with heavier-than-average class loads.

Obviously, repercussions of an \$800,000 cut will rock a couple boats.

But this budget cut has benefits, too. Forcing budget planners to compress their proposals into the lowest cost budget possible may squeeze out some of the duplication that inevitably exists in UNL budgets. More careful budget planning would result, and that is something that we, as taxpayers and tuition payers, cannot complain about.

Hedges said that precautions are being taken now to avoid duplication of exorbitant deficits in the future.

Although UNL's \$1.5 million dollar minus sign has some good, as well as bad, effects, it is a bittersweet coincidence we would not like to see happen again.

## Duve's stop/go decisions create stir

First John Duve, parking and traffic coordinator, says he is going to quit. Five weeks later, we find out that he's changed his mind and is going to stay.

Duve's first announcement was greeted with general cries of relief from many students. Those happy cries turned into sobs when Duve "unresigned" last week.

If it weren't for the fact that Duve has been such a controversial character, his resignation/unresignation probably would have passed with little more than a news blurb in this paper.

But since Duve's office has drawn more than just the customary complaints against parking, including allegations that he lied about budget figures, we need to look into the matter a little more closely. (By the way, members of the Parking Advisory Board successfully pointed out the "incongruities" in Duve's budget figures last semester.)

According to Duve, he asked to withdraw his resignation because he feels "the atmosphere is here (at UNL) for me now to continue with parking and traffic." He cited the need to make his office and its functions more visible and to improve the parking and traffic office's public relations.

We cannot disagree with such improvements! Duve's office needs them badly, especially in light of the criticism his office—and Duve in particular has received from the general university community.

Despite the apparently innocent circumstances surrounding Duve's job decisions, students who have worked with—and against—him suspect that the situation is not as simple as it seems.

But on the surface, not much has changed. Duve will continue in the same duties and at the same salary (\$18,820).

He and UNL Business Manager Ray Coffey are trying to turn the "adversary" role they perceive the parking and traffic director's job as into an "advocate" role.

Rumors of creating a separate parking department have been refuted by administrators.

So, for the time being, nothing is too shaken up in the parking and traffic office on Avery Road. But for those vigilant observers of this office's activities who are shaken up by Duve's job juggling, we can be sure they'll be watching the office even more closely now.



## letters to the editor

Our idealistic UPC is considering bringing in Linda Ronstadt and The Eagles for concerts. They think these "big name" performers will gladly walk into Lincoln and perform without their established promoters.

Little do they (UPC) know that no big name artists will perform in Lincoln without their promoter. Contemporary Productions or Schon Productions will not stand for it. It is known that men like Chris Fritz or Irv Zuckerman will make a big mess of the matter when the UPC attempts to promote a touring artist.

It will take a bit of magic to eliminate the promoter for a Lincoln concert.

Here are some alternatives. First, seriously study the financial needs of a promoter. They are very, very helpful when it comes to arrangements for the show. Let's not alienate them or we in Lincoln could find ourselves driving to Omaha, or worse yet, Des Moines for any and all concerts.

Second, we use Memorial Stadium about 24 hours every year watching Big Red. Think we could fit a 50,000 for an outdoor festival a la California Jam I and II? I think we could.

A concert like that would draw Aerosmith, Heart, Foreigner, Nugent, Foghat and probably Kansas. These are the artists who play outdoor dates.

If the man upstairs doesn't like us scratching his carpet, would UPC consider using the perfect spot of Mabel Lee Hall's field for the show? And why doesn't Cornstock take place there? Sure it's East Campus' show, but I'll bet

more people would come if it was at Mabel Lee.

Third, use the Sports Complex too. It would be better to keep the mellow crowds in there. Jackson Browne, Linda, James Taylor and The Eagles.

Finally, UPC will have to realize it costs a lot to make a lot. By removing the promoter and his talents we will be at a bargaining disadvantage. With rising ticket prices we've got to book artists who will fill the house.

Someone try to tell me that if UNL booked a big outdoor festival with the above artists it wouldn't sell out. Nuff said!

Danny Darst  
Sophomore, pre-law

### Fees, revisited

The editorials concerning NUPIRG and YAF sounded hysterical (and I don't mean funny). It seems that the Daily Nebraskan editors consider themselves next in line for fund cutting. In view of these editorials, maybe this would not be such a bad idea. The Daily Nebraskan still has not addressed itself to the real issue: should students be forced to support political organizations they are opposed to.

Concerning Bill Skoneki's allegations that YAF does not hold meetings within its organization to determine the mailing and content of letters it sends out, I cannot

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