

Senators accused of fixing election might be stuffed out of UNO offices

By Kris Hansen

The results of a handwriting analysis will affect the outcome of a ballot stuffing charge during last spring's UNO student election, according to Student Body President Paul Hoffmann.

Two former senators have been charged with the ballot stuffing incident. Investigation committee member Ed Johnson said the two were suspected because of suspicious actions at the polling places, along with several incriminating statements.

Hoffmann said the ballot stuffing affected the outcome of three senatorial seats and changed the balance in several others.

"I hope this will go to the student court in less than two weeks, and that the court will declare the race results adjusted. We'll also have to remove three senators and instate the real winners," Hoffmann said.

Replacements named

Business senators Robert Brown and Robert Furr and Education senator Gayle Eckhardt may be removed from office and Carol Treller, Doug Hedlund and Larry Bernardino would be sworn in.

Hoffmann explained how the false ballots could be detected.

"When a student votes, two poll workers initial his ballot and cross off his name. When we calculated the

ballots after the election, we had too many. We cross-checked, and found four bunches of incorrect initials—people who hadn't worked at those times or with those people," he said.

The false ballots and the suspects' signatures were analyzed by an expert from the Omaha police department. Hoffmann said he would study the results this week and then make a recommendation to Ronald Beer, vice chancellor of education and student services.

Accused may respond

"After the information is submitted, I have to determine the strength of the charges and provide an opportunity for the persons charged to respond," Beer said. Courses of action ranged from no action through disciplinary probation to removal from school, he added.

Beer said the student committee did a thorough job of investigating the problem, and concluded that ballot stuffing occurred.

"Since they used a person described as an expert to do the handwriting analysis, a lot will depend on his statement and the strength of his results," Beer said. Beer will then determine what action will be taken.

Hoffmann said all action taken by the student government so far still is legal, despite the uncertain race results.

"These people were sworn in and took office, so nothing is affected in the legislature," he said.

UNL speech professor named editor of journal

Gustav W. Friedrich, professor and chairman of UNL's department of speech communications, was recently elected to a high office in the largest of four regional speech associations, and was also named recently to be editor of one of three major speech education journals.

Friedrich was elected vice-president of the Central States Speech Association, which includes members in the speech communications field from 13 states from Minnesota to Oklahoma and Colorado to Ohio.

Friedrich also is editing for the first time the journal "Communications Education," a publication of the National Speech Communications Association.

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