

Simmons...

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"I represent the gas company here and the telephone company here and they've had to have easements every now and then across university lands but I just abstain from voting. It hasn't been anything serious that I've observed yet."

The biggest problem facing the university now is money, Simmons believes

"The cost of running the university is increasing significantly more than the resources of the state are increasing. There's going to have to be some change, and there's a lot of difference of opinion as to what changes should be made. . . .

Shrink the university

"My personal opinion is the university will have to become smaller, concentrate more on a smaller area. I think the state of Nebraska will have to join the Uniform Compact on Higher Education and contract with other states to provide certain portions of instruction. I don't think the University of Nebraska can be the kind of quality in everything that we're entitled to have good quality in. We really need to get smaller instead of bigger."

Simmons said the Uniform Compact on Higher Education is an organization of several states in the region which pool their higher education resources together. He said the Nebraska Legislature would have a chance next session to decide whether Nebraska would join or not.

One example of pooling resources, he said, is the UNL veterinary medicine program. UNL students who want to major in veterinary medicine must go to one of the universities which Nebraska pays to let them attend there.

Conversely, other states which do not have dental programs pay NU to let their students study at the dental school here, he said.

There are about 30 programs nationwide offered by NU which are offered by other schools, he added.

'Not anti-UNO'

Simmons, who was born in Omaha, has often been accused of being anti-UNO, but he said that's not true. He said he was in favor of the former Omaha University being admitted to the University system in 1968, even though he was not a regent then. He was a member of the State Board of Education, though, and said he was on the committee that first recommended the action.

"I don't think UNO should be a separate university, and people in Omaha think it should be.

"I am in favor of the Omaha campus being a part of the University of Nebraska run as a state institution, rather than just for the benefit of the people of Omaha.

Business professor honored for service

Robert T. Justis, director of the UNL Small Business Center, has been honored by the U.S. Small Business Institute for his service as a member of the institute's national steering committee.

Justis was a member of the six-member steering committee for five years, until it was dissolved last February. The steering committee, whose members were chosen from colleges and universities from coast to coast, was responsible for refining policies and procedures with regard to working with institutions of higher learning in the development of courses and curriculums dealing with small business. There are approximately 450 colleges involved in small business education programs.

A certificate awarded by the U.S. Small Business Institute cites Justis for "important public service rendered" as a member of the steering committee.

Justis was a member of the faculty at Texas Tech University when he was named to the committee. He came to UNL in September 1977 to direct the College of Business Administration's newly created Center for the Study of Small Business.

When I oppose some of the things they want to do for non-educational purposes, in other words to help business in Omaha, they think I'm opposed to the whole campus, which is not true."

Downtown center wrong

He said the downtown center, which is scheduled to become part of UNO but located in downtown Omaha, is designed to bring people downtown rather than to improve education. He said the money spent to build the downtown center should have been used to improve the present campus.

In another matter concerning UNO, Simmons last year proposed that the UNO football team be discontinued in favor of improving its soccer team. The proposal did not pass, and Simmons received a lot of criticism from Omahans and others on the issue.

A former NU track star, Simmons said he was not sure whether athletics was overemphasized or not, but added the quality of education was not being interfered with because of athletics.

"The academic quality of the athletes is improving all the time."

Football 'a symbol'

He called the football team "a great symbol to the state of Nebraska."

"The Big Red football team is not just the university's team, it's the state's team. I think athletics is good for people."

Simmons' 30-year-old son, now an attorney, also lettered in track at NU.

He said the tickets to football games and other university events are not compensation. Regents have a right to know what is going on on the campuses and should be able to observe the quality of various functions, he explained.

Orange Bowl tickets

Tickets to the Orange Bowl, he said, are furnished by the Orange Bowl Committee, not the university.

Last February, Simmons voted against using student fees to support political speakers, but says that he feels that in most cases student fees are used properly, even though he feels they should be lower.

He has voted against approving the use of alcohol on campus, and said he thinks it probably never will be authorized.

He is against it, he said, because there are so many minors living on campus.

"There are plenty of places to go for those who want liquor," he said.

Simmons is against having a voting student regent because he or she would not have a large enough constituency.

"If they're citizens of the state they already have a regent representing their district."

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