

'The Harvard of the Plains'—Regents' hope for NU

By Brenda Moskovits

The NU Board of Regents Friday adopted guidelines, aiming toward making the university system what Omaha Regent James Moylan called "the Harvard of the Plains."

But the system will have to do so without creating a lot of new university positions since NU President Ronald Roskens declared "a moratorium" on creating new positions and filling vacancies without his approval.

The twelve planning guidelines are a 10-year plan prepared by the regents' planning subcommittee and presented at their November meeting.

Specific implementation plans should be ready by September.

Roskens' comments added

The guidelines were supplemented by a preamble added Friday from comments made by Roskens to the board.

"In Nebraska we are accustomed to reasonably often referring to number one, aspiring to be number one, to be among the top, to be best," Roskens said.

Nebraska should strive to be "one of the strongest academic institutions in this general area."

"If we carefully manage the resources we now have... I believe we could equally aspire to become one of the best academic institutions in this region."

Plan's guidelines

The guidelines include:

- encouraging research, scholarship and creativity,
- improving federal research, instruction and scholarship support,
- combining graduate programs and developing a few new nationally-recognized graduate programs,
- reviewing undergraduate curriculum,
- increasing the number of merit-based scholarship and fellowships,
- increasing program coordination with area universities,
- increasing off-campus cooperative academic programs,
- emphasizing faculty merit salary increases,
- increasing the number of women and minorities employed,
- redistributing state funds to meet inflation and improving a limited number of programs,

—remodeling existing buildings to minimize new construction,

—reviewing the effectiveness of the university's business and administrative offices.

Regents give support

Roskens told the board that he will work closely with the three campus' chancellors in enforcing the policy.

He asked the regents for their approval or disapproval and received their unanimous support.

In other business, the regents tabled a proposal to give preferential out of state tuition rates to UNL students living in Potawattamie county residents and second, it area.)

The board received UNO Chancellor Del Weber's report recommending \$32 per credit hour tuition rate last month, but Friday tabled the matter pending an at-

torney general's opinion at the advice of University Counsel Richard Wood.

Resident tuition is now \$22.50 per credit hour and the outstate rate is \$61 per credit hour.

Wood questioned the legality of the preferential tuition rate as a violation of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

'Two-tiered' problems

He described complications as "two-tiered."

First, he said, the plan singles out Potawattamie county residence and second, it singles out the UNO campus, excluding UNL and the Medical Center.

Wood said there is a "potential of a class action suit being instituted by a non-resident student on behalf of all non-resident students outstate."

"My legal advice," Wood said, "is that I don't think it's viable and the university could expose itself to some liability."

The motion was tabled unanimously.

In other action:

—the regents academic affairs subcommittee decided not to consider the housing office's recommendation to experiment with 24-hour undergraduate residence hall visitation on two floors of Selleck Quadrangle,

—approved a policy allowing the chancellors to approve minor budget increases no more than one percent the annual total budget,

—authorized signing the Orange Bowl football contract,

—approved paying \$9,740.09 to Kutak, Rock and Huie for services not officially authorized by the Eppley Institute.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Coach Cipriano expressed his concern over the officiating at Saturday's game and subsequently drew 3 technicals and was booted out of the game. See story on page 10.

Money root of school problems—Hansen

By Brenda Moskovits

Editor's note: This is the fifth in a series of in-depth profiles of the eight members of the NU Board of Regents.

NU Regent Kermit Hansen of Omaha, as a bank executive, is interested in the university's money matters.

But the chairman of the board's business affairs subcommittee combines that concern with one for quality education.

The university system's problems today are "more monetary than academic," says Hansen.

"I really haven't for quite some time had taxpayers who say you ought to cut out or eliminate any kind of a program.

"But," Hansen said the taxpayers do have this message: "I'm not sure there is anything more in the sock I can give you. Therefore, we are looking to you (the regents) as the governmental body and the administration to say that we eliminate this and consolidate that."

Rather than increasing students' and parents' financial burden by raising tuition, Hansen applauds Friday's university efforts to re-evaluate programs and priorities to give the best possible education per dollar.

The regents' constituency is twofold; the university community, including faculty, staff and students and the Nebraska taxpayer, Hansen said.

"The balance is shifting more to the side of the taxpayer because of inflationary impact and because of the growing taxpayer concern about the level of the tax

dollar," he said.

Hansen, chairman of the board of U.S. National Bank in Omaha, graduated from NU in 1939 and was a member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity. Two of his four children graduated from University of Nebraska campuses.

Hansen served as a retired Brigadier General of the U.S. Army reserve.

At various times in his life he has worked in advertising, as a newspaper columnist, assistant business manager and as a radio announcer and program director.

He also has been affiliated with numerous civic groups including the Omaha Symphony, Ak-Sar-Ben and the Nebraska Safety Council.

The twelve long-range planning goals adopted Friday by the board especially appeal to him. They stress merit rather than across the board salary increases, renovation of existing buildings as opposed to building new ones, careful review of the university's programs, particularly to coordinate functions with other area institutions.

Hansen said he also approved of a moratorium on new university positions.

The dichotomy between getting qualified faculty members and keeping salary costs down is difficult, says Hansen.

He denies that Nebraska has had an increase in the number of faculty members leaving because of low pay, saying it has been "fairly constant" over the last five years.

To raise salaries, "maybe you collapse

two positions in order to see the top five people are compensated," he suggested.

Perhaps holding more seminars, encouraging scholarly activity and adopting liberal policies toward leaves of absence would help bring and keep faculty he said.

Hansen admits eliminating positions is "not easy" and would mean bigger work loads. But he said it is one alternative that must be considered.

Academically, "limited or very slight increases in resources is going to be a real testing period," says Hansen.

"We are really better than some from the outside or some from the inside perceive us to be."

He cited chemistry, agronomy, journalism, architecture and law college work with water rights law as areas "we should toot our horn about."

Many of these programs were helped by the university's Areas of Excellence program and have produced results "nothing short of dramatic," he said.

"This kind of selective consideration we have to take a hard look at.

"First, you have to know what your priorities are. Good planning is exactly that."

Increasing excellence in one area while keeping the budget down will mean sacrificing weak programs, Hansen acknowledges.

"It could mean to give up that program that produces 20 graduates in the last 20 years."

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Daily Nebraskan photo

Omaha Regent Kermit Hansen

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