

op/ed

NU, Harvard differ in more than just climbing ivy

It was Saturday night again, and instead of partying with some wild and wonderful women, I was telling roommate about a *World-Herald* headline which read "NU to Rival Harvard?"

michael gibson

I told him the headline was written after the NU Board of Regents approved long-term educational guidelines which Regent James Moylan said would make Nebraska "The Harvard University of the Plains."

Roommate allowed that the plan was probably well and good, but he still thought the presence of a question mark in the headline was most appropriate.

"After all," he said, "need I remind you that this is not one of the two or three greatest institutes of higher education in the western world—or even the western Cornbelt?"

Not the top

"Indeed, last Friday a very qualified source said that 'Most observers don't consider us to be among the top institutions in the Big Eight.'"

"Have you been reading the new Buzz Book definitions again?" I charged.

"No, just listening to NU President Ronald Roskens," chortled roommate.

So much for my defense of my glorious alma mater.

But roommate persisted, asking how the regents planned to accomplish all this. I told him their guidelines called for NU to increase research, strengthen its graduate program, obtain more federal grants, and maintain its undergraduate "reputation for excellence."

"Maintain?" was roommate's only comment.

Make suggestions

I was perturbed by now and told him instead of being cynical he should suggest how to bring NU up to Harvard's level.

"Well," he mused, "last week Harvard students could listen to CIA director Stansfield Turner, former Defense Secretary Eliot Richardson, and several other important personages speak on campus."

Somehow I had to admit that they probably weren't your average non-political speakers.

But roommate had just begun to fight. "Furthermore," he said, "I suspect they get more concerned over finding a new chemistry department chairman than we do finding a football coach. And no one at Harvard is suggesting another stadium expansion, as our regents are, at a cost of \$4 million."

Students are adults

I was going to respond, until I recalled

Harvard spent four times that much money last year on just its library.

"In addition," continued roommate, "the Harvard administration has made a remarkable discovery: students are adults. That means that they should be expected to behave as adults and treated as adults, which means that 'In loco parentis,' visitation rules and alcohol prohibition are as dead at Harvard as teacher evaluation handbooks at Nebraska."

"Which reminds me," he snickered, "at Nebraska, teacher evaluations are never made public. At Harvard, the administration and a student-elected committee publish student evaluations about the 200

courses—and their teachers—on campus with the highest enrollment.

Ask the horticulture club

Considering what had happened to ASUN's attempt last year to do something similar, I suspected roommate had become long on pain and short on common sense.

"Perhaps," he chuckled. "However, I am beginning to suspect that the only way to make Nebraska into an Ivy League school like Harvard is to see what the Horticulture Club has in the way of *Hedera Helix*."

I supposed I shouldn't have, but I had to.

"What's that?" I asked
"Climbing English Ivy."

letters

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sary national connections and record of research activity. Time spent writing proposals and hustling is time not spent on undergraduates.

Current university emphasis all suggest that undergraduate instruction will become even less important at UNL and other "major" universities than it is now. Statistically, moreover, the situation can only become worse as student enrollment levels off and declines in the 1980s.

According to the American Council on Education, Congress's extension of mandatory retirement from 65 to 70 years of age will mean that there will be no new faculty positions available to young teachers from 1983 to 1989. Already there are very few positions open to new Ph.D.'s. Reading between the lines, this means that undergraduates at UNL and elsewhere will be stuck with the present faculty for the most part for a good long while, and this faculty will be growing older and older.

This situation leads to one question: why is the university downplaying undergraduate education by attempting to ex-

pand graduate programs when the Ph.D.'s already in the pipeline can't find teaching positions? It's a question students, parents of students and taxpayers interested in undergraduate education should be addressing to every legislator and regent in Nebraska.

By the way, the teacher Michael Gibson cites as one of the best he's had at UNL, one who has been a runner-up three times as the best teacher in Arts and Sciences, earned less while teaching at UNL than the beginning teacher with a B.A. in the Lincoln Public Schools.

Joseph P. Bernt
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Palestinians shouldn't pay

Why is it so difficult for people to understand the Palestinian's predicament? All they are asking is that they be given back their homes which were taken from them in 1948. Is it such a terrible thing to wish to return to the land that has belonged to them for centuries—the land over which

they toiled and which they love?

Palestine was taken away from its rightful inhabitants and given to the people of the Jewish religion so they could establish a homeland for themselves. The Jewish feel they need their own country because of the oppression they have received in the past, particularly during World War II. Do they think they are the only people in the world who have been persecuted?

People in the U.S. are always screaming for human rights. When Jews from all over the world swarmed into Palestine, the Palestinians were forced to leave their homes. Now they have to live in refugee camps. Where are the human rights in this?

The Palestinians should not have to pay for the oppression the Jews have suffered at the hands of the rest of the world.

If the U.S. thinks the Jewish people need a homeland, perhaps it should offer them some land in this country.

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