

Lobbyist coordinates university policies, legislative data

By Kevin Field

In a behind-the-scenes position, William Swanson bridges the gap between NU and the Nebraska Legislature.

Swanson is vice president of government regulations and corporate secretary to the NU Board of Regents. He also is the university's only registered lobbyist, representing UNO, UNL and the medical center.

"I've always had a deep interest in the university which continued through the legislature," he said, "and when this position was offered, I accepted."

Swanson was appointed to the position in December, 1974.

Swanson graduated from NU in 1947. He was a state senator from 1967 to 1972. Before that he was the director of the state real estate commission.

The duties of his present position are varied and numerous, ranging from preparing the minutes from the regent's meetings to speaking at committee hearings in the legislature.

Daily involvement

Being a lobbyist for the university is different than working for many other groups, he said.

"We are very involved on a day to day basis with the legislature, especially when it is in session," he said.

However, this involvement is not always direct, he added. Many bills that may seem to have nothing to do with the university are of interest, he said.

For example, any bill relating to hospitals or medical care is of concern to the NU Medical Center, he said, and added that this is true for many legislative bills.

The senators also use the university to research bills and they frequently call him for information, Swanson said.

Swanson can locate the correct people on campus and coordinate the information with the university's policies as set by the regents.

Advance discussion

Regents discuss many issues months in advance of the legislative session. He said he generally knows the board's position on policy matters, and acts as a spokesman for the board at hearings.

Current legislature issues concerning the university include the creation of a regional veterinary college, mandatory retirement age for faculty members, the construction of a theatre arts building and remodeling of the Temple Building.

Swanson gave no opinion about the outcome of the veterinary college issue, since legislation still was in committee and he had not heard the results of any votes.

He said the regents believe it would be good for the state, but federal funds must

be available. He added that Nebraska's share of contributed funds come from new money and not from cuts in existing programs.

The Temple Building, he said, is on the board's priority list, but the university has a policy of remodeling existing structures and not building new ones.

Swanson believes the relationship between the university and the legislature

is, on the whole, very good and that differences of opinion are natural.

In addition to his lobbying efforts, he edits a weekly legislative digest containing a description of all bills that may concern the university. It is available to campus personnel so they can know what is happening in the legislature, and help determine if a bill should be followed and which view to hold.

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

A	T	O	N	S	P	O	T	A	H	A			
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B	E	E	N	O	V	I	L	S	A	L	O	N	
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S	T	E	N										

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UNL offers Chinese course

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The UNL Modern Language Department next semester will offer a special topics course in conversational Chinese in addition to the regular Japanese language courses.

Professor Nelly Cheng said the course will involve the basic mandarin Chinese language. The course which is offered through the extension service is not a group requirement, but is a quick way to learn practical Chinese, Cheng said. The special topic is listed in the Modern Languages section of the 1979-80 course catalogue.

Cheng also instructs the four sections of Japanese language. Next fall two courses in beginning Japanese will be offered with continuing courses offered in the spring.

One of the fall courses deals with an introduction to sounds, structures and the writing system. The other course provides students with the reading of moderately difficult Japanese texts.

Cheng said 16 hours of credit can be earned in the Japanese language to help fulfill group requirements. She added that the classes help students become familiar with Japanese culture and students have an opportunity to practice speaking with native Japanese outside of class. Students participating in the Japanese program are also eligible to qualify for a Kawasaki Travel Award for a year of study in Japan.



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