

Davidson, administrators to discuss Dobson situation

By Gordon Johnson

UNL administrators will meet with Marianne Davidson Friday to discuss charges brought by her against UNL Professor of Banking Wayne Dobson.

Davidson alleged last spring that Dobson missed 20 percent of his classes for one semester because he was teaching at the School of Banking held at the Center for Continuing Education. She also alleged some of Dobson's consultantship activities violated university bylaws.

UNL Chancellor Roy Young and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ned Hedges will attend the Friday meeting with Davidson.

As a prerequisite to meeting with officials, Davidson requested the meeting be recorded to avoid confusion about what was said.

SHE ALSO requested that Dobson and Gary Schwendiman, dean of the business college, be at the meeting for direct questioning.

However, in a letter to Young, Schwendiman stated that neither he nor Dobson will answer further questions about the matter and that he won't allow "further fishing expeditions."

Young told Davidson that Dobson's presence would not be needed and Davidson agreed to the meeting without him.

Controversy over Dobson's activities has continued since the April meeting of the NU Board of Regents.

Prior to the meeting, Davidson brought her charges to the attention of Regent Robert Prokop of Wilber who then relayed them to the state senators from his district in a letter.

Because the charges were not on the agenda, Prokop said he went to the April meeting unprepared to discuss them.

HOWEVER AT THE meeting, Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island read a prepared statement commending Dobson's performance and at the same time rebutting charges made by Prokop.

Unable to show evidence for the charges, Prokop apologized to Dobson and the Board of Regents. He said in his statement that he washed his hands of the entire matter and would not bring it before the board again.

After the April meeting Prokop and Davidson met with NU President Ronald Roskens to discuss the charges.

According to Prokop and Davidson, Roskens assured them the charges against Dobson would not be discussed at the May meeting.

Questions about Dobson's activities were again brought to light at the June board meeting when Davidson tried to present her evidence in a 16 page report.

The regents did not allow her to appear because the time was allocated to former UNL student Robert McCoy of Hastings, who asked to let Davidson speak in his place.

AFTER THIS attempt at appearing, Davidson wrote a letter to the board requesting time to present her report at the July board meeting.

Regent Chairman Koefoot, turned down her request because he said he did not feel the board meeting was the place to carry out a personal attack.

"Evidently she must have a personal vendetta or she wouldn't be doing the things she has done," Koefoot said.

Another reason Koefoot said he turned down her request was because she should have first gone to the UNL administration before taking action to the board.

Koefoot said he had better things to do than go over the charges again.

However, Regent Ed Schwartzkopf of Lincoln said he would like to see all of the information come out so the issue can be resolved. The regents can't make a decision unless they have all the information, he said.

Schwartzkopf said that most of the comments he has received on Dobson have been in support of him.

AT THE JULY board meeting, after consulting with NU attorney Richard Wood, Koefoot recanted and granted Davidson a chance to speak at the September meeting. No meeting was scheduled for August.

Not giving Davidson a chance to speak would be in violation of the state's open meeting laws, Wood advised Koefoot.

Davidson said she is not sure whether she will attend the September meeting. She said her attendance will depend on the outcome of her meeting with Young and Hedges.

Because of administration inactivity in handling her complaints, Davidson said she contacted state senators Chris Beutler of Lincoln, George Burrows of Adams, Richard Maresh of Milligan and Harold Sieck of Pleasant Dale.

After meeting twice with Young and Schwendiman, Beutler said that some of the charges appear true.

BEUTLER SAID the two charges which appear true concern class absenteeism and outside paid consultantships.

The charge that Dobson missed some classes while the School of Banking was being held appears true, Beutler said.

"The days did correspond and Dobson was in charge of the School of Banking," he said, but added: "I don't know with certainty that Dobson was there."

Beutler also said it seemed clear that Dobson violated university bylaws by using university stationery for a survey done for the Cattle National Bank in Seward.

However, Beutler said he did not think Dobson was trying to "rip off" the system, but that Dobson's judgment may have been wrong.

BURROWS, MARESH and Sieck then met with Schwendiman and Dobson to go over the allegations. Sieck said that some of the charges have merit, but that the university seems to have taken care of them.

"There were just a couple of items that were on the shady side, but nothing very serious," Sieck said.

The consensus of the senators was that the regents should have handled the charges.

"The regents dropped the ball when the charges were first brought up," Sieck said.



Daily Nebraskan Photo

Todd Ways, Lincoln construction worker, takes time out from his work to get back to the books, as many students soon will. Ways is studying Mark Twain.

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