

ASUN keeps fighting tuition increase

By Cindy Coglianese

UNL student government has not given up its fight against this year's tuition increase, despite Friday approval of the 10 percent hike by the NU Board of Regents.

Committee considers stricter drug laws

By Michelle Carr

Hashish and hashish oil possession should carry a heavier penalty than marijuana possession, according to testimony heard Friday at a legislative study hearing.

The Judiciary Committee heard testimony concerning possible revisions in the state drug schedule. The committee also heard testimony on insanity used as a defense in trials and plea bargaining.

Steve Shaw, chief legislative counsel for the Nebraska State Patrol, told the committee that the drug schedule is inadequate because hashish and hashish oil possessors receive the same penalties as marijuana offenders. Shaw said hashish and hashish oil usually are 20 to 30 times stronger than most marijuana.

Shaw said a distinction should be made in the drug laws between marijuana and the stronger synthesized forms of marijuana, like hashish.

"Hashish is a very strong drug when you consider that it is now charged as marijuana," he said. He said that a person found guilty of possessing less than an ounce of marijuana can receive an infraction and a \$100 fine. This penalty is inequitable when applied to hashish and hashish oil, he said.

Robert Gibson, Lancaster deputy district attorney, said hashish and hashish oil are 30 to 60 times more potent than marijuana.

Gibson also told the committee that the Legislature could create greater penalties for certain controlled substances that are more dangerous. He cited the drug PCP, or "angel dust," as a "volatile hallucinogenic," which could draw a heavier penalty than other substances. He also noted barbituates and LSD as possible exceptions to current law.

"It is not difficult to find others (exceptions)," he said. Distribution of certain controlled substances could also carry a heavier fine, he said.

However, Gibson recommended that the Legislature keep the same drug schedule because changes might cause conflicts with the federal drug schedule, which is the same as the state's.

"If we retain the schedule as it is now, we are in line with the federal schedule," he said.

Gibson noted that an enhanced penalty for delivery or distribution of certain substances could be created without interfering with the present schedule.

The committee also heard testimony concerning insanity as a defense in trials. Amiran Elwork, a psychologist, who was representing the Nebraska Psychologists Association, said the association thinks insanity defense "makes a lot of sense."

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Mark Hirschfeld, a member of ASUN's Government Liaison Committee, said Sunday ASUN is studying alternatives to try to prevent the 10 percent hike. One of the alternatives, Hirschfeld said, is the possibility of circulating a referendum petition to put the increase to a vote of the state electorate. He said it is not known if the regents are subject to referendum.

Hirschfeld also said he met with ASUN President Bud Cuca and two ASUN senators Sunday to discuss the alternatives. The group decided to suggest a series of public hearings about the tuition hike as well as budget waste and inefficiency at the university.

The regents, Hirschfeld explained, do not have public hearings on tuition increases, so student government will take that initiative.

At the Friday meeting, Cuca pointed to the large audience and told the Board of Regents that the reason for "a few more faces in the gallery" was student concern over the 10 percent tuition increase.

Cuca moved for a zero percent increase and handed the board student petitions with 5,828 signatures opposing the increase. He then criticized the board for the lack of public hearings on the increase.

Cuca also questioned the reason for discrepancy between the high tuition rates and low faculty salaries. He said that Nebraska students pay the highest tuition of the Big Eight schools while NU faculty members receive the seventh lowest salaries in Big Eight.

ASUN senators Brad Belt also spoke about the tuition

increase. He said that the university's purpose is to provide educational opportunities and to assure students adequate return on their educational investment.

Belt asked the board why faculty salaries are so low when administrative salaries are above the national median.

Cuca's motion was defeated 5-2. Regents Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff and Robert Prokop of Wilber supporting the amendment. Regent James Moylan of Omaha was absent.

UNO Student Regent John Kirk then offered an amendment for a 5 percent increase in tuition. His motion was defeated with Simmons and Prokop again the only supporting Regents.

Cuca then told the board that the students wanted to get something tangible out of the tuition increase. He moved that \$70,000 be set aside for the Teachers Council for a teacher's assistant training program to emphasize language enhancement. Kirk, agreed that a program to teach English to foreign teachers' assistants would benefit students.

NU President Ronald Roskens said that the lack of English education in this area is a problem that needs attention but he did not want the university to become "isolationistic towards graduates of other lands who have difficulties speaking English."

Cuca withdrew that motion until ASUN has ample time to study such a program. He said he will introduce a new amendment at the next Regent's meeting.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Even though he missed this catch, Mike Arneson, a junior Natural Resources major along with his partner, Kelly Hornbacher were awarded third place in the freestyle competition at yesterday's Alpha Tau Omega Little Sister Frisbee Fest.

Students voice concern with 10 percent tuition increase

By Kathy Stokebrand

Although the 10 percent tuition increase was passed Friday by the NU Board of Regents, a crowd of students gathered on the north side of the Union that morning to protest the increase amid bagpipe strains of "There is No Place Like Nebraska."

ASUN, which initiated the rally, collected students' signatures on petitions and distributed announcements about the Regents meeting.

Hubert Brown, ASUN first vice president, read an open letter addressed to the regents that protested the tuition increase, bringing applause and shouts from the audience.

Brown said Nebraska will have the highest tuition in the Big Eight but will rank seventh in faculty salaries if the tuition raise goes into effect.

ASUN Sen. Brad Belt then explained where some tuition money is going. He said that from NU budget records it was found that administrative salaries are \$2,000-\$10,000 more than the national median salary of college administrators.

Belt said more of students' tuition money should go to teachers to increase the quality of education at UNL.

Mark Hirschfeld, Government Liaison Committee

member, spoke about the results from the survey his committee conducted. He said students believed the quality of education at UNL was declining and that the tuition increase would not mean an increase in the quality of education.

Students were then able to comment. Toni M. Turner, a four-year Regents scholar, said she was against the increase in tuition, although her tuition is paid if she maintains a required grade average.

Another student said the only way to get any attention was to strike and leave the classrooms empty. He said a crowded regents meeting wouldn't bring any results.

After the rally, Hirschfeld commented that he felt good about the response of students there. He said they were receptive and wanted to know where their money was going.

Phyl Albrecht, a graduate ASUN senator, expressed that same view. She said, "I just think the students are concerned about specifics. They want to know if it's going for improvement of instructors or what."

Tom Payne, junior, played the bagpipes before the rally. He said he had friends in ASUN and wanted to help

attract a crowd to bring attention to the tuition rise.

Others holding signs and collecting money for their tuition were Kurt Kuhlman, freshman; Stu Smith, freshman; and Gary Kirkegaard, junior. The three Selleck students were helping out some friends in ASUN with the rally, they said. Kuhlman said the entire Selleck building seemed to be getting involved with the tuition protest.

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