

Opinions differ on faculty freedom to give views

By Diane Andersen

Administrators have encouraged UNL faculty members to express their views to the Legislature this year, according to Ezekiel Bahar, president of the UNL faculty senate.

But not everyone agrees with that view. One official suggested administrators may "informally discourage" faculty from voicing their opinions.

Although only registered lobbyists are allowed to lobby privately, Bahar said NU President Ronald Roskens asked him to testify in budget hearings, signaling a "marked difference" from past years.

Roskens did not "in any way make us feel that we would be at cross-purposes with the university," Bahar

said. He said the faculty has been much more assertive this year and are ready to face the challenges of shared responsibility in running UNL.

UNL English Prof. Robert Haller, a registered lobbyist for the American Association of University Professors, said the administration has discouraged independent lobbying on university matters in order "not to present conflicting points of view."

Contrary views

Some of the views expressed this year in public hearings have been contrary to administration policy, Haller said. For example, he said, former Faculty Senate President William Campbell testified for LB108, a bill

supporting collective bargaining for higher education.

Roskens said he is glad faculty members have expressed their opinions in formal hearings. He said faculty and student consultation on a "wide variety of issues," not just budget requests, is encouraged.

Roskens said the opinions students and faculty convey to other Nebraskans in day-to-day conversation are just as important as the testimony they give in legislative hearings.

He said he hopes faculty members feel comfortable expressing any views they have, whether they agree with NU Central Administration statements or not. Roskens said this year is no different from last year in that he has always encouraged the faculty to express their views.

'Little Saigon' has old, new cultures

Lincoln's growing Vietnamese population has led to the creation of "Little Saigon," a neighborhood reflecting old and new cultures.

According to the Rev. Glenn Frazier of the Antelope Park Church of the Brethren, about 550 to 600 Vietnamese live in Lincoln—many in the neighborhood from 29th to 34th streets and from S to Vine streets.

Many of the Vietnamese are refugees, who, after battling the communist regime of Vietnam, are facing a new battle: adapting to life in the United States.

Luong Thi Vu has been learning to adapt for four and a half years, ever since her family arrived in Lincoln.

Luong lives near 34th and T streets, in the center of what she calls the "Vietnam Village," with her husband and six children. Her five-month-old baby reflects the cultural blend of the transplanted Vietnamese family: his name is Tony vu Tran. Luong said he was given an American name to conform with the culture he will grow up in and carries his father's name to retain his Vietnamese background.

Rice, pizza—and chicken

Other aspects of a merged American-Vietnamese life-style are evident by looking around Luong's spotless house: resting against the wooden bannister leading to the second floor of the frame house is a 100-pound bag of rice. The family depletes that stock in a week or two, she said, explaining that rice is eaten with every meal. Pizza, Kentucky Fried Chicken and beef stew have become family favorites as well, she added.

The sewing machine in the dining room symbolizes Luong's trade. She was a seamstress at Magee's clothing store downtown before she had her last child.

She said she sews almost all of the family's clothing because the American retail shops generally do not carry sizes small enough for the small-boned Vietnamese.

Although "everything's different" from her homeland, Luong said she likes living in Lincoln.

"I don't like to go out in the snow, however," she adds, capsulizing what seems to be a widely held Oriental view of Nebraska's continental climate.

Climate

Despite the cultural differences between the two countries, the climate is the most difficult adjustment, according to Nga Nguyen.

"The snow looks pretty but it doesn't feel good," said the freshman language major at UNL, one of 45 Vietnamese university students.

Nga, 33, has been in America since Saigon fell to the communists in April, 1975.

Many of the Vietnamese who have resettled in Lincoln left their country in 1975, according to Nguyen Tien Trung, better known as Brother Hilary. He is a member of the Congregation of the Mother's Co-Redemptrice order and has been in Lincoln since June coordinating resettling efforts.

"Very few refugees (in America) are immigrants," Brother Hilary said. He explained that the only Vietnamese coming to Lincoln now are relatives of those already settled in town. Government regulations have limited the number of refugees allowed annually into the U.S. and have also tightened the entrance qualifications.

Brother Hilary's work centers on reuniting Vietnamese still in their homeland with their American-based relatives. The average time required to establish contact, wade through the paper work and finally reunite the family is about six months, he said.

Nga's mother and sister are an example of a prolonged reunification effort: with papers cleared and approval given, Nga hopes to see them this spring—the result of nine months of correspondence and work.

Sponsors

Frazier said that last October the Lincoln Fellowship of Churches started sponsoring local refugees.

Most sponsors are churches subsidized by government



Daily Nebraskan Photo

Vietnamese woman Luong Thi Vu, who has been in Lincoln four and a half years, and her baby.

funds on a per-person basis, he said.

"I find that it really does not take that much money to sponsor a refugee," Frazier said. "Within a couple of months they're financially self-supporting," he added. About \$400 is allotted per person to help establish a home, job, English lessons, medical care and whatever else is necessary to function in American life.

"People really give," Frazier said of community reaction to the refugees. "I know of no church which has failed to give."

For the resettled refugees, learning a new language is paramount to adjusting to their new life.

"Some students will quit, some will tolerate the frustration," said Elizabeth Platt, English as a Second Language teacher at Lincoln High. All but three of the language program's students are Vietnamese. "Some situations force you to learn and some don't," she said, explaining that the more isolated a student is from his native language, the faster he will have to use his survival tool.

Teachers have to move the students out, she said, and take away their support system when they're ready.

"It's a counterproductive when you keep them tied to a support system—they speak Vietnamese among themselves," she said.

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New to 'educate state'

However, NU Vice President William Swanson, a registered lobbyist, said NU's lobbying efforts "are pretty much centered from this office." He said he was sure students and faculty would testify during legislative budget hearings and that anyone has that right.

Jane Baack, assistant to the dean of students, expressed some concern that NU doesn't encourage faculty members to "educate the state" about the university.

"There could be some informal discouragement," she said.

Baack said that the University of California at Berkeley pays student lobbyists and gets a much bigger turnout of student groups to speak for their school.

At UNL, the numbers of students testifying at legislative hearings has been small, Bahar said.

A budget hearing last week drew only "a couple" of UNL students, he added.

Bahar said he would not have run for his office if he hadn't received assurances that "no decision will be made (by administrators) without full consultation with the faculty." He said this goes farther than just informing the faculty about issues.

"Any kind of shared responsibility isn't always a happy marriage," Bahar said. "My questions to my administrators have not necessarily been easy, but we (faculty) will offer the utmost cooperation."

The faculty, Bahar said, has a "vast wealth of information in every field," and therefore is capable to help govern NU. Bahar said he wants to avoid any kind of "adversary relationship" with administrators.

If university by-laws "function in spirit and to the letter," Bahar said, there should be no need for such a relationship.

Poll: Health Center fee share too large

By Lucy Bighia

The University Health Center gets too much money from student fees, said eight of 10 students questioned Wednesday in the Nebraska Union. Six of those questioned said the Daily Nebraskan gets too little.

All but one of the students questioned lacked a clear understanding of the student fees issue. Most of the students didn't know where their fee money went—or what student fees are in the first place—the difference between Fund A and Fund B organizations, or what the respective agencies did on campus.

But, once the breakdown of student fees was explained to each student, most said that the health center's share was too large.

If tentative funding allocations proposed by the Committee on Fees Allocation pass, student fees would increase 5 percent next semester; from \$69 to \$72.50 per student.

The Health Center would receive the largest chunk of each student's fees, \$32.62, while the Daily Nebraskan would receive the least, 66.7 cents.

Two funds

The remainder of the fees collected would go to either Fund A or Fund B recipients. Fund A is composed of student-run organizations that directly benefit the majority of students; the Daily Nebraskan, ASUN and the University Program Council (UPC).

Fund B agencies are the Health Center, the Nebraska Unions and the Recreation Department. These agencies serve the students but include more major salary payments and expenses in their budgets than the Fund A organizations.

Fund B also pays for the University bonded indebtedness. This is an automatic \$18 allocation from each student's fees to pay for debts incurred by building the Nebraska Union.

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