

opinion/editorial

Student group would voice educational concerns

The old adage "there's power in numbers" is certainly true in assessing the potential strength of a statewide lobbying organization for students on Nebraska college and university campuses.

Students must combine energy to become a forceful and respected representative current in order to effectively and efficiently lobby for support of higher education in this state. A vote in favor of forming the proposed State Student Association would be one step in that direction.

Unfortunately, the issue of forming a combined lobbying group to represent students who attend classes at public institutions has been clouded recently by a dispute about whether to place the question on the ASUN ballot. The issue will be on the ballot as a survey question to help UNL officials determine if there is enough support to warrant forming the organization.

The disregard for student opinion the NU Board of Regents has exemplified historically and reinforced recently is just one way to illustrate the need to unify the voices of the students attending classes at Nebraska's public institutions for higher education. A clear and loud voice to

rise above the continual rumblings of student discontent is needed and the SSA would provide that amplifier.

Too often, college and university students on different campuses end up competing against one another, waging war and creating powerless factions that easily are ignored or disregarded.

A State Student Association would enable students to give lawmakers, education officials and citizens a broad look at higher education. That expanded view would provide insight into the benefits of providing and maintaining a viable public educational system on the postsecondary level.

There are several common problems faced by students, faculty members and administrators at all public institutions for higher education. As could be predicted, money is the root of many of these shared difficulties and that will continue to be true as the dismal economy increasingly threatens the livelihood and viability of colleges and universities.

The university budget debacle experienced just last year adds fuel to the fire, offering another reason to support forming a strong, cohesive

lobbying organization to work toward gaining support for higher education in this state.

As a result of last year's stingy allowance to the university, students at NU already have suffered the loss of programs. The discomfort will not subside without an increase in financial support. In fact, what appears to be impending budget slashing—on the federal as well as the state level—is casting a frightening shadow on all college and university campuses.

Implementing minimum grade-point averages to meet class requirements and initiating laboratory fees are hardships that appear imminent for many UNL students. These will only be a beginning of what will evolve into continual chipping away at the potential of the university, and other institutions if adequate resources are not provided.

It is a valuable message—a message in support of higher education—that can be brought home to legislators, administrators and citizens through a statewide lobbying organization. The costs to be absorbed by students, 50 cents a semester, are minimal when seen in the light of potential return.

Centennial: Someone has to pay for budget cuts

Maybe you won't go to movies anymore. Maybe you can't eat out as often. Or maybe you'll have to drop out of school for a while to earn enough money to pay tuition. Whatever you decide to do to stay within some kind of a budget, it will hurt—somehow, somewhere.

Some parallels can be drawn between personal budgets and those of universities and governments. As unrelated (in terms of size and scope) as they seem to be, all budgets are tighter nowadays. President Reagan has proposed a leaner U.S. budget, and the NU Board of Regents has recommended we trim ours.

bob glissmann

Like the personal budget, something has to be cut from the budgets of our school and our government. "Something" is the big word here.

"Yup. 'Something' should be cut," you say. "As long as it doesn't affect me directly."

Well, in this new era of reductions and restraint, remember that somebody has to pay, and that somebody will probably be the guy or group with the least power, money and clout.

Take, for example, the Centennial Education Program here at UNL. Centennial, described in *The Good Life* as "an interdisciplinary program founded on the occasion of the university's 100 year anniversary in 1969," is being dropped from the curriculum. The Senior Fellow of the program, Robert Fuller, said "it was probably a miracle it (Centennial) lasted 12 years."

Centennial, with a 1980-81 budget of \$136,000, was a very weak program politically, Fuller said. Since it wasn't under the protective arm of a dean, didn't offer any degrees, had no tenured faculty and taught only undergraduates, Centennial had none of the power prerequisites listed before.

It did have some money, however, although in the "grand scheme" \$136,000 isn't much (Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Ned Hedges' budget is \$50.6 million).

Fuller said members of the Committee on Fees Alloca-

tion, which recommended to Hedges that Centennial be eliminated, had "vested interest in getting that money."

He also said deans, when asked which programs they would cut, all listed Centennial.

"No dean voted to cut programs in their colleges," Fuller said.

Both statements may be true, but that's not important anymore, as Fuller probably would admit. What matters is the program, which offered an alternative to the traditional method of teaching, is slated for elimination.

Jerry Petr, former Senior Fellow and instructor at Centennial said, the elimination is "a significant loss to the campus, diminishes intellectual excitement, and takes away an outlet of faculty renewal." But the recommendation has already been made.

Hedges said, "When you cut budgets and eliminate things, it hurts."

After a recommendation was made to offer third-year Czechoslovakian courses every other year because of small enrollment, the Nebraska Czech community protested to the regents and succeeded in blocking the move. Centennial had support, Hedges said, but it had no "cohesive interest group."

Based on this, if President Reagan's proposals make it through Congress, it will be because special interest groups, no matter how worthy their causes, are acknowledged but not heeded. It's just too bad Centennial formed no interest group that would have supported it, even though it would have been ignored anyway.

Letters to the editor

DN has act together

As a student who has never shied from criticizing the editorial policies of the Daily Nebraskan, let me be among the first to sound a cheer heralding the positive change our newspaper has taken.

While there are still some of us who feel that the op/ed page should be more an amplifier of student opinion and less an ample assemblage of liberal thought, on the whole, the newspaper has gotten together its act.

The *Chicago Times* wrote in 1861 that: "It is a newspaper's duty to print the news and raise hell." What with the current student political activities concerning the SSA and the like, I throw the Daily Nebraskan will do just that.

Willie Watters
Senior, Political Science

Student support surveyed

Have you heard about the concept of a new indoor student recreation center? By now, almost everyone should know about the survey on the March 4 ASUN ballot concerning such a building. The Panhellenic and Inter-Fraternity Councils, Residence Hall Association, ASUN and every residence hall government has been shown the slide show developed by the Recreation Advisory Board. These groups have been asked to inform the students they represent as to the status of the recreation center, so students may cast an informed vote on this issue.

The survey is being conducted to determine the extent of student support for the possible construction of a student recreation center. An affirmative vote supporting the construction of an indoor multi-purpose recreational facility will not increase student fees. The survey will give the Recreation Advisory Board valuable information regarding the extent of student support for this project. It will also allow the student to express his/her opinion on what they would like to have included in the building. This survey will allow the Recreation Advisory Board to compile pertinent background information before proceeding with any planning stages.

If the survey indicates student support for this project, the Recreation Advisory Board will investigate the various aspects which are necessary in the planning stages of this facility. Once the building site, content and cost are determined, the students will be given the opportunity to accept or reject the proposal. Hopefully, the planning stages will not take more than one year. If this is the

case, students should be able to vote on a specific proposal during the 1981-82 academic year.

We urge each student to vote on March 4. Your opinion is vital to the success or failure of this project.

Jim Brockman
Recreation Advisory Board
Junior, Natural Resources

Plasma supplements fees

I have a suggestion for the administration of UNL. Before you generously raise my student fees to help pay for my recreational facility, why don't you check the inside of my right elbow to see how I am paying for my student fees as they are now? Better yet, why not have all the members of the administration make a visit to the friendly neighborhood plasma center at \$10 a shot to pay for our recreational facility? That way, we students could keep our strength up to use it.

Pardon me if my cynicism is peeking through. It's due to a lack of white blood cells. I'm sure you understand. So while I appreciate your concern, dear administration, please stop trying to help me.

Joni Jacobs
Health aide, Schramm 4 & 5

daily nebraskan

UPSP 144-080

Editor: Kathy Chenault; Managing Editor: Tom McNeil; News editor: Val Swinton; Associate news editors: Diane Andersen, Steve Miller; Assistant news editors: Bob Lanning; Night news editor: Kathy Stokebrand; Magazine editor: Mary Kempkes; Entertainment editor: Casey McCabe; Sports editor: Larry Sparks; Art director: Dave Luebke; Photography chief: Mark Billingsley; Assistant photography chief: Mitch Hrdlicka.

Copy editors: Mike Bartels, Sue Brown, Pat Clark, Nancy Ellis, Dan Epp, Beth Headrick, Maureen Hutfless, Alice Hrnicek, Kim Hachiya, Jeanne Mohatt, Janice Pigaga.

Business manager: Anne Shank; Production manager: Kitty Policky; Advertising manager: Art Small; Assistant advertising manager: Jeff Pike.

Publications Board chairman: Mark Bowen, 473-0212. Professional adviser: Don Walton, 473-7301.

The Daily Nebraskan is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, except during vacations.

Address: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 14th and R streets, Lincoln, Neb., 68588. Telephone: 472-2588.

Material may be reprinted without permission if attributed to the Daily Nebraskan, except material covered by a copyright. Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb., 68510.

The Daily Nebraskan encourages brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available in the newspaper.

Letters sent to the newspaper for publication become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

The Daily Nebraskan reserves the right to edit and condense all letters submitted.

Readers are also welcome to submit material as guest opinions, subject to the editor's decision to print or not to print the material, either as a letter or as a guest opinion.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication, and requests to withhold names will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Submit all material to the Daily Nebraskan, Room 34, Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588.