

opinion/editorial

Simplified procedure deserves regent approval

The often frazzled elections for ASUN president and vice president could become less confusing this Friday if the NU Board of Regents approves an amendment changing election procedures.

Currently, candidates seeking election to either of the offices must win at least 50 plus one percent of the vote. This is part of the regents desire to make sure the winners are representative of a large segment of campus.

The amendment to change that procedure calls for the president and vice president of any of NU's three campuses to be "elected by a margin over the next highest candidate of at least 10 percent of the total vote cast." For example, if 1,000 students voted in the election, a candidate would need a 100 vote margin to be declared the winner.

The amendment would simplify elections because it would make chances for a runoff less likely. If a candidate did not win by 10 percent of the total votes cast, a runoff would still be necessary.

Students enlisted, jailed by Reagan

A new fiscal year has begun and, as we all know by now, the country is in for a year of Reaganomics. Although we have been promised economic recovery after years of federal overspending, those of us who are thinking clearly can anticipate the inevitable chain of events ahead.

A decrease in financial aid to the student, leading to an increase in the labor force; a decrease in the number of jobs available, leading to an increase in unemployment; an increase in the number of poor people, followed by a decrease in federal aid to the poor.

doreen charles

This sudden emergence of a large mass of uneducated, jobless and hungry people can only lead to one thing — an increase in crime.

But wait — don't think the government isn't prepared to handle all this. The Nebraska Legislature has come up with a sure-fire plan to deter any would-be criminal from committing a crime — or at least doing so with a deadly weapon.

Mandatory two-year sentences would be the penalty for anyone possessing a deadly weapon while committing a crime, according to the bill to be introduced by Sen. Rex Haberman of Imperial. While the bill has been criticized by some, many have reportedly voiced support for the idea.

Despite the fact that threats of capital punishment have not deterred murders, threats of prison sentences are supposed to prevent use of weapons in other crimes. And don't think the problem of overcrowded prisons wasn't considered. What do we do about the sudden increase in convicted criminals? Build more prisons, of course.

Continued on Page 5

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The amendment would aid ASUN elections by making it more likely that a winner would be elected the first time around. No one likes to be told to come back a week or two later to vote again.

Last year, ASUN President Rick Mockler received 1,186 votes in the first election. The closest finisher to Mockler received 426 votes. Although Mockler already won a plurality of votes, another election was needed to satisfy the regents.

Mockler received 981 votes in the runoff and the decrease in the votes makes him less representative to some than before, according to Jennifer Fager, chair of the ASUN electoral commission.

Fager said if the proposed changes had been in effect for the previous 12 ASUN elections, the person who won in the runoff would also have won by the 10 percent margin.

The regents have often complained that not enough students vote in elections. They then say that the people elected are not representative.

It's fair game to wonder how many people would go to the polls to vote for regents if their elections weren't always held on election days for national and state offices.

Making student regents win by 10 percent or more of the vote is a more stringent requirement than the regents face, but they apparently realize that inequity.

This amendment to the regent's policies would help increase student participation and give stronger legitimacy to student representatives.

Ideally, the regents would allow the winner to be chosen by a plurality of the votes cast. Whether it is one vote or 100 really shouldn't matter.

The current election process is unlike any real elections and it is no wonder some students think of it as a joke. The proposed amendment would bring ASUN elections closer to reality, but it is still an artificial situation.

Hopefully, the regents will adopt the amendment to be proposed by NU Medical Center Student Regent Michael Schmidt.



letters to the editor

'Socialists' impose ideas

What is the point of Joseph Sobran's article "Media masters puppet-like spokesmen" (Daily Nebraskan, Sept 29, 1981)? His point seems to be that they (the liberal media) are "instrumental socialists" who mindlessly impose their ideas on us. But what is an "instrumental socialist"? Sobran tells us, "people who, without fully sharing the socialist dreams, fundamentally accept the socialist critique of Western society and its traditional institutions and liberties."

But we need to know what is "the socialists' critique of Western society"? Sobran tells us that it is the slogans "socialists" have used to "relentlessly" attack "organized religion, the family and capitalism, demanding that society be 'remade' through activist government."

How are these slogans acquired? Sobran tells us simply by repeating them often enough, for example, "Winston tastes good like a cigarette should." Well then, according to what Sobran has told us, a socialist is a person who out of habit utters slogans attacking "Western society and its traditional institutions and liberties".

Now, according to this definition, who are socialists?

It seems many members of the Moral Majority are socialists! They repeat over and over again slogans attacking Western society, women's rights, freedom of religion-through-activist government, e.g. through constitutional amendments.

But, of course something has gone wrong. The Moral Majority is not a socialist organization. What has gone wrong is that Sobran has no idea of what a socialist is. But we do agree that we must be critical of those who mindlessly repeat slogans attacking individual rights.

Jeff Schawk
Graduate
Philosophy

Class reads philosophy

I am pleased with Tom Shelton's excellent article (Sept. 23) on my philosophy mini-courses. It is a trifle misleading, however, on one point. It's true that in Tolkien class, we don't read his more entertaining books: *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. But we do read his more philosophical writings: *The Silmarillion*, "On Fairy-Stories" and "Leaf by Niggle".

Robert Anderson