

Daily Nebraskan

Wednesday, September 8, 1982

University of Nebraska—Lincoln

Vol. 82 No. 12

Massengale cites ups, downs after 15 months as chancellor

By Bill Allen

Martin Massengale started his job as chancellor of UNL 15 months ago, after six years as vice chancellor of UNL's Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources. Massengale said he has now broadened his perspective to encompass both Lincoln campuses.

"I've become more familiar with the duties of the chancellor and with the university as a whole," he said in an interview Friday.

Massengale mentioned several accomplishments during his administration so far.

"We've improved computer capabilities in the Engineering College," he said. Renovations of Temple Theatre and Chase Hall have been completed and construction has begun on the Wick Alumni Center since he became chancellor, Massengale said.

"We need to have more channels of communication with our alumni," he said. "I think it (Alumni Center) indicates that the student is an important part of the university."

Massengale said the biggest problems facing the university are lack of adequate finances, the need to improve faculty salaries and the need to improve the learning environment, inside and outside the university.

UNL foundations

Massengale said to understand his responsibilities and those of other administrators one has to know the foundations of UNL.

"We are the only land grant comprehensive university in Nebraska," he said.

UNL was started under the Morrill Act of 1865, he said.

"This act," Massengale said, "stated that we must teach agriculture, mechanical arts and military science, but not to the exclusion of the other sciences."

"In Nebraska we incorporated the land grant and state institutions into one university," he said. "This gives us a triple mission — teaching, research and service to the state."

"Our objective is to make this a quality institution," he said. "We have to emphasize areas that have nationwide significance."

Massengale refused to name any specific areas his administration is concentrating on for fear of seeming to isolate other areas.

Administrative style

Massengale's style of administration depends a great deal on those around him, he said.

"I try to get input from those around me and base decisions from that," he said.

Massengale said he meets once a week with the vice chancellors.

"I try to do the best job I can representing the university to the regents, the Legislature and the people of the state," he said. "I spend a great deal of time traveling throughout the state promoting the university and its programs. I try to make decisions that are in the best interests of the total university."

"I think we have a good administration," he continued. "Teamwork is important. I don't think that means 'don't rock the boat,' as has been implied."

"You'll find that UNL has one of the leanest administrations of any university of its size in the country," he said. "This means we have a tremendous



Martin Massengale

workload. We don't have time for many of the day-to-day activities we'd have if we had more support staff."

One day-to-day activity is meeting students.

"My primary contact with students is through Vice Chancellor (for Student Affairs) Richard Armstrong," Massengale said. "His primary duty is to keep me advised on student interests and problems."

"It's not like I wouldn't like to get to know them all," he said, "but there are so many things to do that I can't possibly meet every student."

Officials stress value, necessity of prerequisites

By Bill Allen

It is difficult for people registering students to check whether those students have required prerequisites for classes, said R. Neale Cople, acting vice chancellor

for academic affairs.

Prerequisites are classes students are required to take before they can go on to other courses in a department.

According to Ted Pfeifer, director of registration and records, it is possible for

students to register for a class for which they do not have the prerequisites.

"Registration doesn't police this," Pfeifer said. "There are some units that require an adviser signature, but the university relies a great deal on letting the student handle this."

Pfeifer mentioned the Engineering College as one that definitely requires an adviser's signature. He said if a student registers in the college without the signature, steps will be taken to disenroll him.

This is not the case in most other colleges, he said.

Background material

"Basically, if there's a good advising program it can be checked on that level," Cople said.

Cople said prerequisites have a "good solid place" in a department's curriculum.

As an educational device, he said, they require a student to take beginning and background material before they get into more advanced areas.

"Normally," Cople said, "you are trying to get the student to systematically move up to the next point. Obviously, that doesn't work correctly in all courses."

This brings up another reason for prerequisites. They help department heads plan the number of course sections, Cople said.

The number of people who are going to take a course can usually be determined

by looking at the number of students who completed the prerequisite, he said.

Another reason for prerequisites is to weed out non-majors for a popular course, Cople said.

"Prerequisites can be used as both a planning and an educational device for the department," he said.

Cople said a student found taking a class without the prerequisites, is asked to go back and take the prerequisites.

Flow chart

Stan Liberty, Dean of the College of Engineering and Technology, said prerequisites are very important in his college.

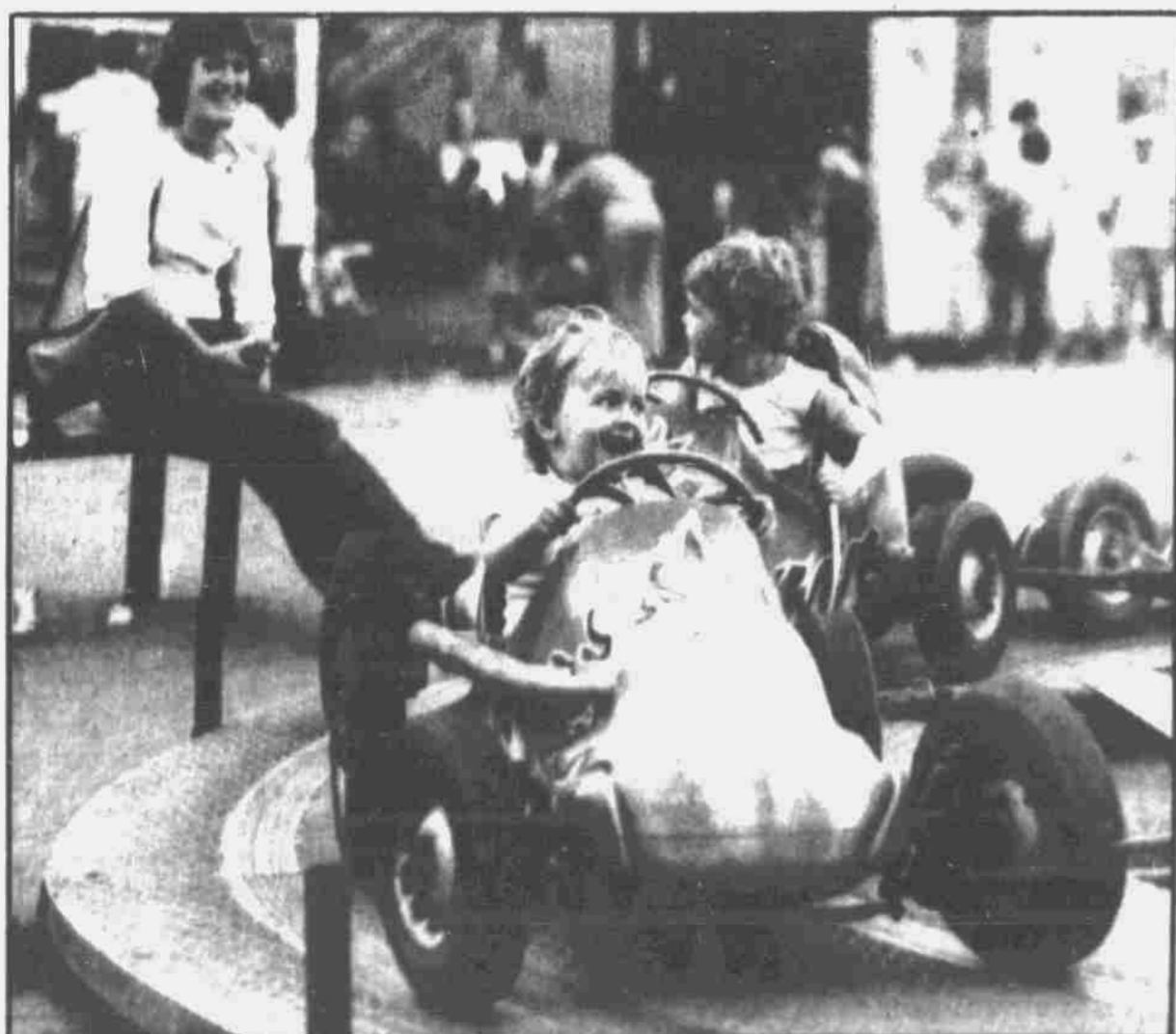
"Almost every course is a step to the subsequent course," he said. "Through the freshman, sophomore and junior year, it's very important. Almost every curriculum will almost follow a flow chart. In the senior year, there is more room for electives."

The Engineering College has one of the best checking systems in the university, said Al Witte, assistant dean of the college.

Witte said the college requires an adviser's signature on all worksheets and registration forms.

He said there have been instances where students have not been allowed to take engineering courses for a semester because of a failure to get an adviser signature.

"Students who try to bypass prerequisites find themselves in trouble," he said.



Staff Photo by Dave Bentz

Sprint car driver Annie Parr, 2, of Lincoln sets a new track record at the Nebraska State Fair on Labor Day. Although her mother kept a watchful eye on the action, Annie needed no assistance in victory.