

Schedule 'least of three evils'

By Vicki Ruhga

This semester's final examination week schedule is the least of three evils, says Maurice Baker, president of the UNL Faculty Senate.

"Ultimately, the problem is that Christmas is on Sunday this year," Baker said.

Baker said the Faculty Senate, which adopts the calendars three to five years in advance, had three alternatives for this semester.

First, finals could have been scheduled Monday through Friday as they usually are, but this year that would mean finals Dec. 19 through Dec. 23, with semester commencement Dec. 24.

Second, the senate could have started classes in the middle of August and scheduled finals Dec. 12 through Dec. 16.

The senate chose the third option, which was to have finals Dec. 16 and 17 and continue them Dec. 19 through Dec. 21. To make up for not having regular classes Dec. 16, students used the Friday

schedule when attending classes on Nov. 23, the day before Thanksgiving.

Before calendars are approved by the Faculty Senate, they are proposed by a calendar committee with representatives from UNO and UNL. Calendars are proposed jointly because the NU Board of Regents requested that both universities begin classes, take breaks and take finals at the same time, Baker said.

Baker said a schedule similar to this semester's may be adopted again when Christmas again falls on Saturday or Sunday.

Baker said he has had fewer than 10 questions and complaints about this semester's schedule, and most of those were from organizations and the press.

Virginia Corgan, assistant chancellor for Academic Affairs, said she has received no complaints about this semester's arrangement.

"There are too many other things to complain about," Corgan said. "There are those students who

don't like exams, and they don't want to take them no matter when they are scheduled."

Tim Ehlers, a UNL sophomore in broadcasting, said he thought finals should not be held on Friday and Saturday.

"It's best if you have the whole weekend to prepare before you zip into finals week," Ehlers said. "Whether you go out drinking or stay home and study is up to you."

Julie Montgomery, a freshman in elementary education, said although she had no finals on Friday or Saturday, she thought the schedule created problems for students who did.

"It upsets people who have finals on a weekend because they have to take time off work," Montgomery said.

Jeff Kaski, a senior in architecture, said he did not mind having finals on Friday and Saturday because he was from Lincoln. Yet, he said, he would rather wait and start them Monday.

Typical students may find 'you can't go home again'

Going home for winter break holds many fond memories for me, especially since I don't have to do it anymore. It's not an easy time to be sure. Parents, anxious to find out what college has "done" to their children, view this as the first real opportunity to extensively question the kiddies — to find out all about the immoral, illegal and indescribable sins the parents are missing out on.

This method has been labeled by its victims as the "Ask me another" procedure. Unfortunately, the questioner has only two alternatives here: either answer the question or move to another state. The questioning goes something like this:

Mother: So, Egbert, how are your pancakes? Are they as good as what they serve in the dormitory? (Note here the use of the subliminal "ask me another" approach.)

Egbert: The dormitory pancakes are good, but not as good as yours, Mom. (At least Egbert has learned something from the last exchange.)

Father: Do you enjoy the dorms?

Egbert: Yes, they're very —

Mother: Do you like your classes?

Egbert: Well, my English class was —

Father: Do you like English?

Egbert: As a language or as a — (not even sarcasm goes uninterrupted.)

Mother: Will you get all A's?

Egbert: Well, it all depends on —

Father: Have you gone out for any sports?

Egbert: They don't have —

Mother: Have you seen that nice boy Jerry from high school?

Egbert: No, he joined —

Father: Have you gone out on any dates?

Well, you get the idea. What is the best way to react to these situations? Unfortunately, it's hard to put an end to one of these sessions once the momentum gets rolling. For example:

Mother: Have you changed party affiliations?

Egbert: Stop, enough already! Let me eat my pancakes in peace, please. It's nice to be home again, but let's talk about you for awhile. I'm not prepared to answer every question about my personal life!

Father: I pay \$2,000 tuition and all you learn is how to be snotty?

Egbert: No, Dad, it's just —

Mother: Didn't you miss us?

Egbert: Of course, it's just that —

Father: Did you have enough money?

Egbert: No, I —

Mother: Did you dress warmly during the blizzard?

Egbert: Wait a min —

Father: Did you go out on any dates?

Of course, there are many pleasant things about winter vacation. Not the least of which is, for three and a half weeks, you're actually anxious to get back to school and the world and academia, where you can get some respect and a word in edgewise. Right, Egbert?

Egbert: Yes, as a matter of —

Have a good break, everyone!



Mike Frost

Generally, there are two methods of inquiry the college parent will take. One is labeled the subliminal method. As the name implies, here the parents try to trick the student into volunteering all the evils they have committed during the semester. An example:

Mother: How's your breakfast, Dear?

Egbert: They're great pancakes, Mom.

Mother: Are they as good as the pancakes they serve in the dormitory?

Now at this point, Egbert has two options. He can either placate his eager guardians, or aggravate them. The latter is easy to accomplish.

Egbert: I don't know, I'm always over at my girlfriend's house for breakfast.

Another example: Usually I'm too hung over to eat breakfast. Why don't you pester Dad for awhile?

Of course, there is no real purpose in inciting such a row. However, many visiting sons and daughters are forced into taking this tact after their inquisitors fail to be satisfied with the more innocuous responses. An example:

Egbert: Why yes, Mom, the dorm pancakes are quite good.

Mother: Oh, and what's wrong with my food?

Egbert: Nothing, it's —

Father: That's all you can say, nothing? I spend \$2,000 on tuition, and you can't even bring yourself to be courteous to your parents?

Or:

Egbert: No, Mom, we sure don't get eats as good as these.

Mother: You mean you don't eat? Why don't you stay at home for college? There's a very good community college just a few miles away.

Egbert: No, Mom, it's —

Father: How dare you contradict your mother. I spend \$2,000 on tuition and all you learn is how to be snotty? You can hardly win with subliminal questioning. Things are no better with the second line of questioning, either.

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