

Clocks!

The members of the Student Foundation enjoy a good joke, too, and we appreciate a well-written editorial and clever artwork, which your April 12 package on the senior gift project was, however misguided.

So we would like to share with you some background that may help your perspective and also thank the 395 seniors who pledged \$25,872 in our call-a-thon campaign to support the class-elected clocks that will adorn the unions on city and east campuses.

Guest Opinion

The choice of the senior gift was not made as lightly as you suggested.

Some history: It has been well-established that UNL is far below the national average of similar institutions in its financial support by recent graduates. Of the \$9 million-plus distributed to the university in private gifts to the foundation last year — including \$2.2 million for scholarships — very little was contributed by graduates of the last decade.

Therefore, our Foundation Awareness Week and senior gift projects were conceived in an effort to build a sense of commitment among today's students, a springboard for a lifetime of support of future students once we reach the outer world. After all, there is ample evidence of the support of earlier generations of students that have benefited us in virtually every building and program on campus.

Perhaps we set too lofty a goal of \$50,000, but the magnitude and quality of the senior gift were dependent on response. It was a modest goal in comparison to the \$175,000 in pledges by last year's Iowa State senior class. A committee from our Student Foundation visited Iowa State, which has one of the nation's top programs, to study its procedures and philosophies.

The lessons learned at ISU told us that the most appealing senior gifts were physical, lasting and visible.

There was adequate opportunity for input before the fact. We formed a gift committee of representative seniors from campus organizations, administration, alumni association and foundation to recommend three choices for a vote of the seniors. They were: the clocks, visitors' centers on both campuses and a computer-based career information system.

You chided us for "not revealing what the decision was...The mystery is over now" and alluded to a meager vote turnout.

There was no mystery, but we weren't satisfied, either, with the number of votes — although the clocks won, no contest.

Of course, we wanted to spread the word and drum up enthusiasm for the project, and what better vehicle than the Daily Nebraskan? We invited the newspaper to do a story, and a reporter talked to us, took notes and said there would be one. Before the vote. Of course, there was no story.

Where were we to reveal the results of the vote? In the Daily Nebraskan, which had already declared its non-



Photo courtesy of Student Alumni Association

The class clock of 1912 on Architecture Hall.

interest? We told each senior individually over the phone. There was no mystery.

Your reference to Secretary of Education William Bennett and our "proof to back up his arguments that students don't really need financial aid, that aid cuts will only put a damper on our squandering ways" don't wash.

We did not appeal to students; we appealed to graduates. You conveniently ignored the fact that we suggested pledges of \$85 stretched over four years — \$10 the first year, which we felt was fairly modest for a recent graduate, followed by \$25 each of the next three.

We emphasized that the seniors could pledge as little or as much as was comfortable for them. Plus, these pledges were strictly voluntary, not fees. Nobody was billed. Seniors could

support it or decline as they wished.

We could not agree more that the university needs cyclotrons, library books, scholarships, etc., more than union clocks. Every item mentioned was discussed by the committee, plus many more suggestions. The consensus was that other sources, including the foundation and private contributions, were wrestling with those shortages, and the senior gift had to have as much broad appeal as possible for success.

Naturally, we don't expect total agreement with the choice, but we tried hard to be as democratic as possible. We would welcome the opinions of the Daily Nebraskan — before the fact — in our second annual senior gift project.

Student newspapers are no more "inherently evil" than senior gifts, but it is

much more difficult to be constructive.

The Daily Nebraskan would be the perfect forum for informing the 1986 senior class about its gift project and for conducting the selection poll.

We would be delighted to have you work with us next time.

P.S. We thought you might be interested in the enclosed picture of the 1912 senior class gift — a clock over the entrance to Architectural Hall. The Lincoln architectural firm of Bahr, Vermeer & Haecker recently sent a \$1,000 gift to the foundation to restore that clock to working order.

Carla Weiland
Student Foundation
president
Steve Henning
Student Foundation
class of '85



Poor turnout at protest angers graduating senior

I attended the march on the Capitol Monday to protest what I see as an unfair hike in tuition. I was appalled when I arrived on the scene to find a group of 200 or so students doing their best to represent the views of more than 23,000 lazy, apathetic others. Apparently, many students attending this university either don't comprehend the significance of a possible 30 percent increase in their tuition or don't care.

I am a graduating senior and as such I felt it was my duty to voice my discontent with the present financial structure of this institution. I have observed the demise of the economy of Nebraska, and have seen how students are asked to bear more and more of the financial burdens that were once paid for by a healthy tax base.

There is little hope for improvement in the state's economy.

If students wish to save this university from falling into the ranks of mediocrity and from having to pay large sums of money for an education that would be scoffed at throughout the

other 49 states, we must take up the struggle. We must work diligently to impress upon the regents and the senators from our districts that we are willing to work with them, but that we as students (and as a strong voting power) will no longer tolerate tuition hikes and the cutting of valid educational programs without our consent. The university community of students is a powerful voting bloc. If we strive for persistence, organization and cooperation, we can return the university to being an institution that represents the ideals of growth and higher learning.

Is your excuse for not being at the Capitol Monday really good enough?

Melissa Blaisdell
senior
marketing

Student says university can't afford 'stupidity'

Just how passive can the students here be? The Nebraska student body is about to be shafted by the regents and few people seem to care. I am, of course, talking about the tuition increase about to be thrust upon UNL students

to pay for the new bookstore and the multi-million-dollar veterinary college (the price tag does not include maintenance) and other such extravagances.

The university cannot afford such stupidity in spending at a time when education is being murdered by budget cuts. We need to preserve and upgrade what we already have. Unfortunately even dumber decisions are being implemented on the national level — like the Reagan administration's policy of spending us into bankruptcy with unnecessary, unaffordable and counterproductive defense programs. Maybe the NU Board of Regents is just adopting the Reagan approach to government that seems to be in vogue these days.

Jack Davis
graduate student
forestry

Student says NU needs equal tuition, fund hike

In this capitalistic country I have heard it said many times that "you get what you pay for." This

is the case not only with goods and services, but also with education.

Many students complain about class size and the quality of instruction. We get the number and quality of instructors that we pay for. The best professors can get jobs at almost any school in the country, so they are going to pick schools with high salaries, good research facilities and low work loads. Think about it, would you rather make less money and teach larger classes?

If you are concerned about getting a quality education, you have to be willing to pay for it. Would you rather pay two to three times as much to go out-of-state to school, or raise tuition here 30 percent to 50 percent and get the same quality education? A 30 percent to 50 percent tuition increase translates to only a 10 percent to 20 percent total cost increase.

If we could convince our state legislators to match our tuition increases with the same percent increases in state funding, the University of Nebraska could offer a quality education at a fair price.

Tim Isaacson
junior
electrical engineering

Letters

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