

# Editorial

## Faculty pay cut bad answer to budget dilemma

For years the salaries of UNL instructors have lagged behind the salaries of their peers.

A 1983-84 study by the department of institutional research and planning found the average salary of all UNL professors was 14 percent lower than the salaries of their peers at comparable institutions. This year, salaries average 12 percent less than those at peer institutions.

Yet now the NU Board of Regents plans to ask the Legislature for emergency powers to enable NU to absorb \$5 million in proposed cuts by reducing salaries, eliminating positions, canceling pay raises or cutting entire programs.

Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island, who wrote the resolution seeking emergency powers, proposed a faculty pay cut, rather than the elimination of entire programs.

But faculty cuts are not the answer to the budget dilemma. First, salaries already are too low. Second, UNL has eliminated 41 faculty positions since 1981, and department officials say many professors have resigned to take better-paying jobs at other universities or in the private sector.

In a February 1985 Daily Nebraskan article, regent James H. Moylan of Omaha said raising faculty salaries was the board's first priority. Apparently the regents have abandoned their goal.

Faculty members already suffer from budget cuts — their equipment is outdated, classrooms are crowded and many cannot provide materials for students. Instructors also should not be forced to absorb the latest cuts with their low earnings.

The regents instead should consider vertical program cuts based on a uniform criteria. For example, a program's fate could be decided by these factors:

- What is the student demand for the program?
- What is the program's national reputation?
- How many of the program's graduates use their talents in Nebraska?

Program cuts would hurt the state and force many young people to export their talents to other states that offer the programs they seek.

Program cuts would make the university a glorified state college, but eliminating faculty positions and reducing salaries would leave only the skeleton of a university.

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Last Thursday the crossword puzzle was inadvertently left out of the Daily Nebraskan.

Several readers called to complain about the puzzle omission, and a few suggested that news stories should be left out in order to print the puzzle.

It appears that some students are more concerned with a crossword puzzle than with articles on the \$5 million budget that could destroy their university.

Too bad.



PICK THE GUY FROM MISSOURI

Full of 'piercing insights'

## Chris solves a few mysteries

I've beenwhelmed by the volume of mail in response to my plea for "Ask Chris" letters.

In my first column, I asked readers to send in their questions on any mysteries, and said I would do my best to solve them. Well, last week I dug into the Ask-Chris file cabinet, pulled out a few letters and solved a few mysteries.



Chris Welsch

**Dear Chris:**  
Your insights are piercing. First, why is it that you think you're such an authority on everything? Second, why do so many people murder with guns instead of knives, strangulation or bludgeoning?

Jon Knra  
junior  
reality science

**Dear Jon:**  
I've spent a lot of time thinking about your questions. First, I'm at least as qualified as Abby. I have a snooty sister and can put on airs as well as the next columnist. Second, people use guns for murder in the United States more than any other weapon because of what I call the "Veg-o-matic mentality."

Why get your hands dirty, risk bruises or even get close to the mess when you can stand at a fair distance and pull a trigger? Why slice a vegetable with a knife when your Vego-o-matic can do it so much faster? The founding fathers knew Americans would appreciate the convenience when they gave us the right to bear arms and electric can

openers. Who knows when the next revolution will come?

**Dear Chris:**  
Your insights are piercing. In regard to your request for questions, here is a letter I have written to you. It seems to me redundant, repetitive and monotonous the way Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne always says he is worried about the next opponent; even when the next opponent is eight elderly men in loafers and Bermuda shorts. Why does he always say that, even when the game is a certain blowout for Big Red?  
Gery Atricks  
freshman  
animal tricks

**Dear Gerry:**  
This is one of NU's greatest mysteries. Osborne usually explains his irrational fear by saying the other team is better than their record indicates, or that old men are tricky, and loafers can be used as dangerous weapons. It might be considered poor sportsmanship to say, "We're going to rip off their faces and shred their innards," but just the same, I'd really like to hear Dr. Tom say it every once in a while.

**Dear Chris:**  
Your insights are piercing. The university is about to be leveled by budget cuts that will have us students paying more to be taught less by high school grads in the upper 25 percent of their classes. At the same time, the Legislature is giving NU \$5 million for a performing arts center. Wouldn't that money be better spent keeping programs and faculty salaries afloat?

Clovis Manurson  
sophomore  
business administration

**Dear Clovis:**  
There's no guarantee that if that money was reallocated (that means

spent somewhere else) that the money would come back to dear ol' NU.

You're right, that money would be better spent on things like salaries and program support since most of us think classroom learning is more important than the opera. However, it's best just to let them build it and forget about it; students won't be able to afford tickets after the next tuition hike.

**Dear Chris:**  
Your insights are piercing. Why is it that even though President Reagan campaigned for a balanced budget, he has never submitted one to Congress? Moreover, the deficit for fiscal 1985 is \$211.9 billion, the largest ever in U.S. history. This seems to be ironic. The United States also has a record trade deficit. Is this really economic recovery? Is this Reagan's fault?

Ernst Earwig  
junior  
underwater basket weaving

**Dear Ernst:**  
I see your point. But a presidential aide assures me that by cutting taxes and increasing defense spending, again, we can beat this "darned thing," as he called it.

Congress has generally cooperated with Reagan. He's popular, and Congressmen know popularity sometimes rubs off. Although Congress has tacked money onto many programs and made it difficult to achieve some cuts, all in all Reagan has been successful in getting his plans implemented. I would give Reagan 60 percent of the blame, and give Congress the rest.

Finally, if you call "recovery" setting new deficit records, then Reagan is batting a thousand.

Welsch is a UNL senior journalism and English major and a Daily Nebraskan copy desk chief.

## Reagan leads way in deficit building

It is said we owe to the Middle Ages humanity's two most destructive inventions — gunpowder and romantic love. But let this be said for the Middle Ages: People understood government. They especially under-



George Will

stood that kings (read: presidents), not parliaments (read: Congress), are the principal impediments to reasonable public finance.

After 500 years of enlightenment, there is less understanding. Americans think Congress is the big deficit-maker. Never mind Lyndon Johnson's guns-

and-butter choice, and never mind Ronald Reagan's guns-and-tax cuts choice. And never mind that while Reagan has been presiding over the production of more than half of this nation's federal debt, he has not found much to veto on budgeting grounds.

Of course, presidents veto for other than budgetary reasons. Still, it is indicative that Franklin D. Roosevelt averaged 43 vetoes a year, Eisenhower 23, and Reagan in his first term only 10 a year. Ten of this century's 15 presidents have used the veto more regularly than Reagan. But as this is written, he is threatening to veto something, in part because of a provision that would reduce the deficit and cancer.

In 1951, the tax on a pack of cigarettes was put at 8 cents. In 1982, it

was raised to 16 cents, which, because of inflation, was much less in 1982 than 8 cents was in 1951. The 1982 law stipulated a return to 8 cents. However, one provision of the current deficit-reduction effort is to keep the tax at 16 cents. This provision was included in exchange for lavish tobacco subsidies.

Much of the deficit-reduction bill rests on cooked books yielding fudged numbers. The reduction number of \$85.6 billion over three years is highly suspect. The \$4.9 billion from the tobacco tax is real. But Reagan regards tax cuts the way Mark Twain regarded bourbon: "Too much is barely enough." Hence his insistence on cutting the tobacco tax. This will increase the annual cost of smoking-related diseases, which now stands at \$35 billion.

Please see WILL on 5

### The Daily Nebraskan

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