

# Editorial

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## Students cheated Live instructors needed

UNL's College of Business Administration faces a no-win situation and some 500 accounting students are finding themselves the real losers in the college's decision to use videotapes as a teaching device instead of professors.

Students in two of the six fall Accounting 201 classes are being taught with tapes made last year. Thomas Hubbard, director of the School of Accountancy, said the change to video came from necessity because of a faculty shortage (Daily Nebraskan, Sept. 3). He said he would much rather have live sections, but told the Daily Nebraskan that students would not be shortchanged.

Two ASUN senators disagreed. During the last senate meeting of the spring semester, Doug Weems of the Arts and Sciences College and Ed Miller of the Graduate College introduced a bill, saying that the use of videotaped instruction defies the purpose of higher education (D.N., Aug. 29).

In May, ASUN President Chris Scudder vetoed the bill because, she said, no one knew whether the program would work during the summer.

## Aptitude tests biased Students' potential cannot be tested

Tests are obviously an integral part of college life. Not only do they form a significant part of a student's life while at UNL, but the vast majority of students needed to take "aptitude" tests to get into the university. Similarly, for many students, aptitude tests (like the LSAT, GRE and GMAT) are required for continued studies after graduation.

An intriguing shift has occurred over the past few years regarding the way the public, students and academicians view these "aptitude" or "achievement" tests. This shift should call forth policy changes by post-secondary schools.

Decades ago, aptitude tests were considered objective measurements. Like IQ tests, these tests were thought actually to measure intelligence and potential for education rather than test "mere" knowledge.

As the years passed, these claims of objectivity came under increasing scientific scrutiny, and substantial doubt about these claims began to arise.

These doubts came to a head especially during the '60s when the "objective validity" of the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant viewpoint underwent critical scrutiny. (The WASP perspective was claimed to underlie the construction of these exams.)

Yet in spite of the cultural and socioeconomic bias of these tests uncovered by critics, the tests continued in popularity — even though the presuppositions which called forth the tests in the first place were largely discounted.

Weems introduced a different version of the bill, which failed to get on the floor. He then moved to override the veto, but failed.

Robert Furgason, vice chancellor for academic affairs, spoke against the bill. He said videotaped courses wouldn't be needed if the Legislature had not cut \$3.8 million from the university budget. He said that if the administration did not introduce the videotaped classes, they would have to raise the grade point average requirements for upper-level classes.

The way it stands now, every time the university receives a setback in educating its students, the budget cuts are blamed. The time has come to do something to overcome the cuts and not reduce the quality of education.

Videotaping classes is not a step in that direction. Students are paying for the real thing and are finding themselves being cheated.

A possible alternative: have students pay more in tuition to receive the education they deserve. Until then, education at UNL is beginning to diminish.

The rhetoric surrounding the tests subsequently changed. The tests began to be talked of as "rites of passage" into adulthood — as if they were testing sheer strength of character. As journalist Michael Knisley recently observed in a Well Street Journal editorial: "The real social function of the SAT is as the central affirmation ritual of American meritocracy. It justified the pecking order and reminds people that they deserve their place in it."

While measuring "objective intelligence" may justify the use of these exams, we certainly are justified in doubting that testing students' ability to do well on aptitude tests (what else do they really "test"?) is a basis sufficient to justify their continuation.

Why, then, do universities continue to require submission of these test scores when scholarly judgment seems so skeptical of their validity? The answer — which is no real answer at all — is that the direction of institutional academic inertia are difficult to slow and change.

If two indices of scholarly potential (such as GPA and recommendations) are not sufficient to make an informed admissions judgment, adding a test score that is assigned in a biased fashion is not helpful. Universities should be concerned with truth and accuracy; a fundamental contradiction occurs if admission into these institutions of higher learning is based upon indicators not demonstrative of a student's desire and ability to further these two aims.



## NCAA ruling on Huskers 'not stupid' UNL's true colors scarlet and cream — not pure and lily-white

Last weekend wasn't a wash after all, now, was it?

All the predictions of doom that popped up in midweek didn't come true. The NU flag over by the Administration Building wasn't hauled down to half-mast. The pep rally Friday night didn't become a "pep wake." And, by gum, our beloved Cornhuskers took the field Saturday night with all players eligible and won big.

Boy, were Helen Boosalis and the rest relieved Thursday when the word came that those 60 players accused of violating the NCAA's game-pass rule could play after all! Somehow, we managed to convince those wolves down in Shawnee Mission, Kan., to give us a chance to plead for mercy tomorrow. But the most important thing about the whole affair was that we'd have Steve Taylor, "End Zone" Jones and the rest and we wouldn't lose our undefeated season and national title.

Wait a minute.

Most important?

It's well-known that "denial" is the first stage people go through when they learn something unsettling to themselves. That something can be learning you have cancer, your long-time boyfriend or girlfriend dumped you for someone else — or a cherished myth you held for many years has been shattered.

Lost in the hullabaloo over the NCAA's death sentence and stay of execution was the sound of a broken myth clattering to the Memorial Stadium turf. That's the myth that the lighter of the two Husker colors is white, as in lily-white, pure white and our-athletic-program-is-blameless white. It's as much a part of the Nebraska experience as loving the Marching Red or hating the Sooners.

But the color is cream — not quite pure white. And we don't like it, so we deny it.

There's so much we all should be disturbed about. The first is that the 60 players were guilty. UNL admitted as much in its report to the NCAA; so did Tom Osborne; so did a couple of the players. The evidence is overwhelming: there were people admitted to games on players' pass lists that weren't "family members, relatives and fellow students."

**Todd  
von  
Kampen**



And the violations were widespread. An Omaha World-Herald story Friday noted that those who broke the rule 10 or fewer times were suspended for one game, while those with 11 or more violations have to sit out two. Fifty-three Huskers received the one-game penalty and seven the two-gamer. Figure it out. At the very least, the rule was broken 130 times.

Even the brightest lights of the team — Taylor, McCathorn Clayton, Jones and so on — broke the rule. Worse, most of the players took their actions much too lightly. As senior linebacker Kevin Parsons told the World-Herald, "the guys laughed" when Osborne told them about the rule last August. "They said they couldn't keep that rule even if they wanted to... It's totally unfair and unworkable."

Maybe it's a stupid rule. But I wasn't aware that it's so difficult for a Husker player to distinguish between family and friends, students and non-students. We can try to change rules, but our personal feelings about them don't give us leeway to ignore them. Turning yourself in is fine, but that doesn't mean you should escape punishment.

We've got a problem here. But it goes far beyond the football team. Last year, we had a basketball coach who felt he could start practice before the NCAA allowed. We had a women's gymnastics coach who broke state law by taking away the scholarships of two injured stars. What happened last week was only the final crack in the vase of purity.

All of the above facts were duly reported by the media. One would think those who are proud of Nebraska's once-unchallenged reputation as a "clean" school would be outraged. But what did we witness? The Democratic candidate for governor, UNL's chancellor, NU regents, students, newspapers, ordinary citizens — all cried out the lightest NCAA penalty possible was too harsh and the NCAA was out to "get" Nebraska.

It's a sorry commentary on what has happened to our senses of morals and values. People used to think quality education was most important and that citizens had a duty to obey the laws. Here in Nebraska, we have the state's only major university falling apart at the seams from budget cuts, apparently unnoticed by the public or the politicians. But they notice when their weekend entertainment is put on the ropes because the entertainers broke the law — and they go after the policemen for doing their job.

Yes, we got our game Saturday night. But we'll never get back the presumption of purity that followed the Huskers around until last Wednesday. The way Nebraskans from Scottsbluff to Omaha reacted to last week's news shouldn't go unnoticed, for it should make us all wonder whether this whole collegiate-athletics industry is really worth losing our souls.

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## Surrogate motherhood turning into controversial rent-a-womb business

Her parents cannot agree on anything these days, not even on her name. Her biological mother, Mary Beth Whitehead, calls the 5-month-old girl Sara. Her biological father, William Stern, calls her Melissa. The court in Bergen County, N.J., just calls her Baby M.

The case that will come up on Wednesday is no ordinary custody fight between estranged partners. These two parents never had a relationship; they had a deal. The intimacy was not one of man and woman but of sperm and ovum. Mary Beth Whitehead was hired to be a surrogate mother.

When Stern, a biochemist, and his wife Elizabeth, a pediatrician, discovered they couldn't have children to-

gether, they went to an infertility clinic. There, they met Whitehead, a 29-year-old mother of two, the wife of a sanitation worker. And there they drew up a contract.

**Ellen  
Goodman**



Whitehead agreed to be artificially inseminated with Stern's sperm, to conceive and carry a baby for the couple in return for \$10,000. She signed on

the dotted line a promise that she would not "form or attempt to form a parent-child relationship" with the baby she carried.

But when the baby was born, Whitehead welched on the deal.

After turning Baby M over to the Sterns, refusing their money, she "borrowed" her back. When the Sterns, tried to reclaim the baby, the Whiteheads ran off with her. Finally, on July 31, Baby M was tracked down in Florida and returned to the Sterns and New Jersey.

"People treat it like we're fighting over a car," says Whitehead now. "But she's not a possession, she's a part of me." She is also a part of William Stern.

See GOODMAN on 5