

Daily Nebraskan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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What others think

Committee looks at ethnic studies plan

... the general education committee of the College of Arts and Sciences is scheduled to consider an ethnic studies graduation requirement proposal.

The proposal is the work of the Association of Students of the University of Washington Racism Task Force, which formed last spring after several publicized incidents of racism occurred on the UW campus.

The proposal asks that more classes from the American Ethnic, Afro-American, American Indian, Asian American and Chicano studies programs be added to the current distribution list of the arts and sciences college.

The proposal also asks that students majoring in arts and sciences be required to take 10 credits in courses that "deal with the American ethnic minority experience." Under the proposal, those courses do not have to be from one of the ethnic studies departments named above.

... The proposal allows for ethnic studies credits to also count for credit in either the social science or the language and literature portion of the humanities distribution lists. ...

Part of what the task force hopes will be accomplished with the ethnic studies requirement is to educate students on the cultures of different ethnic groups.

... Ethnic studies courses not only teach students about non-white cultures, but also cover many areas such as the numerous and opposing theories of race relations, history of the United States that is either ignored totally in the secondary schools or only glanced over, and different forms and styles of fiction, music and drama.

— The Daily University of Washington

• If you've been following the Student's Association campaigns these last few days, you'll have noticed that two issues keep coming up.

The first is the student government's image problem -- the fact that a great number of students regard UT student government as an ineffectual joke. The second is the proposal that a student seat be added to the UT System Board of Regents.

What may not be clear, however, is how closely the two issues are connected.

... You see, most people who complain about the Student Assembly think SA is ineffective because it draws ineffective people.

Those critics, however, get cause and effect reversed: If in fact the SA draws too many ineffective people, that's because the regents have systematically deprived student government of effectiveness.

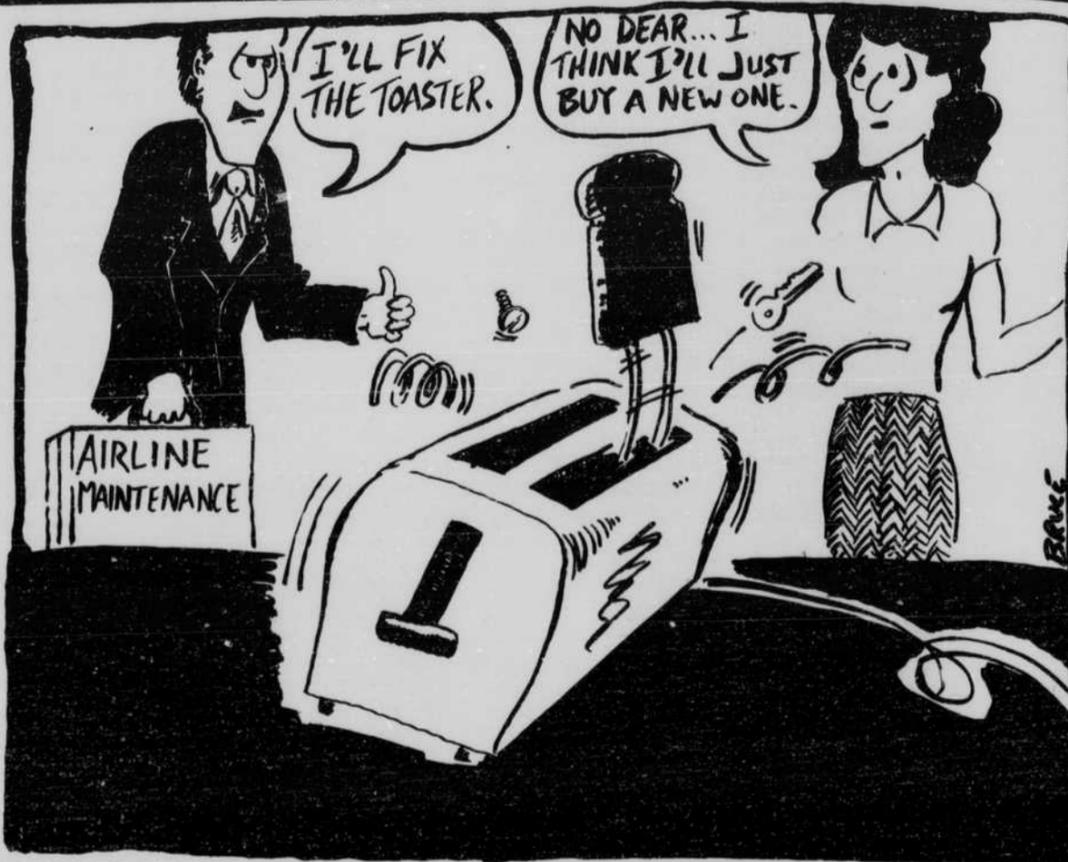
And the regents make many other decisions that directly affect students' educational experiences and opportunities. ...

But can we really expect a student to be able to grasp the issues the board has to confront? Of course we can. ...

What's more, non-student members of the board often require as much training and orientation as any student member would. Remember: Very few members of the UT System Board of Regents have any special expertise in education issues.

In order for UT student government to recover its power to support a variety of substantial student programs, students need an advocate on the Board of Regents who can stress students' need for -- and right to -- a strong, independent, autonomous student government. ...

— The Daily Texan University of Texas



Ethics missing in North's trial

Longsine compares federal case to problems on campus level

Honestly, I haven't been following the trials and tribulations of Oliver North. Has he been acquitted yet? Or has the trial simply halted for lack of non-classified, non-shredded information?

There is a thoroughly documented case involving the purchase of some silk or lace for Fawn Hall, but I was hoping that the special prosecutor was going after more than the return of \$36.95 to National Security Council petty cash.

Just because I don't know anything about it doesn't mean that I don't have an opinion on it. This is America and I'm entitled to have an opinion on anything, despite Meese's best efforts. If history is any guide, my deepest convictions should be about that which I know the least. That's another story though.

Join with me in reciting the American Creed on the Iran-Contra Affair.

I believe that Lt. Col. Oliver North is guilty of crimes more serious than theft, but short of treason.

I believe that then President Ronald "I believe in the book of Revelations" Reagan played an active role in approving North's attempts at circumventing the prohibition set down by Congress against funding the armed group known as the Contras.

I believe that then President Ronald "Trees cause more air pollution every year than automobiles" Reagan may have forgotten that he did indeed approve these fund-raising activities.

I believe that North was directed by his superiors to perform various tasks which he and they knew to be of questionable legality.

I believe that William Casey and George Bush had direct knowledge of North's actions and might be included among those as of yet unnamed superiors which form the basis of North's defense.

I believe that people who have "Ollie for President" posters, T-shirts, bumper-stickers and coffee mugs are guilty of poor taste.

I believe that North is innocent in the eyes of the law until proven guilty, and that he has the right to a fair trial.

Despite the fact that I don't agree with North's actions (selling arms to the Ayatollah is not a good idea, ask Salman Rushdie). I am no longer convinced that he should spend time behind bars, or even on a minimum security golf course.

North is still convinced that he did

nothing wrong, although he should be convinced otherwise. But using him as the scapegoat is perhaps a greater evil. The special prosecutor, naturally, wants to see someone held accountable for breaking the laws of the land with malice and forethought.

The central problem lies with North's defense. His actions thus far demonstrate extreme loyalty to Ronald "ICBM's are recallable" Reagan and might still be considered admirable. North does not want to get up on the stand and say "the president, vice president, and the director of the CIA not only were aware of my every action, but even directed me in my effort to provide support to the Contras."



Gary Longsine

Instead, he wants to quietly subpoena documents which will demonstrate that fact when he talks vaguely of his superiors. North doesn't care if these portions of the trial take place in secret. He certainly doesn't want these documents made public any more than the Bush administration does. The only person North wants to see those documents is the judge.

The administration doesn't want that. Why, what if, a year from now, the judge tells his girlfriend, and she tells her husband, and he tells the press? Ghastly!

The central issues here all involve ethics. It was wrong for North to what he did, whether he was told to do it by President Ronald "We begin bombing in five minutes" Reagan, or not. It would also be wrong for our country to convict and sentence North for something we all know he did after denying him access to documents needed for his defense.

Ethics are not wholly a forgotten art, by the way. Residence Hall Association members recently had a bout of ethics and thoroughly lambasted the space to my right, (your left) which unlike my space, represents the official opinion of the Daily Nebraskan. That doesn't prevent it, in my opinion, from being wrong on occasion. Even though Sen. Matt Wickless was within his rights to spend, with his committee, their remaining \$13.50 at Burger King, I

think it is important for some senators to question the ethics involved. Such persons should run for other government offices and counter the longstanding government principle that if one has taxpayer's money left at the end of the fiscal year, one should spend it.

I was thrilled to see that the issue despite its technical legality, was cause for debate. It is an interesting comparison between RHA and the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska. RHA has a tiny pittance of a budget (ASUN spends more than the entire RHA budget on photocopies and other printing expenses each year) and yet most of the time, most of the senators attend most of the RHA meetings.

Wednesday night on the local news ASUN was featured prominently. The opening shot was simply the senate meeting with the typical attendance level of about 2/3 of the senators.

Every year RHA senators work (in vain, I might add) for the two issues of primary concern to their constituents, visitation rights and the other one. They also contribute to educational and recreational activities in the halls.

Former ASUN senates, in contrast, have stood by while the NU Board of Regents pass sweeping changes in their jurisdiction over student fees, leaving them with token control. ASUN was out to lunch when the Regents grabbed Freedom O. Speech by the neck and slashed her campus speaker's programs.

There is one option, though. Very soon you will have the opportunity to vote for new leadership for ASUN. Vote for the only serious party: SLUMBR. Rather than suggesting, like their opponents, that ASUN has an image problem that can be countered with a Committee on Good Public Relations or some such bureaucratic monster, McArthur and SLUMBR have set about finding issues that are important and taking real, public stands. The most interesting and important of these is the issue of on-campus condom distribution.

The SLUMBR campaign buttons feature a slogan and a condom.

Longsine is a senior international affairs and economics major and a Daily Nebraskan editorial columnist.

letter

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Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions.

Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

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