

Daily Nebraskan

Tuesday

WEATHER:

WEATHER: Tuesday, partly sunny, high 35-40, SE winds 10-15 mph. Tuesday night, breezy and cold, low 20-25. Wednesday, partly sunny, high mid-50s. Thursday through Saturday, dry Thursday, chance of rain Friday, high 50 Saturday.

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Senators advance bill stiffening penalties

By Jerry Guenther and Natalie Weinstein
Staff Reporters

The Nebraska Legislature gave first-round approval Monday to a bill that places stricter penalties on crack and cocaine

legislature

dealers, despite claims by Sen. Ernie Chambers that the bill is "a farce and a sham."

Student Court orders Petersen to pick justices

By Ryan Steeves
Staff Reporter

The Student Court at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Monday ordered ASUN President Jeff Petersen to appoint new justices by April 5.

After 28 minutes of deliberation, the justices unanimously voted that Petersen should appoint the justices before new executive officers of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska take office April 5.

Eric Aspengren filed a petition against Petersen in Student Court March 9. Aspengren accused Petersen of not appointing justices on time as prescribed by the ASUN constitution.

The constitution requires senators to approve justices, who serve one-year terms, 30 days prior to the general election. The general election was March 15. Petersen has not yet appointed justices.

"It was an oversight on my part," Petersen said.

Petersen said he will comply with the court's order without appealing the decision. He said he will try to make the appointments by Wednesday so ASUN senators can approve the justices at the regular ASUN meeting.

During the course of the hearing, Petersen accused Aspengren of having ulterior motives for filing the petition. Petersen said he thinks Aspengren filed the petition on behalf of Stan Mommaerts, a nominee for student court.

At the time the petition was filed, Petersen said, about five students had applied to be a justice. The president appoints seven justices.

Petersen said he thinks Mommaerts wanted the appointments accelerated because the lack of applicants would have ensured him a spot on the court.

"I believe that is the real motivation in this case," Petersen said, "and if that is true, then I think that's a real flaw in the system."

Aspengren said he resents Petersen's accusation. While admitting he and Mommaerts are friends, Aspengren denied filing the petition on Mommaerts' behalf. Aspengren said Mommaerts informed him about the missed deadline but did not ask him to bring the issue to Student Court.

"It was my feelings to do this," Aspengren said.

Aspengren said he filed the petition because he didn't want the next round of ASUN members to appoint the court. This could lead to "court-packing," he said, in which members' friends are appointed.

Without the petition, Petersen would have ignored justice appointments, Aspengren said.

"I think he was willing to let it go and let the next president do it,"

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"It's a politician's bill, pure and simple," Chambers of Omaha said.

Senators advanced LB592 31-5 after about four hours of debate.

The bill, sponsored by Sens. Chris Abboud and Sharon Beck of Omaha, and Scott Moore of Stromsburg, provides for mandatory minimum prison sentences for people who manufacture, distribute or possess cocaine or crack with intent to sell.

Abboud said the bill does not deal with the individual user.

"It deals exclusively with individuals selling and trafficking these types of drugs,"

Abboud said.

According to the bill, a person caught with at least 10 grams, but less than 28 grams, of crack would receive a three-year mandatory minimum prison sentence. Someone caught with 28 grams or more of crack would receive a five-year mandatory minimum sentence. Twenty-eight grams is slightly less than one ounce.

A person caught with at least one ounce, but less than seven ounces, of cocaine would receive a three-year mandatory minimum prison sentence. Someone caught with seven ounces

or more of cocaine would receive a five-year mandatory minimum sentence.

The maximum penalty for all four crimes would be 50 years imprisonment.

Abboud said 26 states have adopted similar legislation.

Chambers said senators would vote in favor of the bill, despite its ineffectiveness, because it would make them look like crime-fighters.

"You're going to pass this knowing it won't do a thing," he said.

See DRUGS on 3

Commission scrutinizes state's colleges

By Larry Peirce
Senior Reporter

The Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education gave its annual review Monday and presented suggestions on how to conserve resources at the state's colleges.

legislature

Eric Seacrest, program review chairman, told members of the Nebraska Legislature's Appropriations and Education committees that postsecondary institutions need to monitor their programs to avoid duplication.

At least two public postsecondary institutions offer similar programs that don't meet "statutory performance criteria" for degrees conferred and credit hours taken per faculty member, he said.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the University of Nebraska at Omaha offer graduate programs in political science and psychology that don't meet state standards.

To conserve money and resources, the commission recommended that the institutions monitor these programs and jointly explore options, including attracting additional students, Seacrest said.

The commission also updated the status of programs that in the past had failed to meet statutory criteria.

The undergraduate programs that UNL continues -- but that do not meet statutory criteria -- include physics and astronomy, philosophy and sociology. The math and statistics, sociology, and physics and astronomy departments continue graduate programs that do not meet statutory criteria.

State statutes require that academic programs, failing to meet state criteria, be reviewed. UNL is continuing the programs "without monitoring" them, Seacrest said.

Failure to meet requirements doesn't mean a program must be discontinued, because some programs show growth trends, and others are vital to their institution's mission, he said.

The commission also noted that:
• UNL is considering a master's degree program in legal studies and museum studies, and a doctorate program in home economics.

• Kearney State College cited a need to confer a Master of Arts, Master of Science and Master of Fine Arts degrees, which are now beyond its authority.

• Chadron State College cited a need to offer a master's degree in business administration. The program has been approved by CSC's board, but the college lacks funds to implement it.

See REVIEW on 3



Kelly Palmer, a freshman arts and sciences major, tells moderator Vaughn Robertson she is disturbed that traditional and minority sorority members refer to each other as "we" and "they." Palmer spoke during an open forum in the Centennial Ballroom on increasing cultural diversity in the university sorority system.

Minority participation dominates discussion

By Sara Bauder
Staff Reporter

Granting representation in the Panhellenic Association to a black sorority and trying to increase minority participation in the greek system dominated a panel discussion Monday aimed at improving cultural diversity in UNL sororities.

The panel discussion was part of the Panhellenic Spring Program on Cultural Diversity and was attended by members of all sororities at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Beth Hansen, a junior French and English education major and a member of the Delta Delta Delta sorority, said the greek system is not diversified enough.

"Look at yourselves," she said. "The greek system is way too white. We need to consider Spanish, American Indians and other minorities and diversify."

One of the three panelists, Leslie Lewis, a senior pre-med major and member of the black sorority Alpha Kappa Alpha, said that although it would be difficult for her sorority to reach the mini-

mum-member requirement of the National Panhellenic Council, her sorority should still be recognized as a member of Panhellenic.

She said that because of the small number of blacks available to rush at UNL, reaching the member requirement is difficult.

However, Tiffany SeEVERS, president of the Panhellenic Association, said Alpha Kappa Alpha is not presently recognized on the UNL campus because its national chapter has not petitioned UNL for permission to start a local chapter and join the Panhellenic Association. She said that the minimum-member requirement had been waived in the past for Zeta Phi Beta, UNL's only recognized black sorority.

Robin Uecker, a sophomore advertising major and member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority, said that in order to fit into Panhellenic, all sororities should have to abide by the same rules.

Lewis said Panhellenic should accommodate minority sororities by making representation proportional.

"We don't want to be assimilated, but accommodated," Lewis

said. She said that she wants her sorority to be recognized as a separate entity with some of the same goals as other sororities.

Lisa Morris, a sophomore business major and member of Alpha Chi Omega sorority, said she thinks people don't understand exactly what minorities want from traditional sororities.

Morris also said blacks labeling their sororities "black sororities" is keeping the gap of communication open.

Courtney Butherus, a junior journalism major and member of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, said that part of the reason more blacks are not in sororities is because they are a small minority on campus.

Before the panel discussion began, suggestions for increasing cultural diversity in the greek system were discussed.

One of these suggestions was to change the wording in the Panhellenic rush booklets to encourage minority participation.

Theresa Sindelar contributed to the story.