

Daily
Nebraskan
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Court was limited

Ruling dictated by ASUN Constitution

The UNL Student Court decided Sunday that there is no room for interpretation in the ASUN Constitution to allow Sandy Haughton to serve as a senator for the Division of Continuing Studies.

Continuing studies students began paying student fees this year so they were given a senate seat for the first time.

Haughton was elected ASUN senator for the division, but later was informed she could not serve because a rule stated that to be eligible for the senate, a candidate must "be regularly enrolled as a full-time student, either as an undergraduate or graduate student." A full load is 12 hours. Haughton carries six.

The student court dismissed the request, stating that, "... when the language of the constitution is plain and unambiguous in its meaning, there exists no room for interpretation."

Association of Students of the University of Nebraska President Phil Gosch said he is disappointed with the court's decision.

"Perhaps there's a greater leeway in the interpretation of the constitution than the court chose," he said.

It seems that sadly enough, the student court had no leeway. Its job is to interpret the constitution. It would be quite difficult to interpret 12 hours as meaning six hours, or full time as meaning part time. The student court was bound by uninterpretable language -- namely, numbers.

This certainly is not to say that Haughton should be denied her seat in the senate. Less than 1 percent of the approximately 800 division students meet the 12-hour requirement. The other 99 percent still pay fees and still deserve representation. These students have a right to control where their student fees are spent.

But the only method to get this vote is by amending the ASUN Constitution. For Gosch, Haughton and all others concerned, this means the painful process of gathering signatures from 5 percent of the student body to force a student vote. Not much fun, especially considering the time of year.

Gosch and Haughton's reaction to the student court decision is understandable considering the route they now must take. But the student court did everything they could. Now it's up to the students to do all they can to help gain a vote for the Division of Continuing Studies.

-- Bob Nelson
for the Daily Nebraskan

Military's homophobia debated

"Be all that you can be." How many times do we hear that slogan in our lives? It is a catchy phrase used to advertise the U.S. Army, but after reading the letter by Douglas J. Shonka (DN, April 18) I get the distinct impression that these are just empty words trying to lure young people into the ranks of an institution based on prejudice and hypocrisy.

Douglas makes a point to criticize ASUN for not understanding the military's role. Strangely though, Douglas himself seems ignorant to what the military's role is. "The military's purpose is to win wars in as efficient manner as possible -- not as a case study for a social experiment." Well isn't that special. Warmongers are in the military. Isn't the TRUE and intended purpose of the military to defend the United States? If Douglas' definition of the military's role is seen as correct, then the military has not fulfilled its purpose.

Homophobia does exist in our culture and that certainly includes the military. Until we understand homosexuals, we cannot expect them. To "be all that you can be," one must conquer many fears, from working on helicopters, jumping from planes, driving tanks, being shot at, and a multitude of other super-male-ego things that are fed to our young people by way of the airwaves and printed media. The people in the military need to have the REAL courage to make adjustments in their attitudes.

Douglas, your letter reeks of homophobia. If you believe that cohesiveness of a unit is important, why is it detrimental to have a gay in the

unit? They are people just like anyone else, and are just as capable as heterosexuals to learn the skills that are mandatory for military action. There would be no problem if you weren't prejudiced against them. If our society promoted, understood and accepted gays, their security risk wouldn't be as big a problem.

You feel your rights would be infringed upon if you were forced to serve with a homosexual? Oh, give me a break, you sniveling crybaby! You've never had to do something you didn't like in the military?

You may think of me as poorly as you do ASUN, Douglas, but I think that puts me in pretty good company. I'd like people to realize as well that Douglas never supported his claim that ASUN senators are "self-important, resume stuffers." That too is just another one of his childish attempts to justify his prejudices. In this instance, ASUN has the interest of people in mind, not their resumes. They are taking a commendable stand against the institutionalized prejudice that exists in the military.

Just try reading Douglas J. Shonka's letter substituting the words "gays" or "homosexuals" with the word "blacks" or "Jews" and I think any reasonable human would see the foul garbage that is his prejudice.

It takes more courage to change an unfair system that one is a part of, than to fight a war against those who oppose it.

James A. Zank
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Test grades really do matter

Finals week dampens student's normally bright outlook on life

Columnist's note: Following the tradition of other columnists this week, this column may contain cheesy reflections on the end of the school year and corny references to the past.

I guess I've been pretty lucky so far in my life. Early returns tell me I'm doing okay.

I get that feeling because, despite the occasional disappointment, I've been fairly successful at most everything I do. That doesn't mean I'm terrific at everything I do, but I don't feel I've ever truly met with fall-on-my-face failure.

Maybe it's just my outlook. I tend to see things from the brighter side. I tend to find silver linings in the grayest of clouds. I tend to brush off poor test grades with a "next time I'll study harder."

But this time of year always gets me down. This time of year means there are no more next times in tests. That's what the word "finals" is all about. At no other time during the semester do I have the potential to blow anywhere from one-fifth to one-third of my grade in one afternoon.

The optimist in me says, "Hey, test grades don't matter that much anyway. Potential employers want experience and your kind of attitude. They don't care about grades. You can always sock it to 'em with a snappy interview."

And the naive one inside me adds, "Besides, you have a few years to go. You can always make up for it later."

But the truth is, grades do count for something in the post-college world. The realist in me tells the optimist my grades might be what gets me that interview. The mature one tells the naive one there's no true way to erase that bad grade; even a removal carries an asterisk.

So, this is the time of year when

editorial

POLICY

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the spring 1990 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Amy Edwards, editor;

letter

POLICY

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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

my stomach, along with the rest of the campus' stomachs, gets growly, because even if my track record shows a majority of successes, there are just enough failures out there to make me shaky.

Take, for example, an event during my senior year of high school.



Jana Pedersen

I was a member of my high school gymnastics team, and we were solid contenders for the state championship. Our toughest competition didn't come from other teams; it came from our own teammates. And now the veterans, including me, were competing head-to-head with some up-and-coming sophomores and freshmen for spots on individual events.

Although I'd secured a place on the team, I really wanted to compete in all four events, as I had the previous year. But I knew the younger gymnasts were better than me in some spots, especially the balance beam.

So, I got this great idea: Throw a big trick, wow 'em, grab the last open spot on the beam. For me, that big trick was a back flip.

It was the conference championship, two short weeks before the state meet and the last sure time for me to compete on the beam. The coach already had hinted I'd lose my spot to one of the younger gymnasts if I didn't nail that back flip.

I was reasonably secure about the trick. I'd done it in practice dozens of times. But from the start of my routine, I was shaky -- a wobble here, an unsure step there. And then there I

was, poised, fingers tingling, doing my in-the-head countdown.

One. Two. Three.

I jumped. I flipped. Both feet touched the beam. I bent my knees to steady the landing. But when I rocked back on my left heel, I discovered it was slightly off, and I dropped four feet to the mat.

So, my balance beam career came to an end, and every time I'm faced with similar challenges, I get that old, back-flip feeling again.

This week, I'm feeling that way often. My so-called dead week is loaded with two final project deadlines and one final exam.

I just know no matter how hard or late I study, that back-flip feeling will nag me until the end. And then there will be that moment when I check my left heel to see if I've made it.

About the time that blue computer sheet has lines of gray dots all over it, I'll start second-guessing myself. If only I'd studied harder or earlier. If only I'd done better on that first test back in February. If only ...

One of my favorite Peanuts cartoons shows Charlie Brown helping Sally with her homework.

Sally says, "It's going to be a history test, and I need your help. Fortunately, I think it'll probably be mystical choice."

"Multiple choice," Charlie Brown corrects.

And Sally says, "Whatever."

Sally's right. There is a certain mysticism about exams. And I guess the only way to get away from that back-flip feeling is just to get through it.

Okay. Here we go. One. Two. Three.

Pedersen is a sophomore advertising major and a Daily Nebraskan night news editor and columnist.

Bob Nelson, editorial page editor; Ryan Steeves, managing editor; Eric Pfanner, associate news editor; Lisa Donovan, associate news editor; Brandon Loomis, wire editor; Jana

Pedersen, night news editor.

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