

## Raising standards?

*Admissions policy may change*

**D**on't consider yourself lucky to be sitting in class this morning. You have been admitted to one of the least selective universities in the country.

To satisfy the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's admissions policy, you have had to meet only one of three requirements: completion of a core group of high school courses as described in the student bulletin, a ranking in the upper half of your graduating class or a score of 20 on the ACT or 850 on the SAT.

You couldn't quite make it into the upper half of the class because of the rigorous high school curriculum? The ACT made you nervous? Your school didn't offer the core courses required for admission?

No sweat.

Chances are, you were invited anyway, under a policy known as conditional admission. Study hard this semester, and bygones will be bygones.

Admissions standards have become a topic of debate since a consulting firm studying higher education in Nebraska recommended that UNL's be raised.

Now, a committee appointed by NU President Martin Massengale will look at changing admissions policies for the university system.

Although the committee, which will begin meeting in a few weeks, will perform more than a routine review of admissions, no specific changes currently are planned, said J.B. Milliken, Massengale's executive assistant.

The panel is expected to examine admissions requirements for all four NU campuses — the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

But the main controversy has centered on standards for the Lincoln branch. It is, after all, the state's comprehensive, land-grant institution. It ought to have higher standards, and a higher caliber of students, than the other branches.

Massengale asked the committee to "consider admissions policies which reflect the individual character of each campus in role and mission as well as the standards of the University of Nebraska as a whole."

That could be a politically charged process, but it is one that's needed if Nebraska's higher education system is to improve.

The state cannot continue to allow its university branches to put forth equal admissions policies, which sound fair but benefit no one.

Making standards more stringent at UNL would keep some students away — at least for a while. But the wait would benefit them if they took entry-level and remedial courses at state and community colleges, rather than at UNL.

After gaining basic skills at the colleges, students would be prepared to transfer to UNL, where their education would be a benefit, not a burden.

Such a change assumes that transfer policies are improved at the same time. To be fair to students who didn't meet UNL standards the first time around, the system would have to give them a reasonable chance to qualify later. Bureaucratic obstacles should not loom as large as academic ones.

Milliken said the admissions panel would submit findings and recommendations to Massengale early in 1992.

One possible recommendation is to base admissions on more than one of the three criteria.

John Beacon, UNL director of admissions, said that at some universities, students must satisfy the core course requirement along with one of the other two requirements.

"That's a trend, and that's probably where we're headed," he said.

That change would be an appropriate step, though not a radical one. It would be meaningless, however, if students still were accepted on a conditional basis.

Committee members must take a broad look not only at specific recommendations but also at the purpose of education at each campus.

Since the consulting firm released its report last year, there has been plenty of discussion on the "role and mission" of NU. Now the admissions committee has a chance to recommend definitions of and changes in role and mission that could affect students directly.

—E.F.P.



ERIC PFANNER

## Soviets need written ideology

**T**he Moscow Tea Party has hit full steam now, with statues, officials and former decrees toppling left and right.

Virtually all that's left is the writing of a declaration of some sort.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to have a revolution, they need a declaration to back up their actions.

The Soviet revolutionaries had better start putting pen to paper. They will not get far without a written outline of their ideology.

A listing of the Soviet people's grievances against the Communist Party could go something like this:

- It has refused its Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.
- It has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of Baltic States unless those people would relinquish the right of seceding from the union, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.
- It has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness its invasions on the rights of the people.
- It has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass the Soviet People, and eat out their substance.
- It has kept among them, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of their legislature.
- It has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.

Don't forget the coup. And the Moscow Massacre, which created three martyrs. The Soviet people rose up against these outrages and their perpetrators as grass-roots democracy blossomed.

Congratulations, Soviet people. You have a lot to look forward to. Be sure to model your reforms after the great democratic power on the other side of the globe, the nation that invented the noble concept of self-government.

Tear down remnants of the Communist rule, symbols of oppression such as the KGB building.

In fact, go beyond the building;



**Remember the dour Soviet leaders of the past? Forget about them. Politicians will learn the magic of public relations. They will wear makeup during televised debates and say snappy things like, "You, Senator, are no Jack Kennedy."**

tear out the entire institution of the infamous Soviet secret police. Democracy cannot tolerate covert agencies that spy on their own people, conduct subversive plots against other nations and participate in the brutal suppression of dissent by a totalitarian, Communist government.

In the new Soviet republic, replace the KGB with a Committee of Central Intelligence, to spy on its own people, conduct subversive plots against other nations and participate in the brutal suppression of dissent by a freely elected, democratic government.

Your elections will be textbook exercises in the virtues of responsible citizenship. About 40 percent of registered voters will participate. A large portion of those will vote the way they do because of their parents and the television.

The elections will be dominated by Committees of Political Activity, representatives of interest groups and businesses. The former collective farms will have such a committee, as will other former state-run industries. Many people will criticize these CPAs, as they will be known, but few will want to get rid of them.

How wonderful to be out from under the boot of the Soviet military-industrial complex, driven by the need to build arms to protect the Communist Utopia from imperialism. Go out and build those arms to protect your free markets and promote the spread of the principle of self-government to backward areas such as the Middle East.

Your virtuous citizenry also will enjoy the new-found freedoms made possible by democracy. Instead of waiting in lines for food, they will be free to discuss important social concerns.

Issues such as gun control and abortion will be debated in reasonable, orderly forums, such as the editorial pages of newspapers. They will not spill over onto the streets of the cities of your heartland.

Once democracy takes complete hold on the nation, ethnic and racial clashes will end. Those rebels in the Baltic states and the Ukraine will want to return to the reconstructed union. There will be no more strife between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Jews who left for Israel will want to come home. Give people the right to vote, and injustice and inequality will disappear.

Remember the dour Soviet leaders of the past? Forget about them. Politicians will learn the magic of public relations. They will wear makeup during televised debates and say snappy things like, "You, Senator, are no Jack Kennedy." They will have vacation dachas on the coast of the Black Sea but will not catch any fish.

The new capital city will be named Yeltsin, and a monument to father Boris will be placed next to a Taco Bell.

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