

# Official says ceremony gives honor graduates deserve

By Jean Lass  
Staff reporter

After putting in four or more years of undergraduate study, going through the graduation ceremony gives students the honor they deserve, a UNL professor said.

Jeff Keown, an associate professor of animal science and the chairman of next year's graduation ceremony, said it would be an honor for this year's 2,000 graduates to sit through a commencement exercise, especially one as formal as UNL's.

"Commencement is the university's way to recognize the amount of sacrifice the graduates' friends and family put in for financial and emotional support," he said.

"And it's the faculty's way of honoring students for all the time and effort they put into their undergraduate studies."

The ceremony honors graduates in a special order. First, the honorary doctorate students are recognized and awarded their degrees.

Then, after the honorary doctorate students receive their diplomas, 3rd District U.S. Rep. Virginia Smith will give the traditional commencement speech.

And, finally, the moment every graduate has been waiting for: The university will award all other diplomas — the doctorate, master's and undergraduate degrees, and UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier will conclude with a few final words to the graduates.

At UNL's ceremony, graduates don't get to hear their names called. Instead, graduates sit with other students in their college, and the

university assigns them a number, the same number that is on their diplomas. Students then walk across the stage by number to obtain their diplomas.

Students should still view going through the ceremony as an honor, Keown said, because UNL is one of the few universities where graduates actually receive their diplomas when they walk across the stage.

At other universities, he said, graduates usually receive a blank diploma. The real one is mailed to them in a couple of weeks.

And, Keown said, sitting through graduation is an honorary occasion also because of the history involved in commencement. The required academic attire, a cap and gown, goes back to the medieval commencement exercises in Europe, he said.

The cap and gown costs UNL students \$11.72, and the graduating seniors receive a packet of pertinent information regarding commencement.

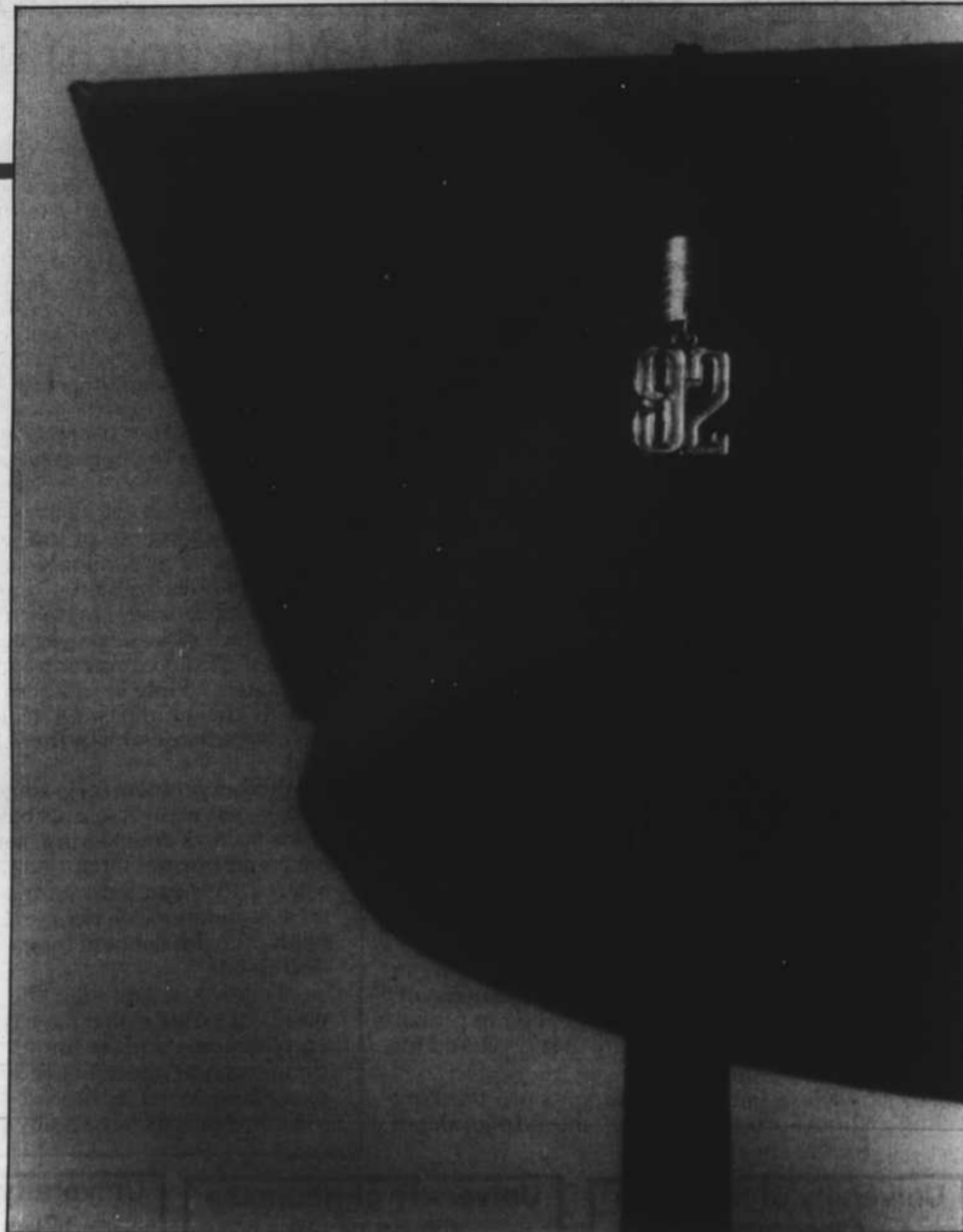
Although students are required to wear a cap and gown, Keown said that what they wear underneath is up to the graduates.

"It ranges from some wearing nothing at all underneath to others wearing formals," he said.

Graduation Day, May 9, probably will be warm, he said, so he recommends that men wear a shirt and tie and that women wear a dress.

The UNL faculty also will be required to wear caps and gowns of the universities from which they graduated.

"There are several years of college education represented in this university, he said, "and the university is very proud of this."



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— Keown, graduation chairman

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Photos by Michelle Paulman