

Daily Nebraskan

March 9, 1993

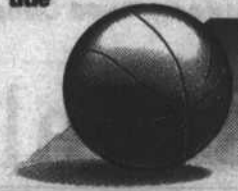
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

DIGEST



SPORTS

Women's basketball competes for Big 8 title



TUESDAY



55/25

Today, increasing cloudiness. Mostly cloudy with a few flurries tonight. Cloudy on Wednesday and cooler.

Candidates debate cuts, student fees

By Michelle Leary
Senior Reporter

A SUN candidates addressed several issues dealing with UNL's budget Monday afternoon at the final debate before Wednesday's elections. The budget debate focused on the university's hearing today in front of Legislature's Appropriations Committee. The hearing will address the proposed 5 percent cut for the University of Nebraska.

Trent Steele, VOICE's first vice-presidential candidate, said if budget cuts were made at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, it would be "disastrous."

"If (budget cuts) do go through, we want to make sure students have a voice in where the cuts will be made," Steele said.

PARTY's First Vice-Presidential candidate Leslie Strong agreed.

"We would like to prevent cuts," she said. "But if they do go into effect, we need to cut vertically."

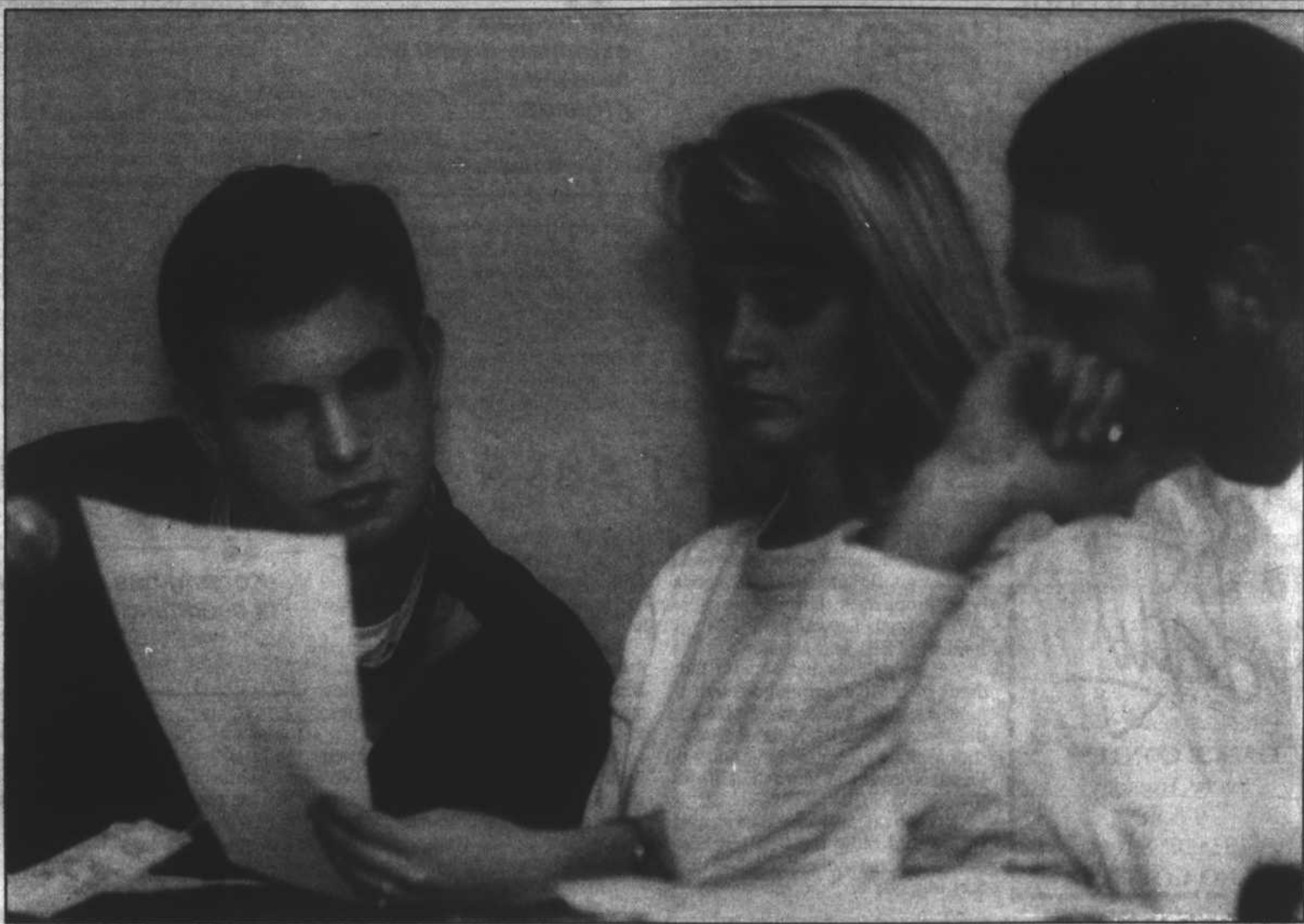
Vertical cuts would allow for only a few programs to be cancelled, instead of "watering down" several programs, Strong said.

Both parties said they would attend the march, which begins at Broyhill Fountain at noon, and the rally at the Capitol at 12:30 p.m. today.

Steele said the cuts needed to be fought before they happened.

Both parties also discussed student fee increases.

"We're striving to hold student



Matt Maser, left, Leslie Strong and Steve Dietz look over a ASUN complaint form that targeted sarcastic posters promoting the VOICE party Monday during the ASUN debate in the Nebraska Union.

Staci McKee/DN

fees down while maintaining quality programming," said Jill Anderson, VOICE's second vice-presidential candidate.

However, PARTY's Second Vice-Presidential candidate Matt Maser said a zero percent increase in student fees would be "unrealistic."

"The PARTY platform deals with realism," Maser said. "We'd try to keep student fees consistent with the

rate of inflation."

PARTY's Presidential candidate Steve Dietz responded to questions about leadership by saying: "The No. 1 skill you need as a student regent is knowing how to get the job done."

"I don't see Keith Benes as having the experience to get the job done."

Dietz has been a member of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska for four years,

while Benes, VOICE's presidential candidate, has only served on the UNL Homecoming subcommittee, Dietz said.

Anderson said although Benes had no experience in ASUN, he had other leadership skills, which include involvement in the University Ambassadors and the UNL Multi-Cultural Affairs office.

Steele said Benes was unable to

attend the debate because of continued health problems.

Karen Friedman, a Teachers College Advisory Board candidate with the VOICE party and a member of the debate audience, asked Dietz about the lack of diversity within PARTY.

"Our campaign was so late in starting that we didn't have time to go out

See DEBATE on 3

Students urged to attend budget cut hearing

By Chuck Green
Senior Reporter

A SUN President Andrew Sigerson is hoping UNL students can spare some time today to help spare their university.

With the long-awaited Appropriations Committee hearing on proposed budget cuts targeted at the University of Nebraska beginning at 1:30 p.m. today, Sigerson said he hoped students would make the trip to the Capitol to voice their concerns about the future of higher education in Nebraska.

"I'm hoping we can get at least 300 students there," he said. "There's really no reason students shouldn't come to this, if their schedule allows it. The weather will be nice,

and the Capitol's not that far away.

"If they don't come, it's because they're apathetic."

In January, the Appropriations Committee — which writes the state's budget — targeted almost \$14 million in cuts for the NU system.

Sigerson said he would try to illustrate to the Appropriations Committee — the Legislature's budget-writing body — the cost of one year at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, based on a 15-hour per semester course-load — a cost of about \$5,200, he said.

"That will take into consideration tuition, books, living expenses, parking permits, lab fees and student fees," Sigerson said. "I'll also point out the fact that in the last 10 or 15 years, tuition has increased more than 100 percent."

"It's not like we're not paying our fair share."

The hearing, which will be in Room 1520 on the first floor of the Capitol, will include testi-

mony from administrators, faculty, staff and students from all four NU campuses.

A march from Broyhill Fountain to the Capitol is scheduled to begin at noon. At 12:30 p.m., there will be a rally on the steps of the Capitol, and then students are urged to gather in Room 1520 for the hearing.

In addition to Sigerson, UNL's official speaker list includes Chancellor Graham Spanier, Irv Omtvedt, vice chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and Sally Wise, NU faculty representative.

After the official speaker lists of each of NU's four campuses are exhausted, students wishing to address the committee will be allowed to make five-minute statements.

Sigerson said there would be a sign-up sheet in the room for students wishing to speak.

Rob Douglas, a lobbyist for the Government Liaison Committee, said he too hoped for a

“There's really no reason students shouldn't come to this, if their schedule allows it.”

--Sigerson
ASUN president

large student turnout.

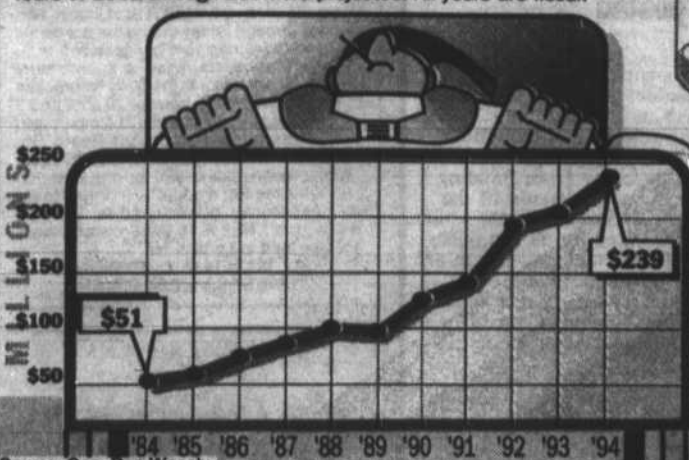
"We've been pushing pretty hard for students to get out there," Douglas said. "If we don't get a lot of students there, I think the Legislature will see that as, 'Well, the university students really don't care.'"

"And the Legislature won't take us very seriously in the future."

Medicaid shortfall behind budget crisis, senator says

Nebraska Medicaid expenses

Years of 1992 through 1994 are projected. All years are fiscal.



Source: Sen. Don Wesley

Scott Maurer/DN

By Matt Woody
Staff Reporter

A Medicaid shortfall for the 1992-93 fiscal year is largely responsible for the state's budget crisis and the possible cuts looming over UNL, a Nebraska state senator said.

Sen. Don Wesley of Lincoln, chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee, said the projected \$29.1 million Medicaid shortfall for 1992-93 was keeping him busy searching for solutions.

Nebraska is not alone in facing this "severe problem," Wesley said —

many states are having the same difficulties. These states are all looking for answers, but "frankly, there aren't any," he said.

According to the Medicaid Study Task Force report, published in December, Medicaid could cause problems for Nebraska for years to come unless something is done. The task force predicted a Medicaid shortfall of \$49 million in the 1993-94 fiscal year and \$71 million for 1994-95.

The United States' health care system is badly in need of reform, Wesley said. The current system is "eating up our state and our nation," he said.

The task force's report shows a large increase in Nebraska's Medicaid spending over the last eight years: "Medicaid general fund expenditures in 1985 totalled \$51 million. The projected general fund expense for 1995

is \$239 million, an increase of 369 percent."

In 1992, the general fund expense was \$140 million.

The report cites eight factors that have led to the Medicaid spending increases.

These factors include an increase in the number of people using Medicaid, a number that has more than doubled since 1980, and a rise in the cost of health care, which "increased at a much higher rate than the general inflation rate."

The Medicaid task force recommended that fundamental changes in the Medicaid system be enacted and requested "that the Department of Social Services develop a managed

See BUDGET on 3