

ASUN to tackle minority bill before swearing in executives

By Andrea Kaser
Staff Reporter

Before the swearing in of new executive officers tonight, ASUN will consider adopting a policy of sponsoring racial minority students to attend educational conferences.



If the bill is approved, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska would make a bylaw to set aside \$1,000 each year for minority students from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's four recognized racial minority student organizations to go to educational conferences, said Andrew Sigerson, outgoing ASUN president.

Those organizations include the Afrikan People's Union, the Malaysian Student Association, the Mexican American Student Association and the Vietnamese Student Association.

On returning from conferences, students would give reports about what they learned to ASUN, Sigerson said.

Sigerson said he and Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Griesen worked on the policy together. He also has spoken with the groups about the travel fund, he said.

"I think that's a going to be a major step at least to bridging some of the gap" between ASUN and minorities,

Sigerson said.

Another bylaw change to be considered tonight would combine the Student Life and Scholastic commissions, serving as both a liaison between the Academic Senate and an appointment-making body.

Sigerson said the senate had trouble keeping the head positions of those commissions filled.

Members of student government also will vote on a bill calling for more undergraduate student involvement in the International Teaching Assistants Institute, and present an honorary plaque to former University of Nebraska Athletic Director Bob Devaney.

After the regular meeting is adjourned, the swearing-in ceremonies will begin.

President-elect Keith Benes and Second Vice President-elect Jill Anderson will give speeches at tonight's ceremony.

Sigerson and Second Vice President Elizabeth Healey will give farewell speeches, but First Vice President Trent Steele will say both goodbye and hello again, having been re-elected to the same position.

Sigerson said he had confidence in Benes and that the transition would go smoothly.

"I think Keith will be ready to go when he steps in. I'm . . . trying to leave him where we are on certain topics . . . so he doesn't have to reinvent the wheel," he said.

Legislature

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"The essence of the bill is to create a continuing support system for the child for postsecondary education," Beutler said.

Betty Peterson, commissioner for the Nebraska Commission on the Status of Women, supported the bill.

In a letter to the committee, Peterson wrote that all too often the absent parent's financial assistance ended and the custodial parent was unable to provide adequate support.

"The potential scholar is unable to continue her or his education," she wrote. "The bill is a possible remedy for such students."

"(The bill) at least provides an opportunity and a way for parents to contribute to that education and the best possible start for their children as they set out on their own," Peterson wrote.

LB568 is similar to LB1265, which was introduced by Beutler last year. The bill was heard and indefinitely postponed by the judiciary committee.



Michelle Paulman/DN

Andrew Sigerson, outgoing president of ASUN, said he stuck to his guns while in office, and hopes the new leaders can do the same.

Sigerson

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state senators and had been the chairman of the Committee for Fees Allocation. He also ran because he thought he could help ASUN could accomplish more.

"I just thought I could do the job. I guess you have to have some ego to do something like this," he said.

Sigerson said his drive comes from his parents. His mother runs her own hair salon, and his father is a State Farm Insurance agent and was the most recent chairman of the Douglas County Republican Party. Through their examples, he says, they showed him that leadership was valuable. Childhood memories of working along with his father have given him an optimistic outlook on politics.

"It's fun for a kid to walk in a

parade and hold balloons," he said. But today, Sigerson admits he's much more serious.

One thing he said he would do differently was his press conference at the State Capitol, when he protested proposed university budget cuts.

He made some state senators angry, which he said was his point. But he also said he carried it too far, nearly burning some of his bridges.

Despite such sober lessons, Sigerson is quick to say ASUN has accomplished a lot during his term, both with issues student government faces every year with issues ASUN hadn't ever faced before.

ASUN's influence brought great improvements in campus safety, he said.

"Those blue phones are there because ASUN came up with that safety surcharge," he said, adding

that ASUN helped research where the phones were needed and came up with the plan to pay for them.

Sigerson also said ASUN had helped reduce the limit on overselling parking permits.

ASUN was more active in improving minority affairs, Sigerson said, by involving senators in diversity conferences and inviting minority groups to take part in protesting the university budget cuts.

Sigerson says he is most proud that members of ASUN took a stand on issues and stuck to their principles.

"I see a lot of people who get involved that change their stripes pretty often," he said. "I really felt that we didn't do that."

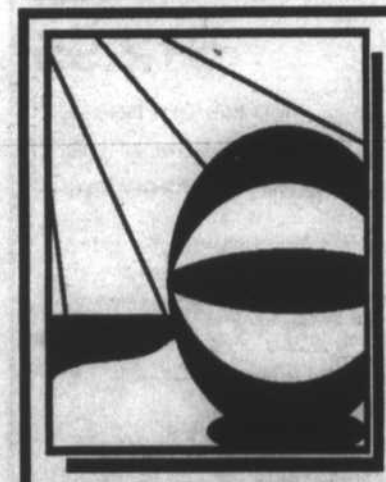
Sigerson, a business economics major, will graduate in August and hopes to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Law.

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EOE

Theater

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About 15 people attended the association's first meeting in March, where they formed committees, such as finance and scenery, to start planning for productions.

They plan to meet again in April, and King hopes to see more African-American students interested in theater at the second meeting.

In addition, King hopes to gain some new members as a result of the group's booth at Freshman Friday.

Dingle said the group is pursuing several financing options.

"It's still kind of up in the air where we're gonna get the money from," Dingle said.

The theater group would like to get backing from the Theater Department, Dingle said, for example, by being allowed to use the department's set and stage facilities for performance and production.

Dingle said she did not want to require members to pay dues in order to finance the group, because this might discourage interested students from joining. She pointed out that students involved in other theater productions did not have to pay dues.

"I think there's a lack of diversity in the Theater Department," Dingle said. "It could benefit from more African-American students as actors."

Other avenues for financing which the group might pursue include applying for state grants to support minority groups in the arts and general fund-raisers conducted by the group's members.

King felt the organization would be beneficial to all members of the university community.

"I'm very glad that UNL is able to have a black theater association, because it will help not only African Americans but just broaden cultural diversity for UNL in general," King said.

UNL class offered by satellite

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will use satellite technology to offer a computer design course to participants nationwide.

Beginning Thursday, the basic design course will help non-artists incorporate graphics in newsletters, flyers, brochures and other multimedia work, said Melanie Eirich, who will conduct the sessions. Eirich is a UNL computer graphic artist in the Institute of Agriculture of Natural Resources.

Each session will feature profes-

sional design principles that can be implemented through a variety of computer systems. Programs will examine logo design, the use of basic shapes, 3-D elements of shading, layout skills, color usage, scanned images and other graphic effects.

Participants in the course will send samples of their work and any questions they have to Eirich by fax or mail. Eirich will respond through correspondence or will demonstrate the answer to specific questions during the next televised program.

Non-profit craft store moves

Helping Hands Haymarket will open Thursday in the lower level of the Apothecary, 8th and P streets.

The store is intended to provide a sales outlet for handcrafted items made by needy people in more than 40 countries, including the United States.

Helping Hands has been in Lincoln for more than 10 years, with the

original shop located in Piedmont.

The store is unique because it is a non-profit shop where volunteers assist customers with their gift selections.

The Haymarket store is scheduled to be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Peer

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quartile when U.S. News and World Report rated the country's colleges and universities last fall.

UNL was in the third quartile.

Both Oklahoma State and Kansas State failed to make the National Science Foundation's list of the top 50 public research universities in the country.

UNL made the list at No. 48.

But, Stahl said, many factors were considered when the commission picked the peer group.

"We have a 38-page document that helped us decide," he said. "We look at an institution's role, administration, progress, size, wealth . . . things like that. We tried to pick institutions that would combine all of those and mirror UNL as much as possible."

Stahl said he already had received a letter from UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier stating disagreement with the commission's choices. And he

said that while NU President Martin Massengale had not yet taken a stand, he thought Massengale "probably (would) disagree with it, too."

However, Stahl said he didn't perceive the different lists as a clash between the university and the commission — just a "difference of opinion."

"I think in our jobs — all of our jobs — there's room for differences of opinions," he said. "I can certainly live with that, and I hope others can, too."

The commission's peer group, Stahl said, was not intended to be the backbone of every decision made by its members concerning UNL.

"In the overall scheme of things, this list is only one of many tools that help us in making decisions," he said. "I think there's been a lot of confusion on that. We really don't attribute as much importance on the list as some people interpret."

"Anything of this sort must be used in context and with good judgment, as with anything else."