

# Appointee leads UNL through information age

By Mindy Leiter  
Staff Reporter

## Simerly to direct campus technology

Robert Simerly plans to take a pro-active approach to his two-year appointment as associate chancellor for informational technology at UNL.



Simerly there," he said.

Simerly, who will retain his job as dean of the division of continuing studies, was recommended to the temporary position by UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier and must be con-

"We need to do this; we are headed toward a new information age and a new form of literacy for the United States.

"The basic forms of literacy have been reading, writing and speaking, but there is an emerging fourth form of literacy, being able to utilize the informational technology that is out-

firmed by the NU Board of Regents.

If confirmed, Simerly will begin work this fall in the new position to coordinate UNL's television, telephone and computer technology for classroom and administrative purposes.

Joan Leitzel, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, said Simerly and the informational technology management council he would lead were critically important additions to the university.

Simerly's yet-to-be-formed management council will work to form long-range strategies to implement computer, informational technology at UNL.

Simerly said he wanted UNL to coordinate its technology and move dynamically toward the 21st century.

He said the management council would look at planning strategies to help the university improve its use of technology in four areas: administration, curriculum development, fac-

ulty and student research, and outreach activities to the state.

Leitzel said UNL already did well in technological areas such as television, telephone and voice systems and computer networking.

Some areas still need improvement, Leitzel said.

"We need to get the technology into the classrooms and build tools for the whole curriculum," she said. "I'm sure there are other areas we are behind, but the whole purpose for this appointment was to make technology a priority."

The university already plans to put more technology in the classrooms, Leitzel said, and students and faculty should expect to see more technology-based education.

Simerly said council members face many challenges ahead.

The council must work with the problems of quickly changing and overlapping technology,

he said.

Simerly said the council would make its plan flexible to deal with this problem.

"It's not going to be something that winds up in a beautiful blue and gold foil folder. It is only useful so long as it can be changed as new approaches and new technologies develop," he said.

Simerly said the council also was challenged by the lack of precedents regarding new technology.

"We have to figure out how to do much of what we need with no historical precedents to help. Much problem solving is done with a rear view, and in this instance there is no rear view to go along," he said.

In addition, Simerly said the council must make its plans with student and faculty needs in mind.

Leitzel said technology systems must be considered as merely a means to an end.

"It's just a tool for what we need to do, either learning or research or serving the state. Whenever we need help we want to make sure we have the tools," she said.



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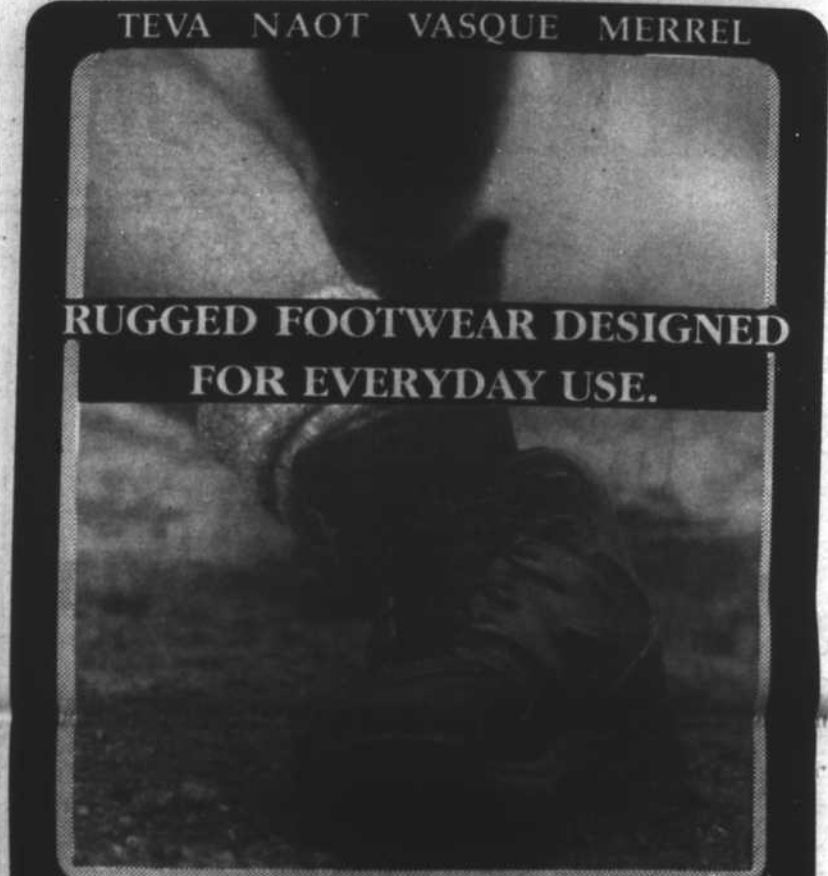
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