

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Budget unity

NU president's idea to be positive change

NU President Dennis Smith took a big step toward unifying the University of Nebraska this weekend.

Smith told the NU Board of Regents he would like to assert more control over the university's entire budget and the office of the president.

Smith is not overstepping his bounds with this proposal; he is right on track. He is doing exactly what the regents asked him to do when he was hired last fall.

Next year is a budget year in the Nebraska Legislature, and this unification will send a good message to lawmakers.

In past years, all four campuses of the NU system have acted somewhat independently during budget negotiations with the Legislature. This new, unified front should show lawmakers that the University of Nebraska has its act together.

Smith's budgetary assertiveness also will make clear the responsibilities of the president's office. In the past, Smith said, the office was like a "fifth campus."

"No university system can operate in that manner," he said.

A system like the University of Nebraska shouldn't have to.

The office of the president is in its first year of transition. Smith's move will allow him to be completely involved in the budgetary process from the beginning.

Smith's proposal not only will present a unified front to the Nebraska Legislature next January but also will send a clear message to all four NU campus chancellors that their boss will be directly involved in fighting for their budgets.

Keeping track

Students should hold ASUN accountable

Next fall, UNL students ought to take ASUN up on its call for accountability and hold the student senate accountable for its actions.

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska voted during dead week to give itself the power to appoint executive board members of the University Program Council.

UPC members were given only two days warning about the proposal, and nearly 70 students attended the ASUN meeting to oppose the change.

Senators and ASUN President Andrew Loudon cited accountability as the major reason for the takeover.

"If this is about nothing else, this is about accountability. We can be held accountable for the \$100,000 that we give (UPC), yet we have no control," Charles Hamilton, a graduate senator, said.

Some of the nearly 70 students who opposed the change thought the accountability argument was ironic from a body elected to represent them.

But ASUN's recent call for accountability should be turned into a major challenge for students to carefully watch its elected student government.

The university will face issues next year on which a strong student voice is needed. Among these issues are budgetary concerns, student fees, ticket prices and — with the ASUN's latest action — making sure UPC remains a diverse and dynamic student organization.

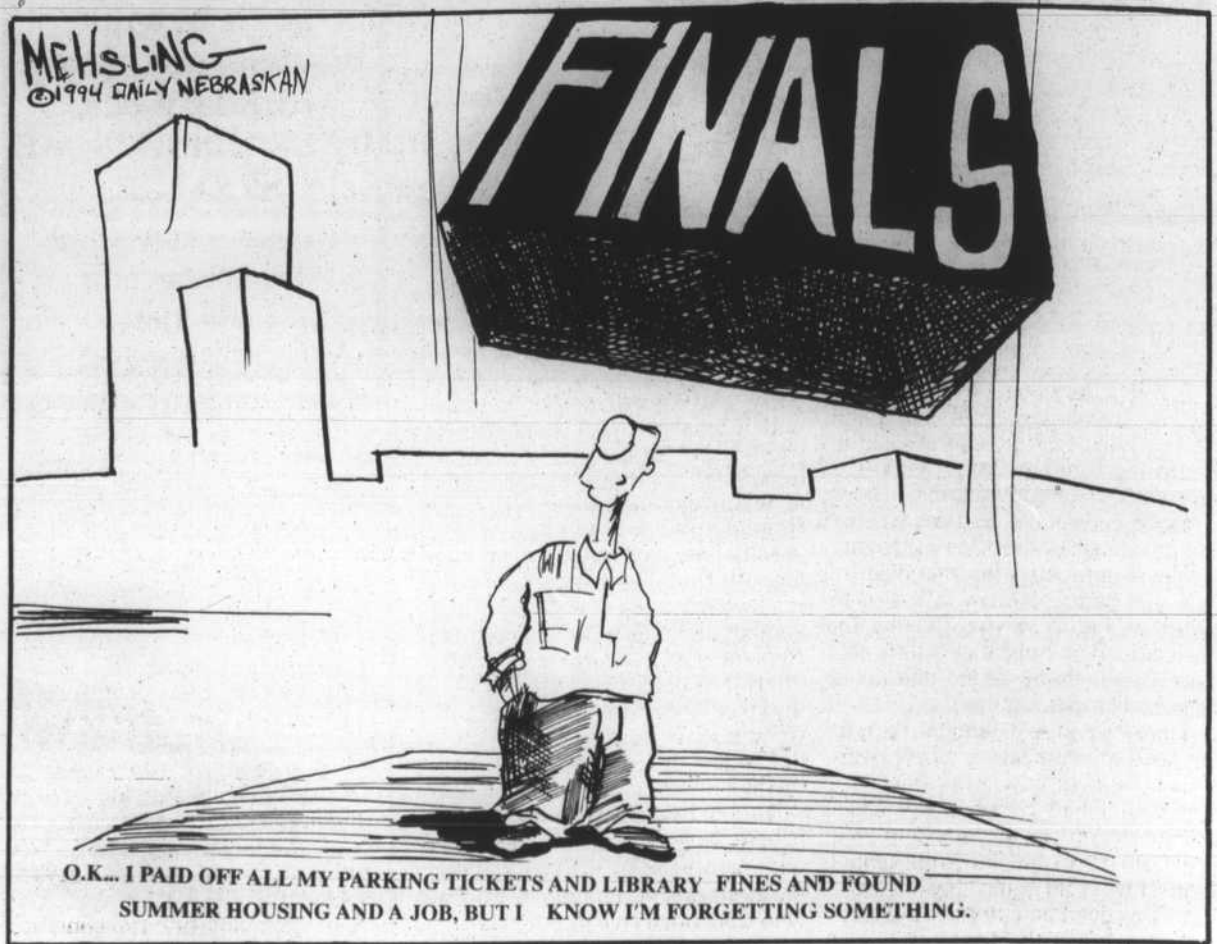
Students now have ASUN's own call for accountability as an incentive to hold their elected representatives more accountable in the future.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Premature stance

After reading Thursday's article relating to the College of Architecture's proposal requiring students to purchase their own computers, we feel that some major clarifications need to be made. In 1993, the National Architectural Accreditation Board granted a five-year reaccreditation to the college. In its report, the largest deficiency was that not all students were computer literate upon receiving their undergraduate degree. Where the report says "computer literate," it does not mean literate in programs such as word processing and spreadsheet use, which virtually all university students know and use. "Computer literate" here means a working knowledge of everything from computer-aided design programs to sophisticated three-dimensional rendering programs to land-mapping systems to furniture symbol libraries.

We must have a computer education program that reaches all students up and running before the next accreditation visit in 1998.

The initial position taken by Doug Stobbe, Government Liaison Committee chairman for the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, at the all-college meeting Wednesday was premature and not fully informed. The College of Architecture Computing Committee has been reviewing several options, and the student purchase option is seen as the most viable at this time.

At Wednesday's ASUN meeting, Andrew Loudon said this proposal was one of the fees ASUN needs to fight. This statement is incorrect. The tentative proposal is that if students are required to purchase their own computers, the cost will be staggered. When the student graduates, they would take their computer with them. The purchase of a computer is not a student fee; it is an investment. If the university purchases these computers for student use, a very large user fee would probably be added to tuition.

The architecture college faculty has unanimously decided to postpone any collegewide computer program until fall 1995 to ensure the best decision will be made. The ASUN Executive Committee's initial position on this matter was hurried and premature. We expect any future collaboration with them will be carefully researched.

Brian M. Dusek
ASUN senator
College of Architecture

Patty Traudt
president
College of Architecture Student
Advisory Board



James Mehsling/DN

Narrow vision

Once again the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska has flexed its muscles and managed to railroad someone's personal priorities through the system without involving the constituents it so vocally claims to represent. The passage of Bylaw A Wednesday evening was an obvious blunder on the part of ASUN.

I am not at all against the foundation on which this bylaw claims to be grounded. The democratic process of checks and balances is one that is proven to work. Proposed in the right form, this change can be effective. However, it's inappropriate to change a bylaw with only two days notice and without proper research or consultation with the group in question.

As a former ASUN senator for the journalism college, I am quite familiar with the process of bylaw changes. I am also well aware that issues fundamentally based in the technical jargon of policy can often be overshadowed by emotional debate.

Part of a senator's job is filtering out the emotional rhetoric and getting to the heart of the issue. Without a doubt, at least one person in the Regency Suite expressed a clearly unemotional point. Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs and longtime ASUN adviser James Griesen stated in effect that the relationship between ASUN and the University Program Council as it now stands does not violate any regents policy. Ironic that the one solid leg ASUN was standing on was swiftly swiped right out from under it, and it allowed this bylaw to pass.

Accountability seemed to be the buzzword of the night according to ASUN. In my two years of attending senate meetings, I have never seen a turnout of students like I saw Wednesday. Close to 70 students showed up to voice their disapproval of this bylaw

change. It truly amazes me that ASUN proposes to hold UPC accountable to the students of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, when the senators are so blatantly disregarding their accountability to their constituents.

It appears that the "VISION" of this campus is wrapped up in 26 senators who disregarded the advice of both their adviser and their constituents. That sounds like a pretty narrow vision to me.

Kimberly Arms
senior
broadcasting

Letter in error

Jim Rose's letter of April 28 argues that the Teaching Committee of the English department acknowledges that "the English department has a problem with a 'lack of rigor in the writing curriculum' and that there has been 'no response' whatsoever to fixing (sic) this substantial problem."

The letter is in error. The report in question comes from a committee of which I am the chairman. In the report, the committee lists the results of its poll of the faculty as to major departmental teaching issues.

Two faculty members indicated a concern for the sequencing and rigor of the writing curriculum. We did not respond to their concern because many other issues received far more concern among the faculty polled.

That two faculty members expressed the opinion that the writing curriculum could receive attention in these areas does not mean that the Teaching Committee of the Department of English endorsed their opinion, and my report does not say that there has been no departmental response whatsoever to "this substantial problem." The department is constantly monitoring its performance in composition areas through composition research, teaching evaluations, the Writing Center and work with professors in other departments who are interested in teaching writing.

What my committee's report does say is that the Teaching Committee has not determined whether to do a study of the issue of rigor and sequencing in the writing curriculum; we were the ones that made no response, not the department.

No one would argue that we cannot improve, and Rose may wish to present evidence to the Teaching Committee concerning where we are falling down. However, he has not done this; he has written to the newspaper making allegations unsupported by research evidence. In the absence of specific evidence from Rose, the department can hardly act on his assertions.

Paul A. Olson
Foundation Professor of English,
chairman of Teaching Committee