

Speaker fears for future of victims

By Kasey Kerber
Staff Reporter

Tom Laughlin is hopeful and afraid. Laughlin, best known as the star of the 1970s Billy Jack films, came to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln this week to discuss domestic violence.

A speaker on psychology and theology, Laughlin talked to the press Tuesday afternoon about domestic violence and well-known figures, including NU football player Lawrence Phillips and O.J. Simpson.

The difference in the cases has caused him to appreciate the growing awareness of the issue, yet fear for its victims.

Laughlin said he had spoken to Nebraska coach Tom Osborne and commended him for his stand on

Phillips, who was found guilty last month of assault against a former girlfriend, NU basketball player Kate McEwen.

Osborne dismissed Phillips from the team on the night of the arrest but has since said Phillips may return in the future.

Laughlin said Phillips' case called for a university center to help battery and domestic violence victims.

"In a university of education you have to teach human values," Laughlin said. "This is the opportunity to take this young man's exposing of a problem and set up a center."

No such facility exists on university grounds, said James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs.

"We operate in conjunction with the Rape/Spouse Abuse Center,"

Griesen said. "They have a crisis line and have been very receptive to students' problems and needs."

Laughlin said he was concerned with the rising amount of domestic violence nationwide.

"In a survey of female students conducted at the University of Miami," he said, "200 out of 600 respondents who had been hit by their boyfriend said it was a sign of love."

"That's frightening." He said the not-guilty verdict in the O.J. Simpson case would hurt victims of domestic violence.

"This is one of the sickest days in America," Laughlin said. "The day he was arrested, calls to battery hotlines increased by 400 percent. People will now be afraid to call because they think there is no justice."

Appeal

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Brian Humes, assistant political science professor, said students should be allowed to walk and receive a folder without the degree if they were enrolled in courses that would have fulfilled their graduation requirements.

He said it could be decided at a later date if the student actually earned the degree.

Humes said he had a friend at the University of Iowa who walked

through graduation three times and didn't receive a diploma.

Donald Jensen, psychology professor and commencement committee liaison, said the committee opposed having anyone in the ceremony who did not earn a degree.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, said he almost let a student walk without having a degree because he did not know it had to be approved by the committee.

"This is a problem," he said, "and there are cases beyond a student's

control."

He said there have been cases where a senior's graduation has depended on a professor who left the country before turning in final grades.

Another suggestion to resolve the problem included setting finals for all senior-level courses earlier in finals week so grade appeals could be handled before commencement.

The senate is waiting on a report on grade appeals from Harvey Perlman, interim vice chancellor for academic affairs, before it takes further action.

Conduct

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Greek Affairs have their own judicial process but have to report to the UNL Judicial Board if the matter exceeds their authority.

If a situation cannot be resolved by the student and a judicial affairs officer, Griesen said, it goes to a hearing.

The athletic department, ROTC and marching band had the code of conduct at their core before adding on stipulations of their own.

Barbara Hibner, associate athletic director, said all student athletes were

held to the university code and to the department, Big Eight Conference and NCAA rules, as well as to city and state laws.

She said the faculty made every effort to inform students of the rules before they come to the university. In screening athletes, she said, about six have been turned down recently because of "questionable behavior and lack of values."

The department also uses a program called Life Skills to teach students about their lives outside of athletics, said Keith Zimmer, the program's director.

He said it changed athletes from idealists to realists.

"It prepares them for a life after sports," he said, "knowing how few will make it to the next level in athletics."

The NCAA has used Nebraska's program as a model for its own program, he said, which was launched in 1994. It deals with career choices, handling anger, alcohol and drug resistance and other personal issues.

Immediately following its discussion of judicial affairs, the senate delayed voting on faculty representatives to the Judicial and Appeals Board.

Some senate members wanted more information on the candidates, and the senate lacked the 50 representatives it needed for a quorum.

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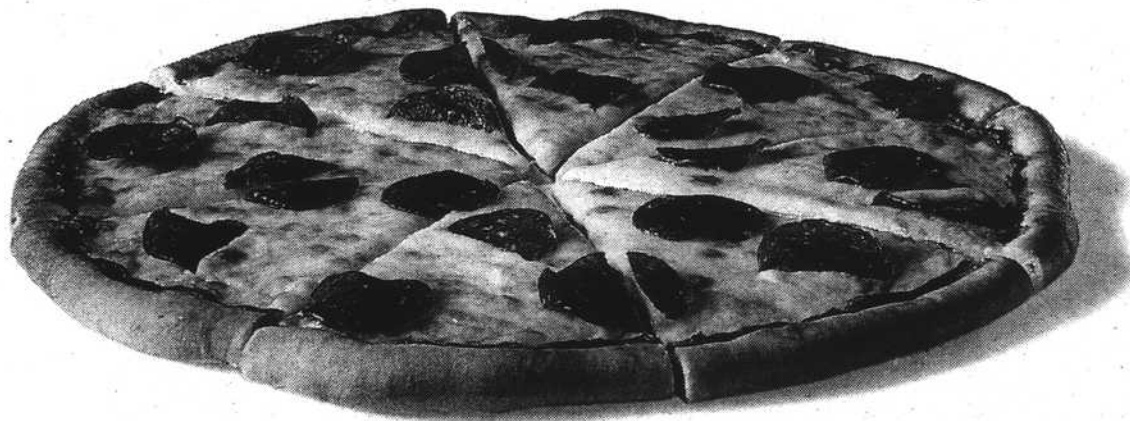
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