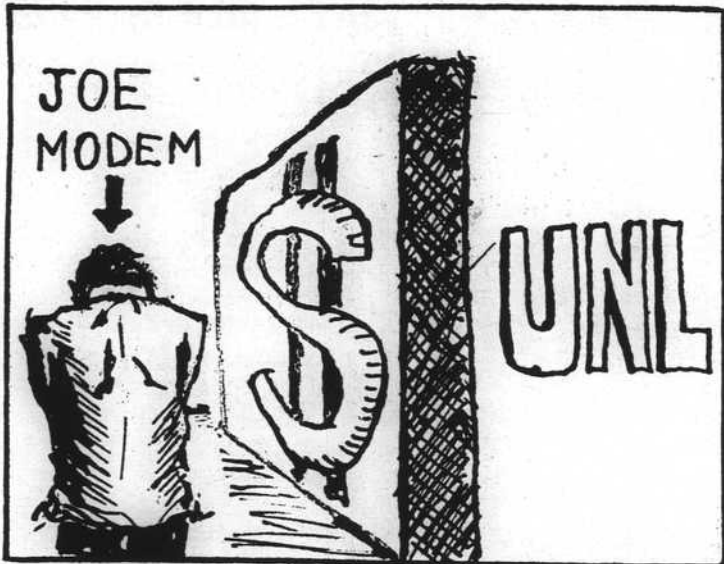


OPINION

Daily
Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Bret Gottschall/DN

Wrong answer

Distribute e-mail service, cost fairly

College isn't cheap, but maybe the university is. Instead of living up to the commitment of providing low-cost e-mail to students through "bigred" accounts, UNL is considering putting off-campus students further in the red by turning over maintenance of the Huskernet modem pool to a commercial provider.

Bad idea.

The problem isn't handing the modem pool over to a commercial entity; it's not the added financial burden of \$10 a month, either.

It's the way the university plans to distribute the burden — on off-campus students only.

If the university needs to reinstate a fee for e-mail accounts, fine. Let everyone who has an account pay a small fee. If the university, as it now is proposing, intends to charge only off-campus students, it had better be prepared for the inevitable backlash.

Some might say that off-campus students could just come down to campus to use the computer labs, thus avoiding the off-campus charge. If that is seen as a remedy to this situation, we expect the university to provide enough computer labs to handle the traffic. That, most likely, would cost more than maintaining the modem pool.

Others might say that students desiring free e-mail services should just stay on campus. That would be difficult, considering campus housing already is overcrowded.

Another argument for the charge might be that off-campus students have the luxury of a computer at home, and that they should expect to pay for the convenience of accessing e-mail from their own living rooms.

All of the reasons for charging off-campus students for e-mail use when on-campus students receive it for nothing are flawed.

Off-campus students pay the same fees and the same tuition as those students living within the confines of campus. They shouldn't be expected to pay more for any service offered by the university.

Let everybody or nobody pay for e-mail services.

Keep the lines open, and keep it fair.

Editorial policy

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1995 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

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: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



Mehlsing/DN

Library nonsense

Required class teaches freshmen very little

This semester, I'm paying \$209 to learn how to use Love Library. For that price I could buy 209 Subway 6-inch meatball subs, but instead ... I'll be learning to use the library.

You see, \$209 is the amount required for an out-of-state student like myself to pay for one-credit hour and an "extremely high quality," cookbook-bound "Library 110" textbook.

Not that I had a choice of whether I wanted 209 meatball subs or "how to use the library." Library 110 is a one-credit course required for all freshman students.

Yet taking the course might have advantages. Maybe I would make the most of my money ...

... yeah, or maybe I'd be able to eat 209 subs in one sitting.

I'll be straight out: I hate Library 110 more than 3 a.m. phone calls from a drunk guy who swears my name is "Jenny."

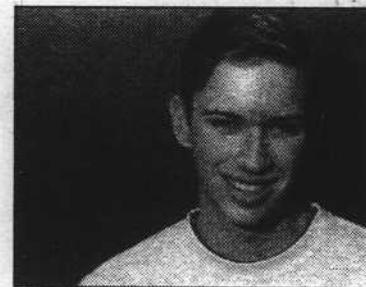
My main objections to the course are that it will not keep freshmen from "failing" out of school (as designed), it teaches students very little about using the library and it costs students too much.

One of the main reasons for establishing the course was to keep freshmen from failing out of school. The freshmen dropout rate is somewhere close to 60 percent, and the administration feels that if students have better library skills, they'll have a better chance of staying in school.

Let me clear this up right away: Students are not failing out of school because they don't know the Superintendent of Documents classification system.

Bert and Ernie are failing out of school because they went to the nearest pub with Grover and got so drunk that they ended up passing out on Sesame Street.

Students also are failing because they haven't learned good study skills, because they skip class or because they never wanted to pass in the first place.



Kasey Kerber

"Let me clear this up right away: Students are not failing out of school because they don't know the Superintendent of Documents classification system."

Requiring students to take a library class is not going to have any profound impact upon the dropout rate.

Also, Library 110 teaches students very little about using the library. The main reason is that students have to do little with the textbook and prove even less of what they've learned.

To pass the class, a student has to do five assignments and pass a final with 35 out of 50 questions correct.

The worksheets are easier than remembering your Social Security number — I did all five in a half-hour. While I have not yet taken the test, the mere fact that you need a 70 percent to pass is pathetic. Bert and Ernie could guess their way to a 70 percent on a multiple-choice test, and they just learned how to count.

Any student who's crammed for a final in five hours can tell you — the moment after they've taken the test ... the knowledge is gone.

Although it has not been scientifically proven, I believe all information from a class is trans-

ferred directly to the scan-tron test sheet by means of No. 2 pencil lead. Once you turn in the test, you are as dumb as when you first walked into that class.

Lastly, this course is not worth 209 meatball subs. The main reason is because students have the ability to pass out of the course by the second week. They simply pass a test with 40 out of 50 questions correct (Bert and Ernie may struggle, but Grover's in easy) and the credit hour is theirs.

Pay no heed to the fact that you wasted \$83.50 (in-state cost w/ textbook) or \$209.00 (out-of-state w/textbook) for one credit hour that won't even figure into your GPA.

The question is: Why pay \$83.50-\$209.00 to take a test and get out of the class, when you could save your money in the first place?

Library 110 should be optional, not required. If I want to learn how to use the library, then I'll take the course. If I suddenly find the need to become a librarian, I'll take comfort in knowing that good ol' Library 110 is there. Otherwise, it'll be another name in the NRoll schedule of classes.

If the administration feels that library skills are something every freshman must have, fine. Require students to buy, or better yet, issue them the cookbook-bound Library 110 textbook.

It thoroughly explains how to do everything in the library, and when the student finally needs to use the library, he or she has the book handy.

Glancing back, Library 110 makes about as much sense as swishing down a few Vivarins with a cup of Nyquil. Its intentions are good, but its structure and workings are miserable.

Well, I gotta go now — Bert, Ernie, Grover and I have 209 meatball subs to work on ...

Kerber is a freshman news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Please
Write Back!

Send your brief letters to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 "R" Street, Lincoln, NE 68588, or Fax to (402) 472-1761, or e-mail <letters@unlinfo.unl.edu>. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.