

OPINION PAGES

OUR VIEW

Short circuit

Modem pool's demise spells death to 'VU'

It's a good thing the university is expanding Nebraska Union. There will be more room for the long lines to the computer room when throngs of students have to come to campus to check their e-mail.

Next spring, Information Services will get rid of the dial-in modem system that off-campus students now use to connect to the Internet. This means students will have to use computers on campus or in residence halls. If they want to use their home computers, they have to pay for a private provider.

The worst consequence of limiting Internet use to a select few will mean the destruction of NU's goal to be a "virtual university."

The university should not be able to require those students who take classes through e-mail to pay the cost of using a private provider to access the Internet — in addition to regular tuition and fees.

It will be impossible for all the students in "virtual classes" to find enough computers available on campus for their work.

The virtual university concept is one in which the NU Board of Regents has expressed great interest. The board is pushing for the concept at all four NU campuses and has established a partnership with other universities to have an Internet link.

Eliminating the dial-in modem pool will break a link in the virtual university chain. For Information Services to suddenly move from a proposal to a decision behind closed doors shows a lack of protocol among Information Services, UNL and their governing board.

Even though Information Services managed to make a tangled web of the modem pool at UNL, we hope the NU Board of Regents will find it in its interest to make the virtual university a reality and dictate a better alternative.

If the university is concerned with students not being able to dial in, chucking the modem pool altogether will not improve the situation.

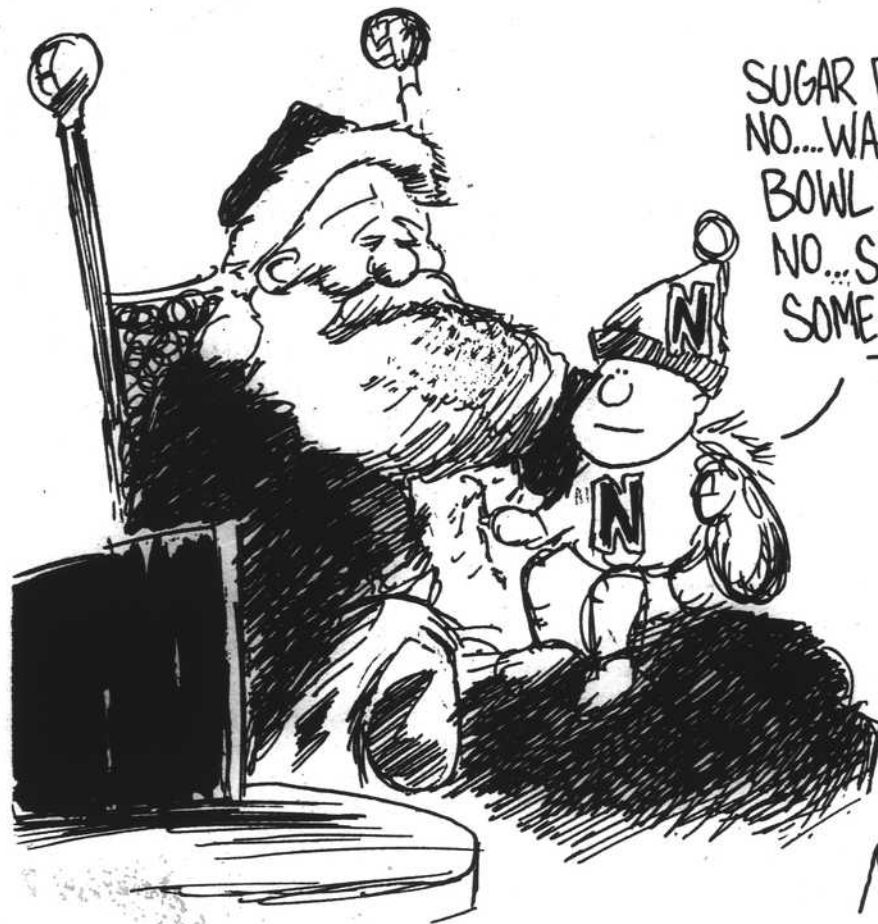
The computer labs are already full. Limiting e-mail use to campus will mean that a student working on a 10-page term paper may have to wait hours for other students to stop checking their e-mail, chatting with their friends or surfing the World Wide Web.

And students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln should not have to foot the bill for a private provider when their fellow students at other universities use the Internet at home for free.

When Information Services decided to eliminate the dial-in modem system, it went against the foundation of the Internet itself.

The proliferation of Internet use started with free access at universities. It shouldn't end at this one.

MEHSLING'S VIEW



MEHSLING © DAILY NEBRASKAN

LETTERS

TREND TRASHERS

What would you say if I told you that I am bewildered and annoyed that my African-American professor wears a suit and tie every day? I mean, give me a break, is he trying to be white? Obviously he tries to copy Caucasian professors, and behavior like that has no place in today's society.

Sounds racist? To me, it sounds like Sonia Hollimon's column from Monday. Sonia, do you want to know why ethnicity is still such a big factor in society and overshadows personality? It is because of published opinions such as yours, from both black and white people.

Are you saying that only blacks can follow a trend for young people that was started by African-American artists? Now here is a good message for our young folks: Don't be racist... just stay within your own ethnic group.

Are you saying that certain trends are only for blacks and others for whites? That is probably the last way to close the race gap, but I am sure you thought this through. Therefore I am going to join you in the struggle for equality. Oh wait, I can't! The color of my skin is white and I don't want to be accused of "acting black." I guess I don't wanna be a wannabe.

One last thing... can I still play basketball or would that be another one of those things that I can't do?

Klaus Marre
sophomore
broadcasting



MATT HANEV/DN

Furthermore, am I correct in assuming that even though I pay the same (if not more — being a graduate student) fees as an on-campus student, I will not have equal access to UNL servers? Why not ask students to fund upgrades by requiring all students who desire Internet access to pay a semester fee?

It seems unfair that one portion of the student population is having to pay more for a service that other students have for free (after student fees).

Again, I applaud the DN for covering this issue and informing the student body in a timely manner.

John Perlach
graduate student

ROAD BLOCK

I would like to thank the Daily Nebraskan for informing the student population about the "road closed" sign which the university has put on my off-campus "on-ramp" to the information superhighway.

I find it humorous that one day after the DN published the story about restricted Internet usage, the system manager for the UNL Internet network released an announcement about the restriction. The announcement strikes me as too little, too late.

RITE RIGHTS

I'm pleased that a Hawaii judge has ruled that gay people have as much right to marry each other as the rest of us. It's a small but important step toward civil equality.

It is ridiculously unfair that gays and lesbians in committed 30-year relationships receive less legal protection than heterosexuals who meet in the morning and marry by sundown. A gay couple may have

lived together for three decades in the same home, cared for each other through illness, comforted each other through life's ups and downs and shared their entire lives together, and yet they are denied the rights and protections that come with a marriage license. They remain legal strangers.

The faithful partner of 30 years has no legal right to make important medical decisions for an incapacitated partner. He gets no help from laws that would protect his job in the event he must care for his sick partner. Insurance companies can deny them the opportunity to obtain joint policies for car, health and home insurance. When one of them dies, the other may have no legal right to continue living in his own house. The deceased's family can contest a will and leave the survivor bankrupt and without a home.

Society benefits when we encourage stable, monogamous relationships between adults — heterosexual and homosexual. Allowing gay people to marry would encourage monogamy, with the obvious health benefits that accompany monogamous relationships. It would lower the social pressure on closeted gays to marry heterosexual partners, resulting in lower divorce rates and fewer broken homes when the gay partner comes out of the closet.

People who are married buy houses and save money. They are good neighbors. They tend to be more helpful and quieter than singles. They have a reason to work and stay out of trouble: responsibility to their spouses. Finally, the sheer joy and comfort of having their relationship publicly acknowledged makes for happier people, and happy people cause less grief to others. Any two people who fall in love and want to share life's ups and downs should be encouraged to do so. In this day and age people who want committed, monogamous relationships deserve all the help we can provide.

Charles Godwin
Davenport, Iowa

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