

OPINION PACKETS

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Our VIEW

Plugging the drain

Top faculty needed to keep top students

During the last year, Nebraskans have heard a lot of rhetoric about the importance of keeping smart, talented Nebraska students and employees in the state.

From Varner Hall to the Canfield Administration Building to the governor's office, the call to arms resounds: "Brain gain, not brain drain" and "Keep Nebraska's best and brightest in Nebraska."

As a result, the Legislature placed special importance last spring on keeping Nebraska graduates in the state, and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's honors programs have received significant funding through internal reallocation processes.

Yet a team from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools reported last week that Nebraska was doing little to keep an important group of Nebraska's best and brightest in the state: the UNL faculty.

UNL faculty get lower salaries on average than the faculty at its peer institutions, the team reported. Faculty salaries were 2 percent above their peer institutions in 1992-93, but "this advantage has eroded," the team's report states.

Starting salaries for young professors remain at or near market levels, the report states, but "there are some problems in retaining highly productive senior faculty."

The report notes such faculty are recruited by other universities, which offer them significant salary increases to join their ranks. But, to the embarrassment of the state, our state government didn't recognize their value last spring.

At that time, Gov. Ben Nelson vetoed a faculty salary increase in the midst of his "Brain Gain" gab, perhaps unaware that a raise in faculty salaries is an investment in Nebraska that repays the state.

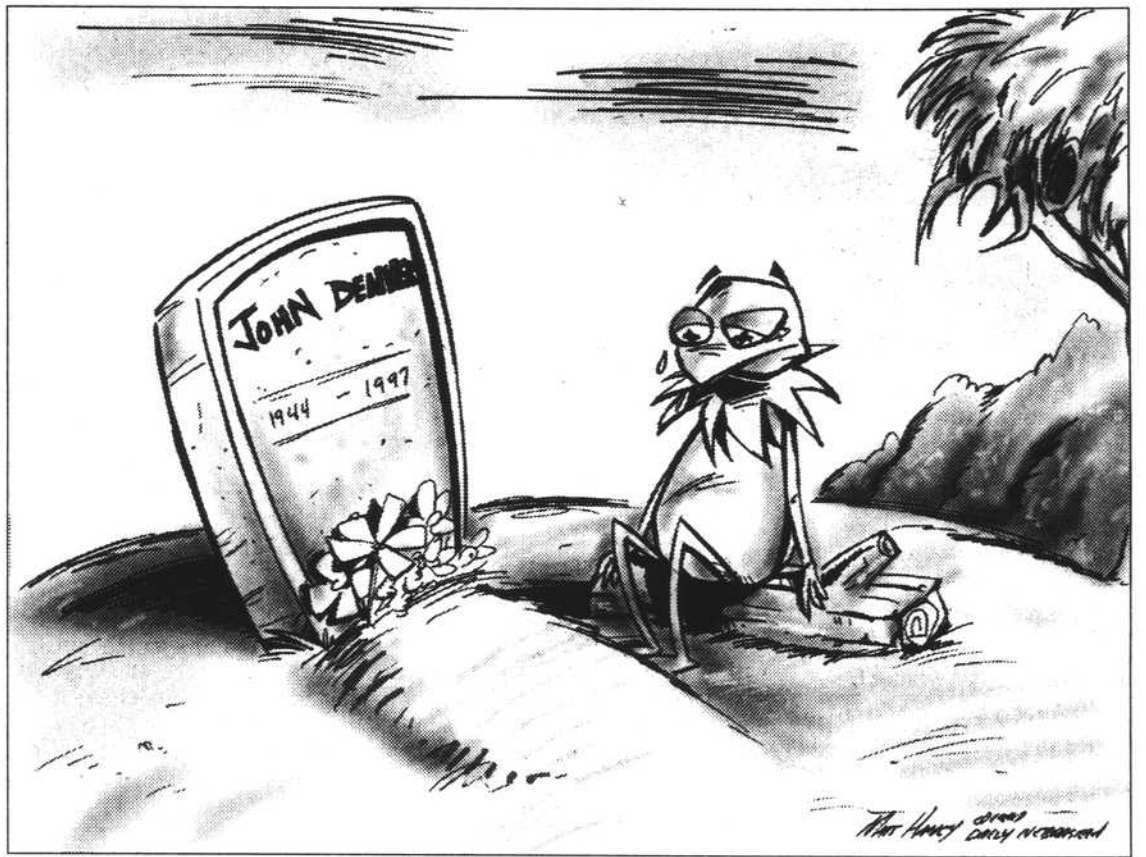
UNL faculty members directly impact the quality of the students' education they will take to Nebraska businesses.

Faculty research in new agriculture-related technology contributes \$50 million to the state economy, the report states. That figure doesn't include contributions to business made through UNL's world-class Center for Entrepreneurship or NU's Distance Education programs, which are the largest and most comprehensive in the state.

Therefore, state government officials can no longer overlook faculty salaries at UNL while claiming their dedication to keeping smart Nebraska students in the state during college and after graduation, to developing new technology or to investing in Nebraska's future.

Because, in faculty or in any other commodity, you get what you pay for.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

I challenge Moeser

On November 10, 1997, President Clinton will be holding a National Hate Crimes Summit. Because of the recent hate speech that littered our campus sidewalks, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will be listed among the statistics presented to President Clinton concerning gay hate crimes in America. While this incident is not being charged under the new Nebraska hate crimes law, it is an example of the kind of abuse and harassment many gay people must face in our nation today.

Six days after the hate speech was discovered on our campus, Chancellor James Moeser finally spoke. In his open letter to students, he said this kind of behavior (hate speech) will not be tolerated at this university. However, in Chancellor Moeser's untimely response to the incidents, he sent a strong message to the university community that this behavior is acceptable, there will be no punishment, there will be no immediate action taken against you.

Chancellor Moeser also challenged the university community to increase its efforts to respect and understand each other. I challenge you, Chancellor, to take heed to your own advice. Had you doubled your efforts to respect your GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered) students, your response would have come in a more timely manner.

Chancellor Moeser also called for more education on diverse issues. In an effort to educate the university community, GLBT students chalked the sidewalks to promote the week's events, to let others know that GLBT students were no longer the invisible minority. Is this not what a university is for - education?

Luckily, there are those on this campus that understand the need for immediate action and I offer my gratitude to ASUN for taking such a strong stance. ASUN has set a good



AARON STECKELBERG/DN

example, one that the administration should take notice of.

I challenge the university community to challenge Chancellor Moeser and hold him and others in the administration accountable for their words, and then maybe we will see some action.

Kristen E. Job
senior
women's studies/English

Give and Get

In the two years and two months that I've attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, I've grown quite disgusted with students here. For a

crowd who should be leading other students in open-minded argument, they seem to follow a great deal.

In the past two years, I've been either explicitly or implicitly called names: theocratic dunderhead, ethnocentrist, half-racist, close-minded, ignorant, etc. For people who say they want respect, minorities go out of their way to destroy any respect I might have for them personally. After all, why should I respect you if you don't respect me? Actually, how CAN I respect you if you can't return the favor? Three-year-old children use name-calling to hurt each other. I HOPE you've all grown out of that stage. Look, people, if you can't respect yourself enough that you can't respect me and my opinions, no amount of pseudo-respect will equal the real respect you COULD earn.

I won't give real respect if you whimper and say "Respect me, accept me." Remember how the university always wants us to be diverse? Diversity is nothing more than a catchy slogan for cultural trade. It comes from a real respect that must come from honest, person to person interaction, not a political rally intended to inspire a group of people.

These are the reasons I pay little attention to students on most campuses who promote diversity and respect. They frequently don't make sense and they frequently resort to childish name-calling tactics. Ladies and gentleman, we live in a cold, cruel world, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity or whatever. I challenge the administration of this university to lead the student body toward open-mindedness with each other. The half-following trend hasn't worked.

John Flaherty
senior
meteorology

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