

OPINIONPACKETS

Guest
VIEW

Making it happen

UCLA works toward diversity curriculum

Daily Bruin
University of California - Los Angeles

Los Angeles (U-Wire) - Last year many student organizations and the Academic Affairs Commission organized extensively around the campaign for a diversity requirement at UCLA. Issues of curricular reform are hot topics, with concepts of diversity challenged by the elimination of affirmative action, the formation of a new set of general education requirements, discussions over the future of ethnic studies and a new chancellor thrown into the bargain.

UCLA has long toyed with and finally rejected the supremely reasonable and long overdue idea of including a class about race, gender and class as one among the other classes considered important for every student to take. Ironically, UCLA, which is one of the most ethnically diverse universities and which is located in a major urban center, is currently the only UC school without such a requirement.

Since last year, we have entered a different phase of the campaign, moving beyond the groundwork of campus education. In light of the inactivity of the Academic Senate on this matter, students have taken it upon themselves to write their own proposal for a diversity requirement, which builds upon past proposals written by faculty task forces.

The student proposal is still in its rough stages, but it would most likely be a one- to two-quarter class covering:

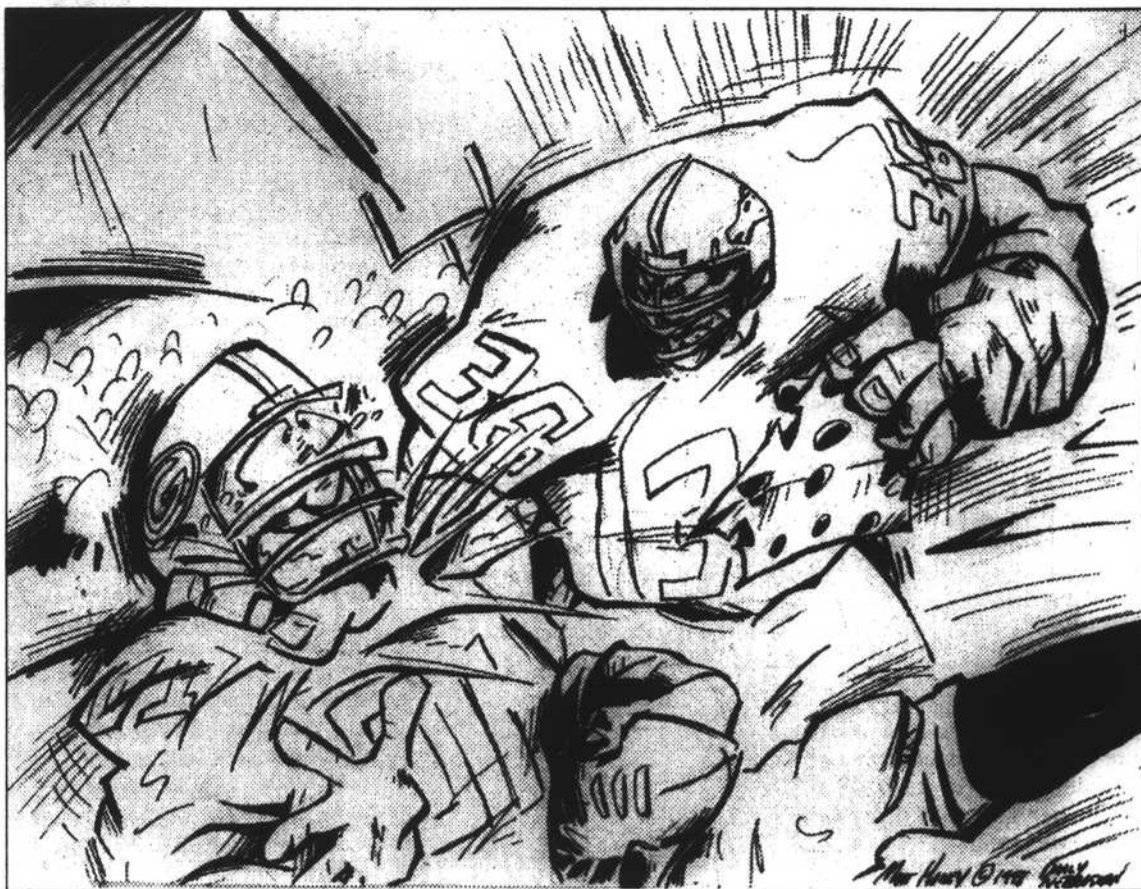
1. The anthropological and socio-historical foundations for such categories as race and gender.
2. The modern-day manifestations and ramifications of those categories in the form of racism and sexism. The requirement would be campus-wide and could either be incorporated into the new general education program or it could be separate, such as the foreign language requirement.

The proposal has to undergo a process of discussion and debate, as students and faculty together decide what exactly an academically rigorous, socially relevant and institutionally feasible requirement should look like.

The battle truly begins once the proposal is submitted to the Academic Senate, where factions of resistance and support have traditionally existed. Large bureaucracies are built to resist change, and we expect to hear the old, tired and essentially evasive arguments that always point to ubiquitous budget cuts and financial problems, or the merits of "integrating" the curriculum with race and financial problems, or the merits of "integrating" the curriculum with race and gender studies instead of having a specific requirement.

Significant progress has been made, but much work also lies ahead.

Haney's
VIEW



DN
LETTERS

Last week's battle, part I

I have to applaud Lori Robison on a very well-written argument in favor of abortion rights for women (Roe vs. Wade, Thursday). Her logic is unparalleled with any other writer that the Daily Nebraskan has to offer. She even quoted notable sources like the San Jose Public Television documentary and various quotes from the Journal Star. These characteristics along with others make her stand on abortion almost believable. It's just too bad that all of her talent and research were wasted on an argument that was flawed from the beginning.

The main premise on which her whole argument was based on was her so-called fact that "a woman has the right to choose for herself what her internal organs will and will not be used for." Actually, this statement is true, the fallacy lies in the fact that a baby, fetus, embryo, or whatever you want to call it, is not a woman's internal organ!! When will people understand the fact that the fetus is an entirely different entity from that of the woman? Yes, the two are connected via the umbilical cord, but that is exactly what it is - only a connection, nothing more.

Nobody who has studied fetal development can honestly believe that life begins after birth. And for the same reason, no one can honestly believe that the fetus growing inside a woman is some odd internal organ that continues to grow! This "logic" is the very heart and soul of the pro-abortion argument, and without that premise, there would be no rationality to the "choice" argument. As long as that lie continues to infest the minds of the populace, the mass murdering will continue.

Nathan Sneddon
junior
biological sciences

Last week's battle, part II

You're right, Lori Robison, women do deserve a choice of what to do with their bodies. The problem is, what you and all other pro-choice supporters forget is that by the time a woman gets pregnant, a choice has already been made: the choice to be sexually active, which occasionally (gasp!) results in pregnancy.

I'm not advocating abstinence-only education; although it is the only, 100 percent guaranteed method of effective birth control, very few of us have the

patience and willpower to totally abstain from sex until marriage. I have no problem with a person deciding to have premarital sex. The problem I have (and I'm sure I'm not alone), is when we allow ourselves to fall into the myth of "choice" to avoid the possible consequences of unplanned pregnancies.

What we need is to remember that there are consequences to our actions, and to be prepared to face those consequences. Rape and incest-born pregnancies are a gray area for me personally, because choice is not an option. But abortion as birth control is murder, the same as the death of any other innocent person.

An unplanned pregnancy, while being hard, is a survivable event. Please, if we must have this "choice" available, keep the 24-hour waiting period and parental notification laws in effect, for the sake of preventing ourselves from errors in judgment.

Scott Johnson
senior
classics

This week's battle, part I

I would like to correct some of the misconceptions presented in a letter from Clint Keller and Matt Molsen (DN letters, Friday). Keller and Molsen accuse the various facets of the GLBT movement of being "totalitarian," then go on to characterize lesbians and gay men as "mentally ill." How ironic that those who cry "totalitarian" would share the mental illness myth with the likes of Adolph Hitler. The APA took homosexuality off its list of diseases 25 years ago. Comparing it with Tourette's Syndrome is like comparing Keller and Molsen's "pity the homosexuals" attitude with the benevolent civil rights ideology of Martin Luther King Jr.

Contrary to Keller and Molsen's letter, we are not asking for the right to "engage in certain activities." We are fighting to keep our jobs based on our ability to do them, and our children based on our ability to raise them. In other words, we are struggling for basic civil rights, the same civil rights guaranteed to ALL citizens under the laws of this country. We are not fighting through "empty slogans," but rather through grassroots organizing, legislative lobbying, and the same "persuasive debate" that Keller and Molsen claim is not found in our movement. We do not "ignore criticism," but rather we

respond to it, as I am doing with this letter. We cannot ignore criticism, because silence is equated with consent, and I do not consent to the assumptions put forth by Keller and Molsen.

Finally, I would like to challenge Keller and Molsen's attempt to define gay men and lesbians by what we do in the bedroom. It's time to put that idea to rest. My two-year relationship with my partner is not based on sex any more than a comparable heterosexual relationship would be. Rather, it is based on love, trust and understanding.

Doesn't sound like a mental illness to me.

Alison Knudsen
senior
English and women's studies
President, GLBT Resource Center

This week's battle, part II

In response to Clint Keller and Matt Molsen's "brilliant" letter to Friday's DN:

Your grasp of mental illnesses and societal standards should make me laugh, but instead, it sickens me. What you call "normal" and "normalcy" has no standard definition, and yet you would criticize an entire group with a broad and unwarranted generalization for not intelligently defending their beliefs.

The fact is that homosexuality needs no reasoning for acceptance. It is a proposed idea that these people should be given the same rights and privileges that you and I enjoy. You, as the opponent of this idea, have the responsibility of providing some factual information that proves that this acceptance is detrimental to society. This you have done by naming it a mental illness and comparing it to Tourette's Syndrome, which any psychologist will tell you is an illogical and impossible conclusion.

One more thing: You call marches and demonstrations "totalitarian." Are you really a political science major? Marches and demonstrations of free opinion are prevented and suppressed in a totalitarian state. And am I really to believe that you are of the ridiculous mind set that you can write whatever you want to a free forum of opinion such as the DN and condemn others for holding a differing opinion than your own?

Dan J. Rempe
sophomore
computer science and German

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Spring 1998 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the 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 student employees.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.