

ASUN records show attendance in decline

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Assignment Reporter



More ASUN senators missed meetings during President Curt Ruwe's term than in each of the last two years, according to attendance records.

Records show that, of those absences, more were excused than in the last two years combined.

About 100 excused absences for meetings were given by Amy Rager, first vice president since April 1997. About 50 times during the administration's term, however, senators skipped meetings with no excuse.

Determining excused absences is at Rager's discretion, but after senators are unexcused three times, they are usually kicked off senate.

Rager said funerals, visiting family members, tests on Wednesday nights and illnesses were excuses she accepted.

When Jason Bynum was first vice president in 1996-97, he gave out about 40 excused absences, but about 80 senators skipped meetings without permission.

Rager, who was then a senator, said

that year ASUN did not always make quorum, which is two-thirds of senate and is necessary to pass legislation. But this year quorum was reached at every meeting.

Steve Korell, first vice president during 1995-96, also gave about 40 excuses, while senators were unexcused about 30 times.

Rager said she excused a high number of absences because many special circumstances were justified.

Kevin Crabtree, general studies senator, was excused for seven meetings because he was in the armed forces and was called to duty in October, she said.

And Megan Wigert, general studies senator, was excused from the last eight meetings this semester because she was a contestant in the Miss USA pageant.

Rager said Wigert would have been asked to leave senate, but she was a member of the Committee for Fees Allocation and underwent training for the position, so she was needed. Wigert

"People just have things going on. A lot of it is a lack of interest compared to other things they are doing."

BRIAN WIEMAN
former ASUN senator

did attend most CFA meetings until late February, when she left for the pageant.

Kara Slaughter, arts and sciences senator, missed the first six meetings last spring because she was in France but was not kicked off senate.

Slaughter was the only senator who did not run on the ADVANCE ticket last year, and kicking her off might have created a controversy, Rager said. But Rager said she was confident Slaughter would do a good job, adding that she received weekly e-mail from Slaughter to keep in touch with ASUN.

Although Slaughter was spared, several senators were dismissed last semester for skipping meetings or turning in too many absence excuses.

As long as senators show up for meetings before the new business is heard - which is about 15 minutes into most meetings - they are counted present, Rager said.

Erik Hoegemeyer, former chairman of the Academic Committee, said he thought attendance was better this year than last year because enough senators were present for quorum. Though there were many absences, they were more evenly spread over several meetings.

But he said ASUN needed to stress further that every member needs to be there all the time, not just senators with positions.

"The thing is, you can always count on the key people being there - the

committee chairs, the same people who contribute a lot," he said. "The key is getting those other 20 people there."

Brian Wieman, former senator, said attendance started off well but toward the end it dropped. The last couple meetings have come close to failing quorum, he said.

"People just have things going on," he said. "A lot of it is a lack of interest compared to other things they are doing."

Marlene Beyke, ASUN director of development, said attendance this year was good and has been pretty constant over the years.

Kelly Hoffschneider, first vice president, said he will stress the importance of attendance and valid excuses to new senators.

"It is good that they are filing excuses, but that is something we'll have to look and make sure excuses are valid," he said.

At a new senator orientation Sunday, he said, he will send a strong message to incoming senators.

"We will make sure every senator knows the requirement and knows it is very much mandatory."

Milk contest draws large student crowd

MILK from page 1

city nationwide search for the perfect university milk mustache model.

The national winner will appear in a milk ad in Rolling Stone magazine.

One winning University of Nebraska-Lincoln student will appear in a Daily Nebraskan milk ad and on the national milk World Wide Web site at <http://www.whymilk.com>.

Hyland said the contest judges likely will choose the most creative contest entrant as the winner. The UNL winner will be announced in about two or three weeks.

The purpose of the contest is to improve students' milk-drinking habits, said Susan Drew, a registered dietitian with the milk tour.

Few students drink enough milk to get their recommended daily dose of

bone-building calcium, she said.

"We're not asking them to give anything up," she said. "We're asking them to add something on."

Drew said the milk mustache campaign does a good job of promoting milk.

"Students will rethink their drinking habits," she said.

Hyland said more UNL students than expected entered the contest. He stayed busy giving pep talks to those posing for the camera.

"Show the camera why you like to drink milk!" he yelled. "Tip it all the way back! I want to see happiness, and I want to see fun!"

In the end, UNL students' involvement impressed Hyland, he said.

"We've seen a lot of good mustaches."

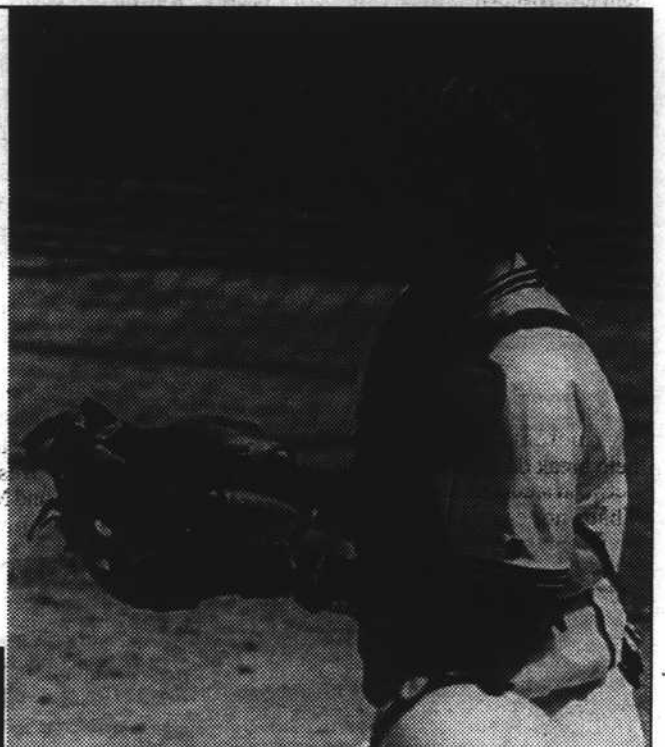
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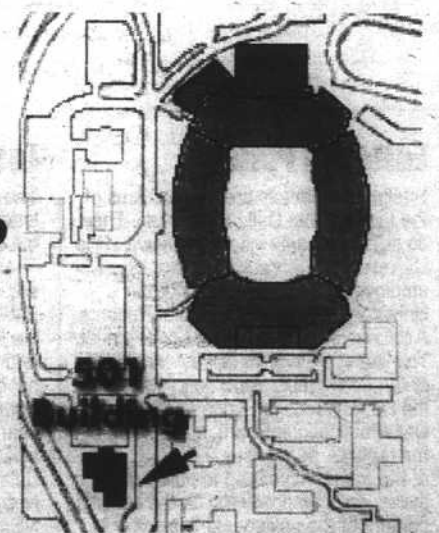
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