

# OPINION PACKAGES

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*Our*  
**VIEW**

## A broken union

*Restricting homeless is pure discrimination*

The Nebraska Union is taking its beautification process a step too far.

On Tuesday, Union Board members will vote on a restrictive policy aimed at curbing the population of transients in the Nebraska Union.

It is no coincidence that this decision comes on the eve of the completion of the union expansion. Obviously, the Union Board feels that the homeless have no place in a new multimillion-dollar facility.

Unfortunately, the student union, old or new, remains a public building — free to all to enter, shop or even loiter. The fact that the building serves as the epicenter of a university makes this bald-faced discrimination even more appalling.

Nebraska Unions Director Daryl Swanson says he wants to create a safer environment for students by expelling those who are not “blending in.”

Although the food court and hallways would remain open to the homeless, their presence in the TV lounge and, most importantly, the new expansion would be eliminated. According to Swanson, their elimination would change the “perception” of safety in the union, thus admitting no real threat even exists.

“Perception” is an ignorant word, one university-trained students are supposed to reject. The homeless pose no threat; they affront only the senses.

Many would say the same about the legions of bloated, ruddy alumni who descend on the union on football game days, who certainly don’t “blend in” to our normal student body.

Will they be removed from the TV lounge? Will they be escorted from the building by UNL community officers?

Probably not. This policy is a poorly disguised act of discrimination against a segment of people who already suffer as societal pariahs.

Now, at a university — a concept founded on centuries of enlightenment and education — they will be carefully removed from our sight, so we can continue our studying in a “safe environment.”

What are we learning?

“*This policy is a poorly disguised act of discrimination against a segment of people who already suffer as societal pariahs.*”

*Mook's*  
**VIEW**

### HOW TO KNOW WHEN AN UNDERCOVER POLICE OFFICER IS AT YOUR PARTY:

1. PARTY ATTIRE IS GROSSLY OUTDATED.
2. OLDER, FATTER AND BALDER THAN EVERYONE ELSE.
3. KEEPS TELLING THE DJ TO PLAY THE LATEST PUFF DOGGY DOG TUNE.
4. COMPLAINS OF CHEST PAINS AFTER HELPING MOVE THE KEG.



5. TURNS DOWN KEG BEER CLAIMING THAT HE PUT A LARGE AMOUNT OF WHISKEY IN HIS COKE.
6. BEGINS EVERY CONVERSATION WITH, “DUDE, THIS PARTY IS TOTALLY GNARLY!”
7. HIS MAIN PICK-UP LINE IS, “HEY WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MY PISTOL?”

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*DN*  
**LETTERS**

**Moeser sets record straight**

I am responding to your editorial in the Thursday edition of the DN entitled “Rank and File: UNL fails to impress the people who count.” This editorial seriously misrepresents my position on the issue of the U.S. News rankings, and I want to set the record straight.

“Administrators, especially Chancellor James Moeser, rarely failed to mention UNL’s higher rankings during speeches or interviews. But now we’re told administrators aren’t worried by the rankings drop — that we should note the positive changes and expect these fluctuations.” So far, so good.

However, you go on to state that we are saying, “These ratings don’t really matter. No one pays attention to them, and they’re unscientific anyway.” Stop right there. I never said that, nor did anyone else, to my knowledge, in the administration.

So what are we saying? Of course, we are concerned. We are disappointed. Rightly or wrongly, people do pay attention to these ratings — especially prospective students and parents outside the state of Nebraska.

We do see encouraging signs in the data — our overall rating is only one-tenth of a point below the average for tier two institutions; the bandwidth of ACT scores improved from 20-26 last year to 21-27 this year. Although this is encouraging, it is still below the average of tier two schools. However, I am confident that with our new admission standards, we will continue to improve in this category. Likewise, the number of new students in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating classes increased from 21 percent last year to 25 percent this year. In this category as well, we need to continue to move up to reach the average of tier two.

In my opinion, our most serious deficiencies are our freshman-to-sophomore retention rate (currently only 75 percent), and

the six-year graduation rate, which has hovered around 49 percent for the last several years, but which fell to 45 percent last year. As I stated in my State of the University Address, these are unacceptable. I have set a goal of increasing within four years the retention to at least 80 percent and the six-year graduate rate to 60 percent.

The other major problem that surfaced in the recent survey was in class size. We dropped several points both in the percentage of our classes with fewer than 20 students, and we increased the percentage of those with more than 50. We have just appointed 67 new tenure-leading, full-time faculty, many as a result of the reallocation of resources to academic priorities. This infusion of new faculty members will have a very positive impact on class

size in many departments.

In summary, we are not glossing or spinning the issue of reputation. It is very important to us. We must all — students included — be a part of the solution. Ultimately, the academic reputation of the University of Nebraska depends on the reputation of our students — the quality of the inputs (admissions) and outputs (graduation). One sign that I shall look for is accurate reporting by the Daily Nebraskan.

Chancellor James Moeser



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