

ASUN discusses election changes

BY KIM SWEET
Staff writer

Students may get a chance to vote on a constitutional amendment in the upcoming spring elections that aims to make the student senate more representative.

The Association of Students of the University of Nebraska discussed a proposed constitutional amendment Wednesday that would allow University of Nebraska-Lincoln students to have dual representation based on their places of residence, their colleges or five specially assigned seats.

Currently, students are represented in the senate by electing members from their own college.

The amendment proposes to elect through direct apportionment 25 members from UNL colleges, 10 from a student's place of residence and five members elected for special seats.

Each student voting in the election would be able to vote for two categories.

ASUN President Sara Russell said students' eligibility to run for a special seat would be determined on a yearly basis by the senate. The special seats would be allocated to underrepresented groups on campus, such as certain minority groups, she said.

ASUN Question of the Week

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ASUN Academic Committee Chairwoman Kara Slaughter was critical of the idea of having five special seats being allocated to underrepresented groups at the time of elections.

"I think the special seats leave us really open to politicking and manipulation and lead to hurt feelings and anger that was never meant for underrepresented groups," she said.

College of Arts and Sciences Senator Urvanzo Gamez Jr. agreed.

"It would be really hard for a senate to come up with groups of students that feel more underrepresented than others," he said.

After first opposing the five new seats, Speaker Matt Boyd changed his mind and said he felt the seats would indicate that ASUN was taking steps to

be more representative.

"It probably doesn't solve the problem, but at least it acknowledges it and shows that we are trying to fix it," he said.

Jason Boykin, a graduate college senator, disagreed with the criticisms of the special seats. He said the decision of having them should be left up to the students.

"Being a member of an underrepresented group, it's not hard to figure out who is underrepresented," he said.

The bill was referred to the Special Topics Committee where more discussion on the issue will take place.

In a separate bill related to the senate's composition, ASUN passed by acclamation an amendment proposing the elimination of the senate seat for the Division of Continuing Studies.

The constitutional amendment will appear on the March election ballot.

The Division of Continuing Studies senator is required to be enrolled in three credit hours, while all other senators are required to be full-time students.

Russell said eliminating the seat would not affect representation because Division of Continuing Studies students are allowed to vote in student government elections like all other part-time students.

Hibler must respond to harassment suit

■ A former student of the accused teacher says the NU regents took no action when she brought her claims forward.

BY IEVA AUGSTUMS
Senior staff writer

Fired University of Nebraska-Lincoln English Professor David Hibler has been given two weeks to respond to a sexual harassment lawsuit, or he will face a default judgment.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard G. Kopf said in an order Friday that Hibler would face a hearing to determine damages if he does not respond to Valerie Giunca's motion by Jan. 22.

Giunca, a former student of Hibler's, sued him last February alleging she was harassed while she was a student in his class during the 1996 fall semester.

In her complaint, Giunca alleges Hibler forced his way into her apartment, where he proceeded to make unwelcome physical advances toward her. She said Hibler continued to pursue a personal relationship after she made it clear it was unwanted.

Giunca's complaint also alleges the university mishandled the harassment charges and failed to provide a safe learning environment.

Giunca alleges Hibler and the NU Board of Regents violated Title IX and her rights to equal

protection.

Title IX of the education amendments of 1972 prohibits sexual discrimination and harassment.

The regents, Giunca alleged, knew of other sexual harassment complaints filed against Hibler with the UNL Affirmative Action Office and did nothing about them.

The regents denied the allegations. On June 20, 1998, the regents voted to revoke Hibler's tenure and terminated his employment. Hibler was a part of the UNL faculty for 33 years.

During that same month, Giunca filed a motion for default judgment because Hibler failed to respond to her lawsuit.

Hibler then filed a motion stating he was never personally served with a copy of the summons and complaint.

In December, Kopf recognized the affidavit was addressed to Hibler at UNL and subsequently that Hibler did not receive the complaint. Kopf extended Hibler's deadline to respond to Dec. 31, 1998. But Hibler has yet to respond.

Upon the court's review of the docket sheet, Kopf said there is a possibility the court's prior order was not mailed directly to Hibler. Kopf requested the federal court clerk to mail the order directly to Hibler at his home address in Valparaiso.

If Hibler fails to respond to the motion, a hearing will be set to determine the amount of plaintiff's damages once Giunca applies to the court for the judgment.

Appeal of no-poster zone continues

BY ERIC RINEER
Staff writer

The Lincoln City Council voted Monday to continue appealing a district court's decision that nullified an ordinance aimed at preventing anti-abortion protesters from holding signs near Westminster Presbyterian Church.

The ordinance, which was passed Sept. 14, required a no-poster zone on church premises throughout the city. It banned signs, banners or placards held within 50 feet of churches.

The anti-abortion group Rescue the Heartland stirred controversy 22 months ago when it began holding signs depicting graphic images of aborted fetuses to protest a church elder, Dr. Winston Crabb, who performs abortions.

In September, Rescue the Heartland filed a lawsuit against the protest ordinance and won a preliminary injunction from U.S. District Judge Richard Kopf.

On Jan. 3, Rescue the Heartland announced it would no longer picket the church because the Women's Medical Center of Nebraska, an Omaha clinic where Crabb performed abortions, had closed.

The clinic's closing met one of the group's demands.

A small group of people have continued protesting at Westminster.

Dan Klaus, an attorney who represents the city in the case, said a settle-

ment agreement that would end the protests was proposed to the city by Rescue the Heartland. Since the occurrence of the new protesters, however, the council has reconsidered the proposal. Gene Summerlin, an attorney who represents Rescue the Heartland, said the idea of the agreement was that protesters would not have any signs on Ryan Street or 100 feet north and south of the intersection of Ryan and Sheridan Boulevard, near Westminster church.

The Dec. 22 proposal also asked that the city not be able to pass additional legislation that would affect protest activities at the church. Finally, Summerlin said, it would pay Rescue the Heartland's attorney fees.

Klaus and Mayor Dale Young pointed to a specific clause in the proposal that prevented the city from accepting.

"There's no restrictions on anybody's activities other than anybody who signed the settlement agreement," Klaus said.

On Sunday, a group of six protesters, led by Sam Schrock of Funk, protested outside the church during its worship hours.

Because of this, Klaus said, the

Council had to continue to appeal the decision to overturn the city ordinance.

Schrock said he and his fellow picketers will be picking up where Rescue the Heartland left off.

He said his group will picket Westminster "until (Crabb) stops doing abortions (in Lincoln) or until he is no longer a member of the church."

Larry Donlan of Rescue the Heartland said his group felt it was victorious in its protest efforts, which spanned most of the last two years.

"We think it's great. There's one less child-killing center in the state of Nebraska," he said.

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