

# OPINION PAGES

## Our VIEW

### Taking the first step

#### New ASUN seats would aid equality

At last night's ASUN meeting, debate was resurrected on whether to allow students to vote on adding five new student government seats specifically for members of underrepresented groups.

The senate seats, if approved by two-thirds of student voters in the March ASUN election, would be open only to minority students, as defined by race, ethnicity, cultural background or sexual orientation.

Adding seats is part of a much-needed movement to ensure views that systematically have been pushed to the fringe are brought to the table and can influence university policy.

By adding the seats, ASUN would admit it hasn't been representing all students and would begin to make amends.

Adding seats isn't so-called reverse discrimination, and it's not a quota system.

It's about fairness and creating a truly representative government.

Of course, it's not a total solution.

The total solution is a societal overhaul resulting in total equality regardless of gender, race, cultural background, religion or sexual orientation. Then minority students wouldn't feel ostracized from the core of student and university government.

Some say adding five "token" seats would just make it easier to avoid bringing about that total solution.

Some say white senators would boast, "There, we have minority viewpoints. We've done our part," and senators would stop actively pursuing more substantial and permanent change.

Those advancing this argument are overlooking the simple fact that every big change has a first step, and adding five seats would form that important first step.

Once a greater number of minority students' views are heard and considered as integral to the student government organization, those views will no longer be easily pushed to the fringe and ignored.

Other naysayers claim deciding what groups can fill those seats would be too difficult and complicated, since those rules would be contained in the ASUN bylaws.

No doubt it would be more complicated than the current system, because senators would have to evaluate overall representation of student groups each year and to decide annually which groups were underrepresented.

An idea that requires a more complicated departure from the status quo is not necessarily a poor one. It just means it would take more work to implement.

Often, the most difficult tasks are the most worthwhile.

If ASUN wants to legitimately claim it represents all students, it's worthwhile for each senator to wholeheartedly support taking the proposal for five new senate seats to student voters in March.

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## Lupo's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Cloistering student stars

Non-honors students aren't the only ones discriminated against by Neihardt's housing policy. Consider honors students from out-of-state who can't go home at every whim. Should they be kept from living in Neihardt just because they need a place to stay during holidays such as Labor Day and spring break? If Neihardt wants to keep its elitism in check, it should really consider accommodating ALL honors students, not just ones who are home-grown. If the university really wants to recruit top students from outside Nebraska (as it claims), it may want to rethink some such housing matters.

**Bryan Cooley**  
senior honors student  
computer science and math

### Basketball has a bad Nee

The series on Nebraska basketball in the DN has brought out some of the problems and trends with the men's basketball program. Something needs to be done about these trends. The first is attendance. Bill Byrne needs to find some way of filling the arena. He needs to get students back to the games. He says the lack of students takes away from the fun of the games, then he goes on to say that the students may lose their floor seats to people who will pay more for them. That would really suck the fun out of games. There are already too many old people sitting on the floor. Students can't stand up because some grandma sitting behind them can't see the game. An actual "student section" needs to be reserved on the floor. It would make the games fun again. Student tickets are a bargain, but it's still too much to go see a mediocre team. Student prices should be lowered or even free to get the students to go.

Here is the big problem. Danny Nee has got to go. Fans are getting tired of his consistently mediocre teams. The Huskers are lucky to win 20 games a year. If it weren't for a weak non-conference schedule, they would struggle to reach .500. Fans dislike him for other reasons. The reason he doesn't recruit in Nebraska is not because of a lack of talent. Nee says he wants to be part of the solution to attendance problems. He can do us all a favor by going elsewhere.

I love going to the games, but they are boring. Bill Byrne needs to figure something out, or attendance is going to stay below 10,000 for a long time.

**T. J. Paulsen**  
sophomore  
mechanical engineering

### Diversity of grooming

It is pretty clear that law student Thayne Glenn, who refused to cut his hair in order to meet the County Attorney's grooming standards, hopes to see the law college withdraw from the criminal clinic program. The criminal clinic is a terrific opportunity for law students to obtain real-world experience. It is unfortunate that one student would seek to deny hundreds of students this opportunity for something as trivial as this, but what really annoys me is that a growing number of law professors apparently agree.

After all, the clinical programs are about real-life experience, and what is more real than grooming standards? Thayne, a former member of the military, is certainly familiar with grooming standards. Did he really think he would never again encounter grooming standards after his discharge?

Professor Duncan is quoted as saying that "this violates university policy." But what about the policies of the county attorney? How is it that the policies of an elected official are trumped by the policies of a university?

What really amused me, though, was Professor Snowden's comment that the issue is "whether (the university) is going to stand behind real principles of diversity or not." Ah, the sacred D-word!

Well, that gives me an idea.

I am currently participating in the law college's civil clinic program. I handle real-life cases with real-life clients. You want diversity, Professor Snowden? If the law college withdraws from the criminal clinic, I vow to give you your sacred diversity in spades. I have been told that I must wear a suit and be reasonably groomed whenever I appear before a court, because I represent the University of Nebraska College of Law. Well, to hell with that. How do you think I would look in sandals and boxers when I appear in Federal Bankruptcy Court? I'm sure the judge would be impressed with the law college's commitment to diversity. And I'm also sure many students would thank you for sparing them costly dry-cleaning bills. And of course I'll decide to grow a beard about three days prior to the hearing. Maybe I'll even grow out and braid my underarm hair.

Of course, it is possible that the court itself might have grooming standards that require me to wear certain clothes and adhere to certain grooming standards. But if that is the case, then I am sure you will agree that the civil clinic should refuse to appear in matters before that court ... right?

After all, nothing trumps the sacred gods of diversity.

**Mike Bielarski**  
third-year law student



Matt Haney/DN