

# OPINION PAGES

## Our VIEW

### Survival of the fittest

UNL must commit to retaining professors

In an era of fierce competition among institutions of higher education, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln seems destined to fall behind its peers.

UNL Chancellor James Moeser last week announced a budget shortfall that will force colleges and departments across campus to cut their budgets by either 2.6 or 3.2 percent.

These cuts are a response to the state government's refusal to grant the University of Nebraska system its full request for a 6.8 percent budget increase for the 1999-2000 school year.

While it's important to run an efficient and affordable university, it's equally important to ensure the quality of academic programs and research — unfortunately state legislators and Gov. Mike Johanns seem unable to balance these two ideals.

Because of the state's expected decision to cut the university's \$24.5 million budget request, NU officials will have to concoct some extravagant plans to stretch the \$19.8 million NU is expected to receive.

Moeser said stretching the money would be a "great task," though he offered the across-the-board budget cuts as a solution.

He identified staff salaries as the No. 1 priority in next year's budget, which is commendable.

To keep the best people at UNL — a landlocked school with a national reputation that is less than stellar in most areas — a competitive salary is mandatory.

At a university that is already strained for funding, Moeser said partnerships with private businesses were also a priority.

An increasing number of public universities rely on private partners and donors to fund programs or construction.

While private donations are a definite benefit to a university, it can be dangerous to rely too much on them, as the whims of private donors and corporations must be heeded even at a public institution.

All programs need support — not just ones that are attractive to big business or big-money alumni.

If UNL's programs continue to be underfunded, its national reputation will decline — something the university, constantly striving to attract the "best and brightest," cannot afford.

Some programs could be cut for the benefit of others, but this option would weaken UNL's stance as a comprehensive university.

To maintain its credentials as a member of the prestigious American Association of Universities and as a Carnegie Research I university — two marks of distinction of the nation's top schools — UNL will have to commit to paying its professors well and to funding its programs past the level of simple survival and on to excellence.

But until the University of Nebraska is no longer just struggling to survive, it will never achieve true excellence.

## Branch's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### A flawed argument

I am downright outraged at the blatant overtones of prejudice and flat-out disrespect in Jessica Flanagan's opinion column, "Failing Families" (DN, 4/1). True, statistics do attribute soaring crime rates to broken families, but what appalls me is that Ms. Flanagan somehow manages to point the finger of blame at the Lincoln Pride Rally (and essentially at the gay community everywhere) for the demise of the family. Ms. Flanagan begins and ends with the Pride Rally, which seems to serve as a convenient anecdote, yet is never fully (and courageously) treated in her central argument.

Come on! Broken families result from failed relationships, not homosexuality. What Ms. Flanagan inherently expresses is that gay men and lesbians are incapable of even wanting the same love and self-validity existing between a man and a woman — indeed the same unconditional love given them by their parents. Isn't that what keeps a family together? Has the author even had a conversation with a gay person, only to discover that — surprise! — he/she too can dream about and have a family?

I agree with

Ms. Flanagan's claim of "children ... facing the consequences." Let's consider the growing numbers of children put up for adoption each year. Although many homosexual couples decide to have their own children, many also choose to adopt these "unwanted" children, providing a life their (probably) single mothers could not give. What these couples do can hardly classify as the "egocentrism" to which Ms. Flanagan refers.

And what role models, one may think, can these homosexual couples have for raising a family? Their own parents — a heterosexual union, at that! What a concept.

What Ms. Flanagan herself "misses" is to thoughtfully examine the premise upon which all families are built: love, dignity and respect. Two persons who are committed to those foundations have every damn irrefutable right to raise children. Children who, hopefully, will continue to fight the

tradition of hate.

Karen A. Valdez  
graduate student  
biological sciences

### Can the comedy

To Jay Gish ("Play Nice," 4/2): In absence of any relevant opinion or analysis in regards to the Kosovo crisis, please do us, the rest of the concerned domestic and international public, a favor, and spare us your moronic philosophizing. Your discourse is nothing but a completely irrelevant and nonsensical rubbish of an infantile adolescent. The insubstantial propositions that you make to solving the very complex Kosovo conflict are absolutely ludicrous, inconceivable, and a waste of a perfectly good column in the Daily Nebraskan.

If this is also your best shot at comedy, please (as an American saying suggests), don't quit your day job. Bombs are showering upon Yugoslavia; more than 500,000 Kosovars are now refugees; families of the captured American servicemen are grieving daily on CNN (or do you get the cartoon networks only?); and in your column, you dare to publicly poke fun at the problem. Nice going, Jay.

As a probable future member of the American media (after all, you are a broadcasting major), your conduct is hugely appalling and offensive to any affected and concerned party, be it Serbians, Albanians or the NATO generals. Your absurd mis- ing should have been prevented from being published by a responsible Daily Nebraskan editor. You see, Jay, in some instances, censorship is good.

Still, you can redeem yourself by getting educated on the subject, and going for a second chance by constructing this time an illuminated take (as one would expect from a university senior).

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graduate student  
journalism



MATT HANEY/DN

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