

OPINION

Our VIEW

Too close for comfort

Honors hall may limit residents' education

Birds of a feather run together.

And eat together. And study together. And sleep together.

In fact, you'd think they lived in the same building.

Well, they will.

In March of 2001, the Esther L. Kauffman Academic Residential Center will open on campus and forever change the way the educational system works. The building will be a residential center for computer science and management honors students. It will be their home and the center of their lives.

Decades ago, students fresh from high school would come to college in search of a career. They would come to college looking for a profession they would feel at home in. Classes were diverse to help students find something that would ignite that spark of passion.

Times, they are a'changin', though.

Education is a field that grows up with people.

The days of students coming to college to find out what they want to do with their lives is now in the past. Either students come here knowing what they want out of college or they still won't have any idea what they're going to do no matter how much time they spend here.

So, naturally, colleges are starting to specialize. This has its ups and downs.

On the positive side, students will be able to focus on their careers, away from distractions. They'll be surrounded by students who are working toward similar careers.

This is, of course, also the down side.

As the Kauffman Center comes closer to being a reality, the university needs to take care not to let the building become a "mind hive" from which students never emerge. Most of the great advances in the computing industry have come from outside influences. Engineers can't figure out what people need if they aren't interacting with them.

Still, these students will be highly trained and heavily recruited by the big boys: Microsoft, IBM, Apple and others. They will have a wide expanse of knowledge at their fingertips.

Let's just hope they know how to apply it.

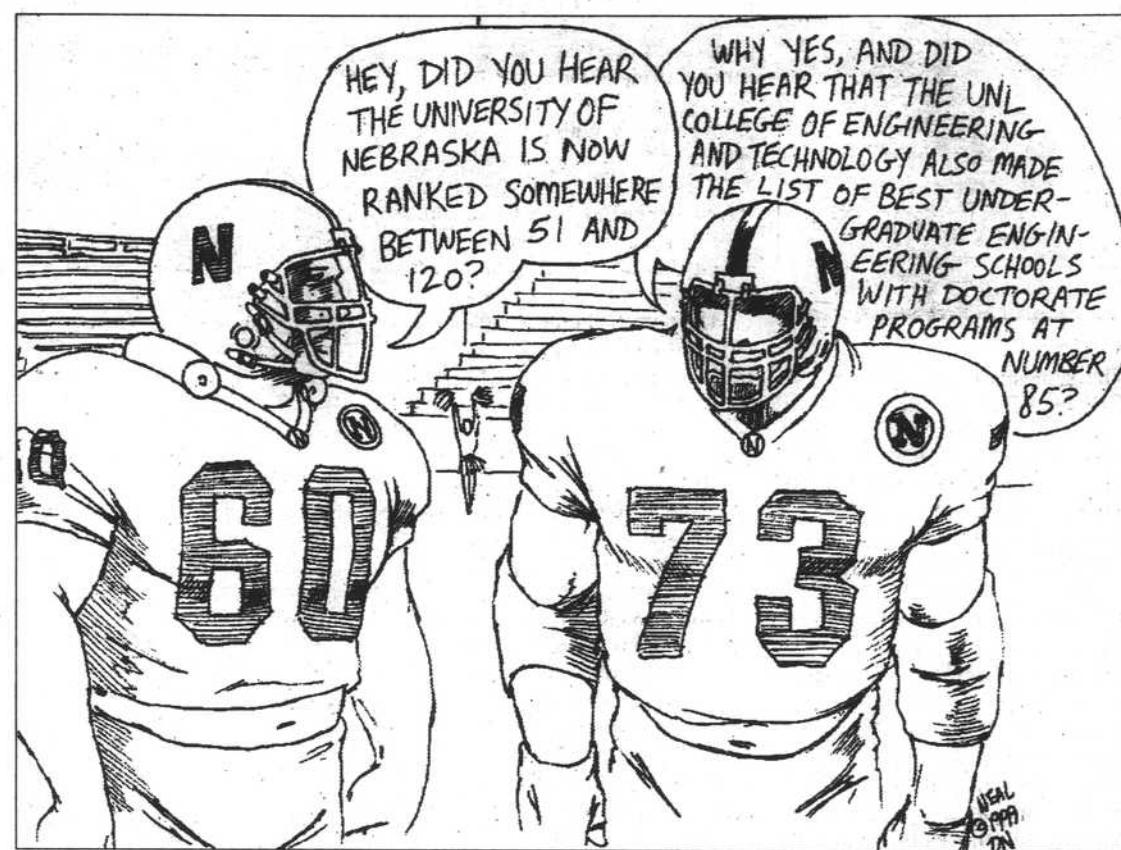
Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 1999 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student employees.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

Obermeyer's VIEW



Not sure what you're doing over Labor Day Weekend? Surf on over to:

WWW.burningman.com

Hurtling down the road to the Black Rock Desert, the colors paint themselves like a spice cabinet – sage, dust, slate gray.

Maybe you're in your trusty car, the one that takes you to and from work every day.

Perhaps you've got a spacious RV, your Motel 6 on wheels for the next few days in the desert.

Or you're driving your glittering art car, complete with poker chips and mirroring to do a disco ball proud.

The two-lane highway turns off onto a new road. You drive slowly onto the playa, the 400-square-mile expanse known as the Black Rock Desert. And there you've touched the terrain of what feels like another planet.

You're at the end – and the beginning – of your journey to Burning Man.

You belong here, and you participate. You're not the weirdest kid in the classroom – there's

always somebody there who's thought up something you never even considered.

You're there to breathe art. Imagine an ice sculpture emitting glacial music – in the desert.

Imagine the man, greeting you, neon and benevolence, watching over the community. You're here to build a community that needs you and relies on you.

You're here to survive. What happens to your brain and body when exposed to 107 degree heat, moisture wicking off your body and dehydrating you within minutes?

You know and watch yourself. You drink water constantly and piss clear. You'll want to reconsider drinking that alcohol (or taking those other substances) you brought with you. The mind-altering experience of Burning Man is its own drug.

You slather yourself in sunblock before the sun's rays turn up full blast. You bring enough

food, water and shelter because the elements of the new planet are harsh, and you will find no vending.

You're here to create. Since nobody at Burning Man is a spectator, you're here to build your own new world.

You've built an egg for shelter, a suit made of light sticks, a car that looks like a shark's fin.

You've covered yourself in silver, you're wearing a straw hat and a string of pearls, or maybe a skirt for the first time.

You're broadcasting Radio Free Burning Man – or another radio station.

You're here to experience. Ride your bike in the expanse of nothingness with your eyes closed.

Meet the theme camp – enjoy Irrational Geographic, relax at Bianca's Smut Shack and eat a grilled cheese sandwich. Find your love and understand each other as you walk slowly under a parasol. Wander under the veils of dust at night on the playa.

You're here to celebrate. On Saturday night, we'll burn the Man. As the procession starts, the circle forms and the man ignites, you experience something personal, something new to yourself, something you've never felt before. It's an epiphany, it's primal, it's newborn. And it's completely individual.

You'll leave as you came: When you depart from Burning Man, you leave no trace. Everything you built, you dismantle. The waste you make and the objects you consume leave with you. Volunteers will stay for weeks to return the Black Rock Desert to its pristine condition.

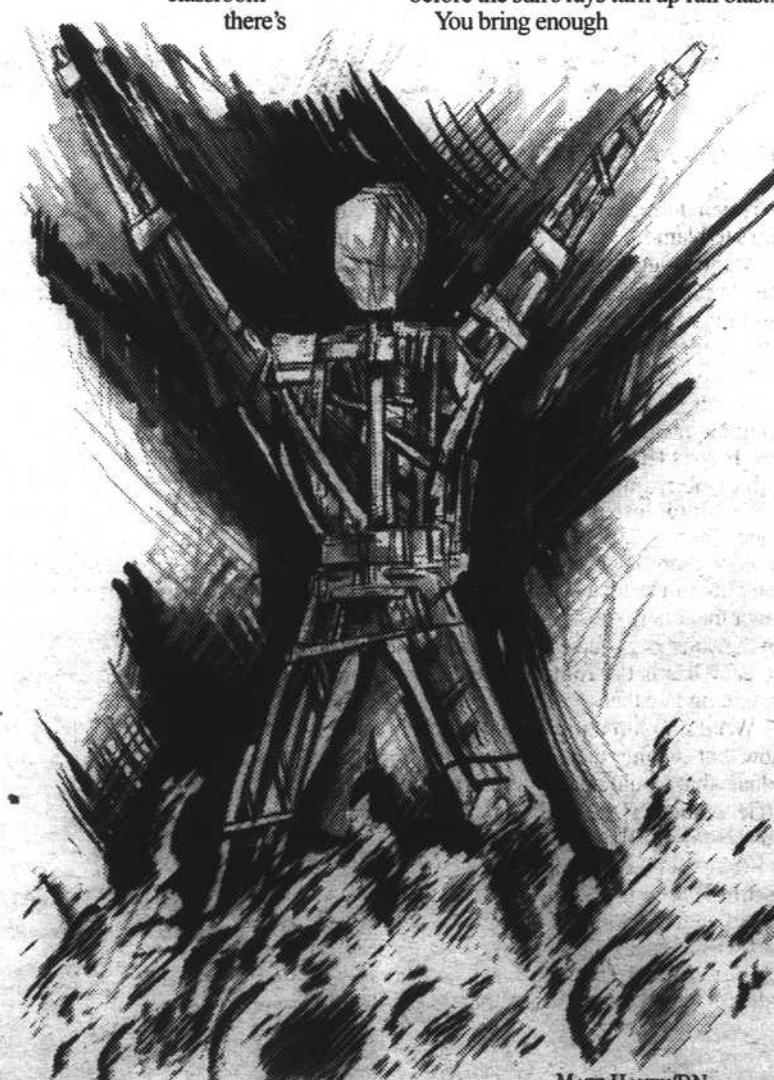
But you'll take the world you built with you.

When you drive back down the dusty roads toward home, you slowly reintegrate to the world you came from. You feel in tune with the other dust-covered vehicles that shared the same community.

Over time, vivid images still dance in your brain, floating back to you when the weather changes.

The Burning Man community, whether your friends, your new acquaintances or the Burning Man project, embraces you. At the end, though your journeys to and from Burning Man are finished, you embark on a different journey – forever.

Taken from "What is Burning Man?" by permission. See site for more.



MATT HANEY/DN