

Quotes of the WEEK

"The state's interest here is to draw a bright line between abortion and infanticide."

Attorney General Don Stenberg, on Nebraska's case against Dr. LeRoy Carhart for performing partial-birth abortions.

"This is a very, very well-contrived plan to try to eliminate abortion as an option for American women."

Dr. LeRoy Carhart, from Bellevue, on the abortion case. The arguments were presented to the U.S. Supreme Court on Tuesday.

"I haven't been gone so long to not have a sense of the planning going on, the initiatives in place and the restraints that the university currently faces."

UNL Interim Chancellor Harvey Perlman, former dean of the NU College of Law.

"I've had better Easters."

Bob Hampton, co-owner of Savannah Pines Retirement Community, still under construction, which caught fire on Sunday morning.

"(Squaw) is pretty well regarded as a derogatory word. You wouldn't have a Cunt Mountain or a Bitch Butte."

UNL English professor Fran Kaye, on Gov. Johanns' recommendation that the word "squaw" be taken out of the name of state parks and bodies of water.

"Three things I fight every year are the weather, the government and machinery breakdowns."

Gary Slater, Nebraska farmer.

"The theme is simple – it's one of love and supporting the people you love through doing good."

Erin Keaney, one of the stars of "Rent," on the meaning of the musical.

"No Diet Pepsi. No Healthy Choice meals of Lasagna Roma with only 14 percent of the your daily fat allowance. No Egg Beaters. No fat-free mini-muffins."

Future DN columnist Petaluma Watson, on how to get fat.

"It seemed as if the administration went into a backpeddle. But right now, it looks like this plan is an all-go."

ASUN President Joel Schafer in response to the possibility of next year's student health care plan's including domestic partners.

"I remember telling my wife before the interview, 'I don't know why I'm doing this.'"

Chancellor James Moeser on his prospects of getting the chancellor job at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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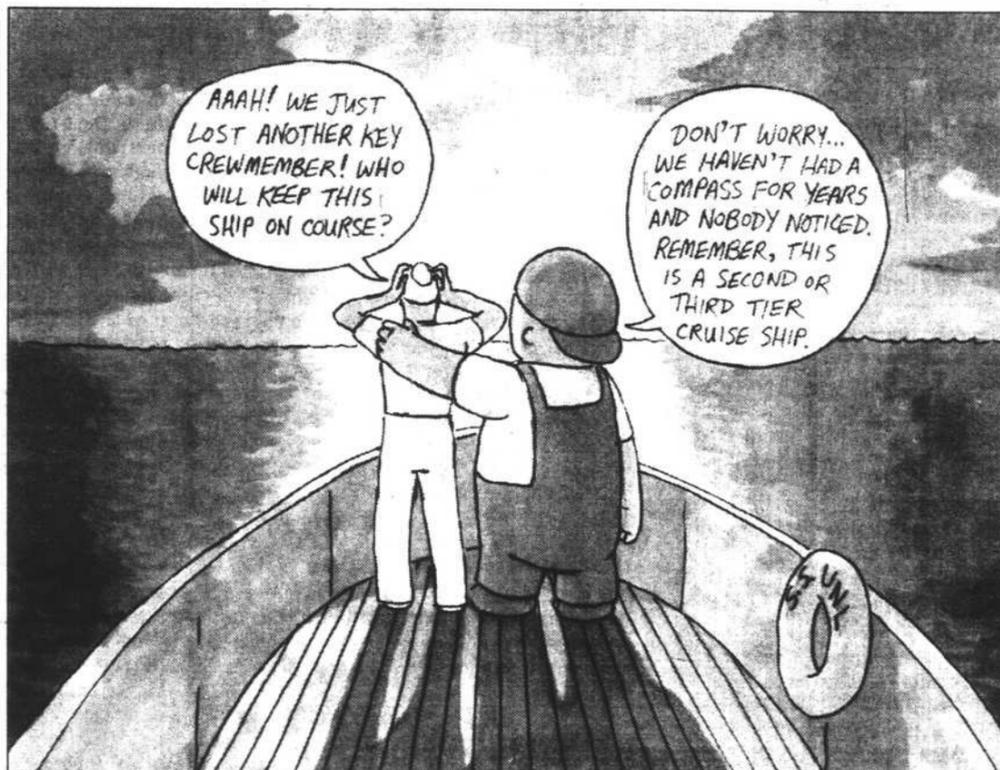
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Obermeyer's VIEW



The seeping apathy

Exposure to real life invalidates countless classroom hours



I used to be such a good student.

I remember my early years as if they were yesterday; I attended classes diligently; I was always attentive; I studied hard for every class. I got on the professor's good side early and did my best to stay there. I would ask questions and talk to the professor outside of class. For those few precious years, I was a shining jewel of scholarly perfection.

Those years have propelled me this far. Standing at the end of my fourth year, I find strangely that I no longer care as much as I did then. There was a time when I would proudly check "number of absences: 0-1" on end-of-the-semester evaluations; but this semester, I honestly will have to check "number of absences: more than six." The number of late or missed assignments is at an all-time high; my transcript is now marred by Ws.

What happened?

Last summer, I had the great experience of playing with the American Wind Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Dr. Robert Austin Boudreau. The experience was hell, actually.

Imagine being stuck in 90-degree-plus weather in a part of New York that doesn't believe in air conditioning, with rehearsals and performances played outdoors (performances in full tuxedos). Imagine junebugs and mosquitoes and all manners of flies vying for your sweat and blood.

Imagine the musician's nightmare: Never having a place or a time to practice.

Participating in the semiprofessional group was a challenge to say the least. Schedules shifted like tectonic plates – slowly most of the time, marked by sudden explosions

of change. Maintaining reeds and instruments and technical proficiency while running from nursing home to elementary school to waterfront park was enough to drive anyone crazy – and many of us did go crazy.

I suppose that returning to school after nine weeks of this crazy schedule – and don't get me wrong, I loved it and would do it again, provided the opportunity – was slightly anti-climactic.

The regular schedules, the semester-long syllabuses, the organized assignments and frozen due-dates, these all seemed much easier to me.

Indeed, I might even say they were so easy I was bored. While I love my classes and the new knowledge gained in them as I love the professors who teach them, I couldn't help but be bored.

One day, while sitting through a class where I got to listen to a fellow classmate discuss the uniquely French characteristics of a suite by Couperin, I let my mind wander off and through her voice. Decorated in the smoke-wisps of her voice, I remembered last summer and the hectic lack of free time, the satisfaction of playing a concert well, the excitement of beating a deadline. Somehow Baroque history just didn't seem important.

The same ennui follows me to every class like a high-school friend looking at prospective colleges. A reed seems more important than class. Practicing while on a roll seems more important than J.S. Bach's St. Matthew's Passion. I know I should go to class – but why go and be bored witless?

The simple fact of it is that, no matter how good your professor, the classroom fails to expose us to the same sort of challenges that real life will eventually present us. And now that I have had a taste of those challenges, it seems that those challenges are much more interesting than the purely academic pursuits that one follows in classes.

The old adage "your degree is useless, you learn everything you need on the job" holds true, but it is even more apparent for a musician seeking a professional career. I

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know a little of what to expect, should I get out into the world and make it as an oboist. And having been in school for four years, I find myself increasingly drawn from the classroom and drawn to my own individual efforts and discoveries.

Granted, classes provide a discipline and structure without which it would be impossible to teach, learn or prepare for a professional career. But at some point professors must realize that a student's needs and demands may counter a MWF schedule – whether it be a gig in Omaha, an interview or a simple chance to take a break.

Every one of my professors this semester takes into account class participation in the final grade – which is basically an upperclass version of an attendance policy. So, this semester, I'm expecting to be hurt by my liberal interpretation of the class schedule. This is fine; it was in the syllabus. I implicitly agreed to it, and my grade must reflect this. I'm not as worried about maintaining a high GPA as I used to be – I'm more interested in preparing myself for a career.

What I regret, however, is the perception on my professors' part that my lack of apparent drive in classes is a motion of disrespect to them – because it is not.

They misinterpret my behavior because the understanding doesn't exist between us that a student may choose to skip class for good reasons.

But in the end, life itself is not on a fixed schedule. It doesn't have fixed topics or lectures. The reason why is because that's boring.

Life is much more flexible outside of the university. Professors should encourage students to explore that flexibility within the context of classes by thinking flexibly.

Then maybe I would care again.

Jacob Glazeski is a senior math and music major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.