

Daily Nebraskan

Since 1901

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Spare the rod Spoil UNL when deciding what NU programs to slash

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is in trouble.

With its share of state funds decreasing and tuition remaining abysmally low, this storied university on the plains — once one of the key outposts of intellect west of the Mississippi — is now regarded more as an academic pipsqueak.

As the university system is forced to spread across four campuses its shrinking chunk of change, administrators are now doing something that some people within the guarded walls of academia may have thought only happened in the pits of corporate America.

The University of Nebraska is prioritizing. And reorganizing. And cutting and slashing — all to become more cost-effective.

Seven-thousand programs, the NU Board of Regents announced Saturday, will be examined and ranked according to how well they fit selected criteria.

The criteria include: how well a program relates to the strategic mission of the university, the need and demand for the program, the impact the program has on the campus, the state and greater society and the amount and quality of research a program generates.

The ranking process, while necessary to a university whose chronic underfunding has left it bleeding red ink, is contrary to UNL's desperate goal of bolstering its tarnished academic reputation.

Though some signs point to a resurgence of academic activity and respect on this campus — the increasing number of well-prepared and high-ranking freshmen, notable research in the life sciences and a distance education program that is held as an national example — UNL could be in danger of losing what status it has remaining: its position as a national, major research institution.

If classes or programs are cut that make UNL what it is — a comprehensive institution of higher learning, not a trade school, commuter campus or community college — the university will undo what has been done in the long road to the UNL's academic recovery.

When the universitywide task force is examining classes on campuses in Omaha and Kearney, it should keep in mind Lincoln's role as the land-grant and flagship campus of the state.

The Lincoln campus, which competes with other national universities on its own and not as part of the NU system, should lead the university's campuses in every academic endeavor.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha and the University of Nebraska at Kearney should have their programs slashed to the bone before administrators even think of touching programs and classes on the Lincoln campus, that, while hurting, is the real home for academic activity in the state.

Editorial Board

Sarah Baker, Bradley Davis, Josh Funk, Matthew Hansen, Samuel McKewon, Dane Stickney, Kimberly Sweet

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Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 2000 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; a cartoon is solely the opinion of its artist. The Board of Regents acts 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 employees.



Senior-Check Lady holds our fate in twisted hands



Karen Brown

We all know her.

She's there waiting, seething, writhing somewhere in her cubicle crammed with thousands of pink slips and an ashtray filled to the brim because of the strange amalgam of stress and monotony she must endure in her everyday work.

She finds some twisted joy in trapping and enslaving hundreds of my fellow brethren a day, keeping us students at this university until we have paid five times more than we should.

And it's all because of this one lady. One lady who does our beloved senior checks. One lady that I will aptly call the Senior-Check Lady.

For you freshmen and sophomores (and extremely unfortunate seniors) who don't know what these are, let me tell you of that which I speak.

Senior checks are the only surefire way to let you, the paying student, know exactly what classes you have left to take before you can officially graduate. And, last I heard, graduating officially is the only way to get the damned diploma.

Is it fair that one woman lies between you and sweet freedom? I think not. Therefore, this woman has become the Antichrist in my tear-ridden, massively mascara-laden eyes.

I never had a problem with this elusive "monster in the cubicle" until my own disgruntled encounter.

I am nothing if not punctual, honest, drunk, wonderful and on top of my shit. I heard from the little man who travels through and tells about 10 students in 10,000 that senior checks even exist.

It took two weeks compared with eight months. Why did she get hers back so soon? My guess is that she has one major. Hmmm. There's something horribly wrong here ...

It just happened to be beating someone up who just came from applying for his senior check. He (I think it was Wayne Newton.) told me that you must apply for this unknown necessity at least a year before you plan on graduating.

Well, after I finished bloodying Wayne's nose and flashing my gang sign, I rushed right on over to Canfield to sign up. As I am one of those extremely overproductive and industrious students who is double majoring (in the art of sneezing sans snot and physics) with a minor (in cross-dressing cows) I heard from yet another "in the know" student that I'm even more liable to get to wait longer.

Somehow, the Senior-Check Nazi, oops I mean Lady, will keep shoving these double majors to the back while those solo majors get to move to the head of the class and out in the streets bare-naked and crying even sooner.

You want proof?



I submitted my check in January (of 1982), and it still hasn't come back. I checked on it once at the six-month mark, hoping that I would be able to plan this fall semester accordingly and not just going from my own calculations from the past four years.

Anyway, at the six-month mark, the ominous secretary smiled and said: "We're still working on the December 2000 graduates."

I was so angry I beat her up.

I was so upset that they didn't care about me, Me, ME. But I figured that they would get to mine soon enough since I had had it in for so long. She told me to check with my adviser, and I laughed so hard I had to have a hernia operation. Believe me, advisers are good for one thing — not helping students.

I checked again this week for fear that my pink slip of life and death was not stuck under someone's butt. It wasn't, and I was informed that they just started on the May 2000 graduates. I was excited once more until I spoke with my friend who submitted hers two weeks ago (in the same college) and got it back already. Two weeks!

I smell anarchy. It took two weeks compared with eight months. Why did she get hers back so soon? My guess is that she has one major.

Hmmm. There's something horribly wrong here, and I don't mean Al Gore's speech patterns.

I must urge the Senior-Check Lady to realize that my frustration is perhaps unjustly directed toward her. However, who else is there really to blame? The university?

I don't think so. I mean, I'm positive that they've done everything in their power to get with the times and turn to technology for the answer.

I don't really care for the idea of computers taking over human jobs (especially after my mom nixed my dad for a cyborg), but I think the proposed computerized senior-check system is a good thing especially with the insane amount of freshmen this year. Maybe Senior-Check Lady can rule over that system once more even if it is computerized.

If it's true that there's one lady who does it all because it must be done in a fair manner, then I'm sure to never get mine back after what I've said.

I'll just have to take even more classes in diaper changing and balloon-animal making to pass the sweet time until my name is finally called once more.

And she'll take a look at it, see my name and put it right back on the bottom of the pile.

Sizing up a painful reality for women

I had tried on two million pairs of size 6 and 7 jeans before I realized I might have to run if I wanted to look 16 again.

Right. Run. I only run when chased. And that never happens because that would call for pain. I would rather take another accounting class. With Professor Lawrence.

Now that is pain. The reality is that you cannot have a tight figure forever. You cannot have a tight figure forever. You cannot. You just cannot. It is not possible.

I know who you are. You squeeze into those tight sequin shirts. Those shirts in the girls section.

I saw you there. I was there, too.

You suck it in for a hot pair of pink pants. Found on clearance. You bought them just in case you shrunk. I watched you. I changed in the next stall. Mine did not fit either. I saw you tossing bras a size too small into your cart. You needed two sizes bigger. You knew that. I knew that. I also knew there was not a size below mine.

You understood. You saw me, too. You are not alone. I am there, too.

I tried on a pair of size 9 jeans. And the jeans fit. I hated that the jeans fit. I wanted them to sag to my knees. Then I would laugh at those in size 9s. Because I had won. Because I could toss jeans around the Laundromat without covering the tag. Because indeed a size 9 was too large for me. Because I was small. I was a size 6. Right. Size 6.

Truth was the jeans fit. Size 9. And perfect. I hated size 9. I bought size 9. Three pairs. I wore a pair.

But I did not leave the apartment. I know what I want to look like. You to Glamour. You to Cosmopolitan. I want to have a rack. You want a smaller one.

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P.S. Write back

We'd love to hear what you have to say about issues that concern you or stories that we haven't covered.

