Top academic priorities unveiled

There are 42 programs identified with a research emphasis. A variety of programs are listed and not all of them are strictly scientific. Programs include creative writing, film studies, French language and literature, high energy physics, medieval and Renaissance studies, law and psychology and software engineering.

■ Thirteen programs are identified under the life sciences category. Bioengineering, biotechnology and molecular biology, functional genomics and sociology of health were some of the programs listed.

■ Undergraduate education listed 22 programs as priorities. Some of these include the e-business program, mass media in transition, math and science teachers for the 21st Century, the University Honors Program and Visual Literacy.

■ Outreach programs were defined as those that serve the needs of Nebraskans. Eight programs were listed, which focus on distance education, public policy, agriculture, entrepreneurship and community development.

Perlman said programs listed under the graduate education also could benefit undergraduate students.

"On quick reading, one might conclude that we shortchanged undergraduate education," he said. "I don't think that's the case."

Sheila Scheideler, Academic Senate president, said she thought the list seemed too long.

"It's kind of a shocking document at first," Scheideler said, referring to the report's length of more than 100 pages.

"Some of it looks like a wish list," she said. "I'm not even aware of all of (the programs)."

Programs such as the International Quilt Study Center, which was listed under graduate instructional emphasis, seemed too obscure to be listed as a university priority, Scheideler said.

Scheideler, an animal science professor, said she didn't think enough attention was paid to agriculture.

Some programs can fit into a broader category, such as plant sciences, which falls under biotechnology, she said.

But agriculture should have been mentioned more times specifically in the document, she said.

"You have to dig deep to find agriculture," she said.

Scheideler said the list needed to be pared down before it would be approved.

Students also should examine the list and offer suggestions, she said.

David Brinkerhoff, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, said forums would be held for members of the university to discuss the priorities.

The list also is published on the Internet, with Brinkerhoff's e-mail address, so viewers can contact him with their suggestions.

Funding won't be cut for programs simply because they're not included in the list, Brinkerhoff said.

"It's not a reallocation exercise in the sense colleges have to give up money," he said.

"These are programs where we have the opportunities to invest in them."

Work began on the list last spring, and in the fall, faculty members began discussing their priorities, he said.

The report will be sent for review to the Academic Planning Committee on March 15. The committee will submit their recommendations to Perlman by May 1, and the chancellor will send it to Smith and the regents May 15.

"I'm really pleased with it," Brinkerhoff said. "It wasn't the work of a single individual at all."

The prioritization report can be viewed on the Internet at *www.unl.edu/svcaa/prioritization.html*

UNL police officer charges spitting man with assault

The act of spitting on a UNL police officer left one person with an assault charge.

Reginald Parks, picked up by UNL police shortly after 1 p.m. Monday, spit on a campus security officer while riding in the officer's car, said Bill Manning, UNL interim police chief.

A UNL officer picked up Parks because he was having difficulty walking near 17th and Y streets, Manning said.

The officer, who determined that Parks was intoxicated, was in the process of taking Parks to Cornhusker Place Detox when Parks spit on him in the police car, Manning said.

The officer charged Parks with assaulting a police officer and took him to jail.

Woman's credit cards stolen from her campus office

Two reports made to the UNL police confirmed the theft of one woman's stolen credit cards.

A woman called the police at 9:09 a.m. Monday to report her credit cards were stolen after a stranger was in her office on campus, Manning said.

He said the woman left her office and returned to find a stranger who said he was looking for the main office of the building. The man left, but the woman said she noticed her credit cards were missing from her purse.

The woman immediately called her credit card company to report the cards stolen, Manning said.

While officers were taking the report, a call made at 9:19 a.m. stated one of the stolen cards had been used at a gas station.

Manning said the woman described the suspect as a light-skinned black male with short black hair, in his 20s, around 5-foot-11-inches tall with a silver earring in his left ear.

The man was wearing a tan coat with black slacks.

Compiled by Jill Conner

ID numbers could be changed

time.

"In my opinion, if the Legislature wants the university to do this without a crash program it has to take effect during a one to two year transition," Hawkey said.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, said he didn't think identity theft was a major problem on college campuses.

"In my personal opinion, I question whether the small gains in increased personal identity security would justify the tremendous cost of revamping most of our administrative systems," Griesen said.

But some students at NU-system schools seem to agree with changing the university's student identification system.

One student from UNO e-mailed Redfield citing his experiences at UNO.

The student mentioned teachers using the last four numbers of the social security number when posting grades and taking class attendance.

Adam Muhle, a UNL junior computer engineering major, said, "I think it's a good idea because letting the university use our social security number like toilet paper is a bunch of crap."

"The fact the university uses our social security number for everything is a big risk."

Joshua Haun, an intern for the Nebraska state Mexican-American Commission, said changing the identification system would be easier because some international students don't even have social security numbers.

"Social security numbers should be used as a government identification number and not an institutional identification number," said Haun, a UNL junior Spanish and international affairs major.

"This has a lot to do with technology and people taking advantage of it."

This bill is just one of five bills introduced this session to prevent and punish crimes of identity involving social security numbers.