

Daily Nebraskan

A high-speed train between Lincoln and Omaha hits a slow-down in News/3

A monster game from Cookie propels the Huskers past a tough Oklahoma State in SportsThursday/12



Mylow, comprised of UNL students, make music tonight at the Grove in Arts/8



Minuses could boost reputation

The administrator heading the transition says the new grading system won't be implemented this semester.

BY LINDSEY BAKER

University faculty members hope to increase academic rigor and up the ante on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's public perception with the Academic Senate's Tuesday approval of a plus-minus grading system.

But two days after the senate's adoption of the system, faculty members are pondering how a few kinks will be worked out before it's implemented.

The system would move from a 9-point scale with a half-point reduction for each letter grade lower than an A, to a 13-

point scale with a third of a point reduction for each letter grade lower than an A.

It was proposed to the senate by English Professor James Ford in December.

Associate Agronomy and Horticulture Professor and Chairman of the senate's Grading and Examinations Committee, Don Lee, said he was concerned about the C- grade, assigned a GPA of 1.67. Currently, students must maintain a C average, or 2.0 GPA, to stay off academic probation.

"I think it's important for teachers to recognize that a C- doesn't mean a low C, it means below a C," he said. "That cutoff has some pretty important implications."

One solution proposed to solve the problem was to lower the minimum performance level from 2.0 to a 1.67, he said.

Lee said he also disagreed with the

example percentage distribution proposed by the senate. Under the senate's example, a 93 percent to a 100 percent is an A or A+.

Lee encouraged professors to establish their own percentage scale pertaining to letter grades instead.

"Teachers need to do some good thinking ahead of time," he said.

Earl Hawkey, director of Records and Registrations, the office that would put the system into action, said implementation and cost of the system was still up in the air.

"We have no plans at this point," he said. "We have no budget at this point."

He said when the plan was implemented, it would be at the beginning of an academic year. He said the system would definitely not be adopted this semester or this

summer.

The motives behind the move, Ford said, were to move to a more standardized system of grading, to provide professors with more grading options and to decrease grade inflation.

He said that as the university stood now, too many students were graded at above-average levels, leading to grade inflation. He said distinction between low and high percentage letter grades should be more defined.

"There is some evidence that plus-minus does stop continuous grade inflation," he said.

He said the new system should drive students to work harder and be proud of that work.

A new scale

The new grading scale will add pluses and minuses and change the corresponding point values.

Current grading scale	Point value	Plus/minus grading scale	Point value
A+	4.00	A+	4.00
A	4.00	A	4.00
		A-	3.67
B+	3.50	B+	3.33
B	3.00	B	3.00
		B-	2.67
C+	2.50	C+	2.33
C	2.00	C	2.00
		C-	1.67
D+	1.50	D+	1.33
D	1.00	D	1.00
		D-	0.67
F	0.00	F	0.00

Please see GRADES on 5

Jerry Morgan/DN

The Reunion building at 16th and W streets sits empty. The building was used as an independent student union and more recently for university art classes.



Jennifer Lund/DN

Old stomping grounds sit idle

BY LISA BEHRNS

A near empty building sits on the corner of 16th and W streets.

Students who pass under the flickering neon sign rarely pause to wonder what secrets the building holds.

But 10 years ago, the Reunion - as the building was known then and is known today - was the place to be.

Built in 1925, the building has housed a watch factory, various warehouses and a food court.

Today, it's empty. But traces of its storied history remain in bits and pieces throughout.

For three years during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Reunion played an integral part of University of Nebraska-Lincoln student life.

Jason and Shannon Jenkins, both 1995 UNL graduates, remember the time they spent at the Reunion.

"It had a little of everything," Jason Jenkins

said. "Mostly it was a place to grab a bite to eat."

David Hunter, president of the Hardy Building Corporation, transformed the building into a privately owned student union.

"We felt those services were needed on that part of the campus," Hunter said.

Complete with food vendors such as The Plump Tomato Pizza Company and Joyce's Subs & Pizza, the building served as competition for the Nebraska Union.

Hunter received a license to sell beer in the Reunion's food court, the Daily Nebraskan reported in 1990.

University officials questioned the consequences of such a license, but Hunter gained the support of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska.

"There was a huge issue about alcohol on campus," Jenkins said. "Everyone was talking about it."

No one was allowed to buy more than one beer at a time, Hunter told the Daily Nebraskan in 1990,

and no pitchers were sold.

Beer was sold in one area of the building, called "The Pub," which catered to students of all ages, but a metal fence separated those who had surpassed the magical age of 21.

The Reunion was open as a union for three years until it was decided there was a better use for the space, Hunter said.

The university rented the upper floor of the building in July 1989 and used it for storage for Morrill Hall, the NU State Museum.

UNL purchased the building in 1997 from the University Foundation, which purchased the building initially, said Linda Cowdin, UNL Property Manager.

Today, the first floor sits vacant. But traces of art students who used the building as a makeshift workspace while Richards Hall was under con-

Please see REUNION on 5

Legislature

Campaign finance debated

BY GEORGE GREEN

As Sen. Kermit Brashear of Omaha sees it, the Legislature has two options - allow an "imperfect" law to "whither on the vine" or perform a "mercy killing" to better the state.

Brashear's spirited remarks were part of testimony heard Wednesday on LB485, a bill that would abolish the Campaign Finance Limitation Act.

The limiting act, enacted in 1990, is a one-of-a-kind creation because it sets voluntary limits on campaign spending. Other states and the federal government have taken up the campaign finance debate on the contribution side of the issue.

Brashear, who introduced the bill aimed at repealing the finance act, said Nebraska shouldn't laud its unique law.

Rather, he said the state should do away with the act to avoid further embarrassment.

"They (spending limits) make Nebraska appear to be an economically pathetic backwater," he said.

The senator is so adamant about his cause he has also challenged the law in court.

Late last year, Brashear, who also practices law privately, filed a lawsuit on behalf of Randy Ferlic, a recently elected University of Nebraska regent.

In his quest for a regent seat, Ferlic dumped \$300,000 into his campaign dwarfing the financial efforts of his opponent, Rosemary Skrupa.

Ferlic's suit, which hasn't hit the courts, maintains the Nebraska law violates his First Amendment right of freedom of speech.

If Nebraska doesn't repeal the law, Brashear said the courts would soon force the state to kill it.

"When litigated with finality," similar limits never make the cut in court, he said.

Jack Gould, a spokesman for Common Cause Nebraska, a political watchdog group, wasn't convinced the Nebraska law was destined for failure.

In fact, he lauded the statute, which gives can-

Please see CAMPAIGN on 5

Students: No to new grades

BY MARGARET BEHM

Joel Schafer, ASUN president, said many unanswered questions remain surrounding the grade changes. ASUN passed a bill Wednesday that recommends Academic Senate inform students about the changes that would occur.

Students are concerned about changes to their transfer credits, scholarships and the minimal academic standards for good conduct, Schafer said.

Many students are against the changes to the grading system, Schafer said.

"A lot of students are upset about the changes in academic grading," he said.

ASUN did not support the grade system changes, he said. But many students think the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska encouraged the changes, Schafer said.

"A lot of rumors are going around with students," he said. "There's a lot of misinformation out there."

In November, ASUN defeated a bill that recommended a change from a plus system to a plus-minus grading system.

Schafer said he understood some students were

ASUN

upset, but said the issue had to be dealt with eventually.

"I know this is tough for students to stomach," he said. "But I think it's something that was on the horizon. It was going to happen; it was just a matter of time."

In other news, a bill was passed that would send the Government Liaison Lobbyist chairman to push for a bill that aims to lessen workplace discrimination.

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha will present LB19 to the legislature. The bill would add the words "sexual orientation" to Nebraska's employment nondiscrimination act.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln includes sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy.

Angela Clements, Human Rights Committee chairwoman, said discrimination in the workplace was still a big problem in this country.

"It's important because in 38 states it's legal for people to be fired because of sexual orientation," she said.



Scott McCarg/DN

Seth Botone, left, and Shane Geraghty, members of the Xtreme team, perform their aerial dunking routine during halftime of the Nebraska-Oklahoma State men's basketball game Wednesday evening at the Bob Devaney Sports Center.