4-5-2013

The Beacon, April 5, 2013

Beacon staff

Follow this and additional works at: https://nwcommons.nwciowa.edu/beacon2012
BY KAITLIN FLOERCHINGER

For students of the Psychology department, there will be one fewer familiar face next term. Like so many other professors, Laird Edman, professor of psychology, will embark on sabbatical.

His two semesters will be busy because Edman has several projects in the wings. The first semester will be spent in Orange City working on a variety of pieces. “I have honestly about six articles that need to be finished and worked on, and one or two brand new articles that I want to sort of polish up,” Edman said.

However, Edman will also be focusing on a much larger project, a book on the cognitive science of religion that will be co-authored by Justin Barrett of Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, in Pasadena, Calif. “He’s probably one of the top three people in the world, maybe the top person in the world, in cognitive science of religion,” Edman said.

Edman will be focusing much of his sabbatical on the book. A majority of the time will be spent reading academic journals, whether they are found in Ramaker Library, through interlibrary loan or at other institutions such as the University of Minnesota or the University of Iowa.

As for the books involved for research, “I can probably list the 20 books in cognitive science of religion that are essential, and I own most of them,” Edman said. “I’m not worried about that.”

Edman will also have research libraries available second semester. After applying for and not receiving the opportunity to spend sabbatical in Turkey, Edman has two other prestigious locations available to him.

“I suspect I’ll be some place,” Edman said. “I would guess either Pasadena, working with Justin Barrett at Fuller or I would love to spend the semester at Oxford, the Center for the Study of Anthropological Study of Religion.”

Both locations would give Edman the opportunity to get substantial work done on the book; this is important because Edman is doing most of the research himself. When Barrett and Edman spoke about the book, the two laid out an effective plan.

“I said, ‘Tell you what, I’ll do the heavy lifting; you consult with me on what needs to go into the chapters, I’ll write the chapters, you edit the chapters, and we’ll go from there,’” Edman said. “And (Barrett) said, ‘Sounds like a plan.’”

Another plan is for Edman’s wife, Sally Oakes Edman, the director of counseling services at the Wellness Center, to come along wherever the sabbatical journey leads if a plan can be worked out with the Wellness Center. “We’ve spent a number of periods of our lives where I was gone a lot during the week,” Edman said. “We spent probably six years living apart during the week. So we would like to arrange our lives so that doesn’t happen anymore.”

Edman said he would prefer Oxford for his second semester. “You know, I really like tea,” Edman said. But if there is more work to be done in Pasadena, he will go there. Either way, he is excited to focus on research in his field, the research that is nearly impossible to do while teaching, grading and meeting with committees.

As for the Psychology department at Northwestern, a replacement professor will be hired for the upcoming year. No decision has been made yet, but it is predicted that whoever is chosen will be teaching freshman- and sophomore-level courses; Jennifer Feenstra will take over Edman’s advanced classes.

His upcoming year looks to be both busy and fulfilling, and Edman is eager for a change of scenery, whether that means no classrooms, the West Coast or England. “You’ve got to leave for a while,” Edman said. “I think that’s part of what’s valuable on sabbatical—getting away.”
“I Am Not A Human Being” is short on good songs

BY TOM WESTERHOLM

In 2007, Lil Wayne released a mixtape called “The Drought 3.” The first song, “Black Republicans,” was an energetic beat, and Wayne, obviously giddy to be laying down a track, giggled throughout the first minute. At that point, Lil Wayne was releasing visionary, fascinating albums. His punchlines were irreverent, offensive and hilarious. His timing was impeccable. In short, he was everything that is entertaining about rap.

That time, unfortunately, seems to have passed. Weezy’s latest album, “I Am Not A Human Being Part II,” is an unflattering representation of one of rap’s most distinctive voices. Don’t believe us? Ask Wayne himself.

“It sucks; I hate it,” he told Power 106, a hip-hop station in Los Angeles. He backed off his statements a minute later, but it wasn’t the first time he expressed frustration with his own record. In a video for TMZ after his recent hospitalization, he called it a “bum-a** record” and suggested that he didn’t care if fans picked it up. Wayne’s opinion of “IANAHB” is a somewhat bizarre subplot to what is undeniably his most disappointing release to date.

Just about every verse of every song features some form (in varying degrees of profanity) of his usual construction: “I am (insert description) like (insert pun).” For example, one of the more printable puns: “That’s my word, like Scrabble,” he raps on “Days and Days.” “So much weed I got grass stains,” he says on the same song. These tired puns repeat over and over without any of the joy displayed in previous records.

It should also be noted that Wayne’s singing just doesn’t work. Drake’s “Take Care” was a hit because his gravelly voice was in perfect contrast with his sad songs. But Wayne’s sung lyrics are no different from his rapped ones, and there is very little to find endearing about hearing the aforementioned “having sex, doing drugs and having sex” in an auto-tune drone.

Several songs show glimpses of what we expect from a Weezy album. In “Trigger Finger,” Wayne’s verses sprint past at a frantic clip until Souljah Boy makes his (ahem) “contribution” to the track. “I don’t speak to cops/I don’t speak pig latin” he spits on “Rich As F***.” But whereas his songs used to be so full of these lines that a listener could barely keep up with the dizzying pace, they are now a novelty worth noting solely because of their infrequency.

There is still some semblance of the old Lil Wayne hiding in places on “I Am Not A Human Being Part II.” Fans just have to hope he’s not too hidden behind his vices to surface once again.

Rating: ★☆☆☆☆
“The Host” fails to capitalize on “Twilight” formula

MOVIE REVIEW

BY KARA NONNEMACHER

“The Host” is a science-fiction film based off the novel by Stephanie Meyers, author of the Twilight Saga. “Twilight” was a mediocre film in the eyes of most critics but struck a chord with millions of teenagers, the saga’s target audience. “The Host” attempts to duplicate this response, but it fails short.

The film tells the story of life after an alien invasion of Earth. These aliens have conquered all other planets and are seeing the most resistance from the humans. They dress in all white, drive shiny silver cars and never lie, cheat or kill. When the aliens catch 17-year-old Melanie (Saorise Ronan), her body is inhabited by an alien called Wanderer, who searches Melanie’s memory in order to find the location of the other humans she traveled with. Because Melanie is so strong, she refuses to let her memory die and convinces Wanderer to run away. Wanderer and Melanie, in one body, eventually reach a desert cave hideout that belongs to Melanie’s Uncle Jeb (William Hurt). There she is reunited with her little brother Jamie (Chandler Canterbury), and lover Jared (Max Irons).

It takes time for Melanie’s family and friends to realize that Melanie is trapped within Wanderer, or Wanda, as they call her. Wanda finds a way to win the hearts of the humans and to use her resources, and the voice inside her head, to give hope back to the small cluster of humans who are left on Earth. The plot and characters are so superficial that the film has no chance of engaging its audience. There are brief moments of true conflict, such as when a hider attempts to kill Wanderer, but the premise of the plot is the strange love triangle between Wanderer/Melanie, Jared and Ian O’Shea (Jake Abel). Jared and Melanie were in love before Melanie was caught, and now Jared is hesitant to trust Wanda.

It isn’t until Jared kisses Wanda that he knows Melanie is trapped inside. Ian, on the other hand, is one of the first humans to befriend Wanda, and they develop feelings for each other. It’s very complicated because Wanda and Melanie share the same body but have different minds. This love story is very strange and a lot like “Twilight.” In one scene, Wanda has lost Melanie’s presence and tries kissing Ian to make Melanie return. This doesn’t work. Moreover, she only option is to kiss Jared. After this, Melanie’s voice returns. It mimics the love triangle of Bella, Jacob and Edward in “Twilight” and serves as a good opportunity for a couple of teenagers to make out on screen.

The plot is romance-driven, which isn’t enough to make it stand out. The intent of director Andrew Niccol was to create another “Twilight,” but “The Host” fell short of that goal. This film will not touch the box office success that the Saga experienced, but that’s to be expected from a movie with a dry plot and a cheesy love story.

Rating: ★★
March madness spreads through campus

BY LIZ KOTTICH

Snow on March 31, Wichita State in the Final Four and Kevin Ware breaking his leg; who could have predicted the “madness” of March 2013? The ups and downs of Iowa weather and the potential for any upset in the NCAA men’s basketball tournament have made for a memorable March Madness. Just how “mad” is March on the Northwestern College campus though?

Many students across campus have filled out brackets for years as a way to bond and have participated in March Madness ever since.

“My family and I always fill out brackets, and the winner earns $25,” said freshman Lucas Jacob. “I pick the teams based on how good they are, which teams I like or dislike, and a couple upsets to make it fun.”

Others started this year as a part of the campus-wide competition or as a way to have fun with friends. Freshman Sarah Tegtmeier filled a bracket out with friends and used unusual techniques to pick the teams.

“We picked some of our teams based on stats and then picked the other teams by flipping a coin or picking the team with the coolest mascot,” Tegtmeier said.

“Filling out brackets and competing with friends is only part of the “madness” of March. The experience of watching the games with friends and cheering on your teams can get crazy, especially when classes are going on at the same time. Across campus, avid fans of March Madness were glued to the games whether they were watching on TV, online or on their phones.”

The men of North Suites hooked up four TVs in their lobby in order to simultaneously watch all four channels with games playing. Junior Jason Katsma described the lobby as crazy with so many TVs and people around.

“I felt like I was at a sports bar because of all the TVs surrounding me,” Katsma said.

Senior Davis Bloemendaal watched the games in a similar fashion.

“My roommates and I moved both TVs into our living room to watch the games,” Bloemendaal said. “There is a lot of yelling that goes on, especially for our favorite teams, and we basically eat food and cheer for the underdog.”

The Final Four of the NCAA tournament is decided, the weather is finally becoming warmer, and Kevin Ware’s injury is beginning to heal. After the unpredictability of March, students are hoping for a calm April. But in Iowa, anything can happen.

Injuries give Northwestern students the boot

BY ERIN VAN HORN

Even though the winter months are coming to a close, several students are dealing with the side effects of the season. This is the case for some Northwestern students hopping around in a walking boot.

“I was walking in deep snow and stepped down, and something snapped,” said senior Emily Mahlum. “I thought it was OK, but I passed out when I tried to walk.”

Mahlum found out she broke her outer metatarsal, which resulted in a Jones fracture. She had been walking along the creek with her fiancé’s family when the injury occurred. Although it was unexpected, there was someone willing to document the occasion.

“It’s a pretty funny story,” Mahlum said. “My fiancé’s mom was behind us taking pictures.”

Although some injuries occur due to weather conditions, junior Anna Zeutenhorst has a different story to tell.

“I went to Haiti on a Spring Service Project,” Zeutenhorst said. “The second to last day we were hiking in Haiti and my foot got caught between some rocks.”

On top of the fact that Zeutenhorst damaged her ankle in a foreign country, she was also a mile and a half up a mountain.

“The cave was really slippery, so I couldn’t be carried out,” Zeutenhorst said. “I had to hobble out and Dan Locker, Mike Mabee and Professor Gibler had to help me down the mountain.”

The mountainous terrain soon became a problem.

“There were three of us that took turns giving her a piggyback down the mountain,” Gibler said. “We decided to take a shortcut, but it was rugged and treacherous.”

Gibler said Zeutenhorst was a trooper and didn’t complain a single time.

When the Haiti group returned to NW, Zeutenhorst treated her injury as a sprain.

“Although many activities are out of the question, there are a few perks that come in handy while wearing a boot. The only good thing that has come out of being in a boot is I now have a handicap sticker,” Zeutenhorst said.

Anna Zeutenhorst broke her foot while on an SSP in Haiti.
Graduate Studies in Mathematics
Master of Arts • Master of Science

The M.A. program can open the door to further growth and professional development for high school teachers seeking a master’s degree or for people who seek employment in other fields.

The M.S. program prepares students for doctoral studies in mathematics and covers advanced topics that will prepare them to take the qualifying exams at other Ph.D. programs.

The department offers competitive stipends and has excellent teaching and computational facilities.

APPLY TODAY — www.usd.edu/grad
For more information contact:

GRADUATE SCHOOL
414 East Clark Street • Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-6240 • 800-233-7937 • grad@usd.edu
Blame only creates shame

BY SARAH KUGLER

Student Voices: Pornography

Pornography “surprise” opens eyes

BY JENNIFER KAHANIC

A Letter From the Editor

Dear staff, faculty, students and community members,

Recently, there have been an exceptional number of comments and criticisms related to the content of the Beacon. Some of the comments have brought to light some missteps on the part of the Beacon staff. As the editor, I apologize for any word or story that was demeaning toward individuals, misleading to our readers or simply excluded from publication. In order to preserve the integrity of the campus newspaper staff and those featured in the stories, I would like to address a few points of interest.

First, although the Beacon is intended to serve the public and the staff prides itself on being accurate and respectful in its work, it is a learning laboratory. For most of the writers and editors (including myself), this is a new experience in mass media writing and communication. We work hard to eliminate bias and maintain objectivity, but we are all still learning, and thus, we are bound to make mistakes. Sometimes we make the mistake of failing to represent a campus group or event. We never want to exclude any organization, but it is difficult to stay on top of every campus happening and impossible to find enough space in our relatively small paper to include everything. In light of this, we welcome and strongly encourage anyone to submit story ideas and contact any of the editors if you would like a story run on a campus group or event, and we will gladly consider all submissions.

Second, we appreciate comments, suggestions and constructive criticism, but attacks at our staff can be destructive. Although some felt a sexist stereotype may have been perpetrated in last week’s pornography article, we did our best to directly represent the views expressed by sources from our interviews. In addition, there was concern with how last week’s feature story on junior Caiti Shaw represented her and the Athletic Training Program. We did not intend to demean either of them or portray the AT department as lazy or less rigorous than other majors.

Finally, there are good things happening at the Beacon. We have increased readership substantially in recent semesters and have generated positive discussions about important issues. I ask that even though mistakes will undoubtedly make their way into Beacon pages, you recognize the countless hours writers and editors spend researching relevant and intriguing story topics, interviewing featured individuals and editing stories. There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes. We welcome anyone who has opinions, suggestions or, yes, even constructive criticism. We are also always looking for people interested in writing. We want the paper to be an open source that stimulates dynamic and edifying conversations.

Sincerely,
Linden, Editor-in-Chief

Beacon Staff

Linden Figgie
Editor-in-Chief

Michael Simmelink
Sports Editor

Tom Westerholm
Arts & Culture Editor

Alyssa Currier
News Editor

Sarah Wedel
Jocelyn Van Dyke
Features Editors

Emilee Berry
Photo Editor

Lyric Morris
Kali Wolkow
Opinions Editors

Christine Williams
Emma Westerholm
Priyanka Fernandez
Copy Editors

Monday - Thursday
11:00 am - 10:00 pm
Friday & Saturday
11:00 am - 11:00 pm

1505 8th St. SE
712-737-3711

For advertising rates and submissions, email Advertising Manager Sara Van Gorp at sara.vangorp@nwciowa.edu.
**Sports**

**Cunard finds second sport in tennis**

*BY JORDAN DYKSTRA*

With only five athletes on the tennis squad at the beginning of the second semester, Coach Jeff Guthmiller needed to find a sixth member to join the team in order to fulfill roster requirements to compete in the NAIA.

With the season on the line, Guthmiller needed to search within the campus to find another athlete who possessed the skills required to play tennis at the collegiate level.

He found one in senior Mallory Cunard.

Cunard had played only basketball all four years at Northwestern. She finished her career as a four-year letter winner and three-time national champion. She excelled at shooting and hit 40 percent of her three-point attempts in her career.

She took a tennis activity class last fall that made an impression on men’s basketball head coach Kris Korver, who taught the class.

“(Korver) talked to Coach Guthmiller about me,” Cunard said. “Then Coach Guthmiller contacted me about the possibility of playing because of the needed numbers.”

With only three practices under her belt because of another long postseason run by the Raider basketball team, Cunard won her first ever collegiate match on March 23 against Martin Luther College.

In a 9-0 team win for the Raiders, Cunard picked up a 6-4, 6-3 singles victory as the No. 6 for NW.

“I was very intimidated with having such a short time to prepare,” Cunard said. “I really did not know what to expect, but I was happy with the results.”

Cunard, who had never played tennis competitively in her life outside of recreation in high school with her friends, proved to be a natural fit with the sport.

“Mallory is very athletic, and she moves very well. Those strengths really help in tennis,” Guthmiller said. “It’s not a sport learned overnight, but she is definitely picking up the game very quickly.”

Her doubts of being accepted as a true member of the team for being a late-season walk-on were thrown out the window as soon as she joined.

“I really appreciate their patience with me as a new player and their willingness to help me improve,” Cunard said. “They are an awesome group of girls who I have a lot of fun hanging around with.”

After she realized how much she enjoyed the sport, Cunard said she wishes that she could have joined the team earlier in her collegiate career.

“I love the game of tennis, and it would be even more enjoyable if I had done it my whole life,” Cunard said. “It really has been a good experience for me so far, and I am very thankful for the opportunity.”

Cunard currently has a 1-1 record this season and looks to continue to hone on her skills during the conference stretch of the schedule.

“It is very safe to say that with her work ethic, competitive nature and athleticism, she is improving every day,” Guthmiller said. “Mallory is a competitor, and she works really hard. She brings a level of intensity that any team would welcome.”

**NW softball sees increased action**

*BY ISAIAH TAYLOR*

The Northwestern women’s softball season has picked up its intensity. The Red Raider women played seven games in five days over Easter break and tallied a record of three wins and four losses in that stretch.

On March 28, NW faced off against Bellevue and lost the first match 7-0. The game was scoreless through five innings until the Raiders gave up seven runs in the bottom of the sixth, which ultimately sealed the game.

In the second matchup of the day, the Raiders lost a closer contest against Bellevue 2-1.

“Defensively, we want to be very sound,” said head coach Chris Nachtigall. “We want to be there mentally all the time. We want to be rock solid and not crumble under tough circumstances. Defensively, we’ve seen flashes of it, but we haven’t been consistent in that.”

The next day, NW went to Sioux City to play in the Morningside Invite. The first game of the day was played against Valley City State, which the Raiders won 7-1. The game was fairly close as NW went ahead 2-0 after the fifth inning. They scored five runs in the seventh, which closed the game.

The second game was against Dickinson State, which the Raiders lost 6-0.

**Stuerman throws shutout as Raiders start 3-1 in GPAC**

*BY KORAY KARAKAS*

Northwestern’s baseball team ended the GPAC opening weekend with a 3-1 record after facing Mount Marty and Briar Cliff last weekend.

Unplayable field conditions in Orange City forced the Red Raiders to open the GPAC series as the home side at Riverside Park in Yankton, S.D.

The Raiders fell to Mount Marty in the opening game of the series 6-4. After a slow start, NW forced its way back into the game after being down 4-0 in the seventh to tie the game at 4-4. However, two runs from Mount Marty in the extra eighth inning were enough to seal the win.

In the second game of the series, the Raiders once again came from behind in the seventh to tie the game, but this time NW got the win in the eighth inning.

A slow start by NW allowed Mount Marty to open the scoring, by picking up two runs in the third inning with the aid of three walks. With one out in the seventh, senior pitcher Taylor Morris singled to ignite the Raiders’ comeback. After a Raider strikeout, junior centerfielder Micah Linn singled home Morris to cut the Lancers’ lead to 2-1. After sophomore catcher Tony Schultz was hit by a pitch to push Linn into scoring position, junior second baseman Erik Widener singled Linn home to tie the game at 2-2.

Senior shortstop Corey Van Gorp led off with a single in the eighth and advanced on a sacrifice to second by junior first baseman Codi Groskreutz. With two outs, sophomore leftfielder Mitch Peschon singled home Van Gorp to win the game for the Raiders.

Junior relief pitcher Matt Plocos picked up the win after he retired all seven batters he faced.

The Red Raiders picked up a GPAC sweep in Sioux City on Saturday after defeating the Briar Cliff Chargers 2-0 and 4-2.

In the first game of the series, starting pitcher junior Tyler Stuerman dominated the Chargers by surrendering just one hit. The blooper came in the sixth inning that broke up the no-hitter. Stuerman walked one and struck out three in what was the first complete game shutout of his career.

Two runs by the Raider offense proved to be enough to support Stuerman. Both runs came from a single in the third by junior rightfielder Davis Bloemendaal. Linn had three hits.

The Raiders started the scoring in the second game after a lead-off double by Bloemendaal in the second inning. Bloemendaal progressed to third and scored on a wild throw by a first baseman attempting to retire Bloemendaal at third. The Chargers tied the game in the third inning.

NW took the lead in the fifth to take the score to 2-1 through senior Noah Bohlmann’s triple with one out and a Schultz sac fly.

The Raiders added two more runs in the sixth after a Groskreutz single, a fly-out, a Morris single, a Charger error that scored Groskreutz and a sac fly by Bohlmann.

Freshman starting pitcher Isaac Horigan picked up his first collegiate win with a solid performance by throwing five innings and allowing three hits, one run, one walk and two strikeouts.

The Raiders started the weekend slowly but were able to find their rhythm at just the right time.

“Our pitching staff kept us in the game. We finally started hitting toward the end of the second Mount Marty game,” Horigan said. “We have a lot of great hitters; it was just about trying to get more than two or three of them to hit consistently.”

The Raiders moved to 12-12 overall and 3-1 in the GPAC and will open GPAC play at home tonight against Doane and Hastings on Saturday.
Honors program to be revamped

BY KALI WOLKOW

Improvements have been proposed to transform the Honors Program from a vague conglomeration of academies into a community of top Northwestern students who can work alongside one another to go beyond the expectations of NW.

The current program is loosely framed by three basic components:

- Honors seminars: team-taught courses in which topics vary according to semester.
- Honors Research: a substantial research project of 2-4 credits completed under the direction of a faculty advisor.
- Extra-curricular activities: a banquet, a picnic and graduate school-related opportunities.

Several problems, particularly with the honors seminars, exist within this program setup.

- Seminar topics change each semester to create variety but fail to reach the diverse interests of those in the program.
- Students are not sure how to find out about them.

On the other hand, because seminar class sizes are so small, underclassmen have a difficult time with enrollment. By the time members are finally able to register (typically as upperclassmen), their interests lie more in meeting their honors requirements than in the seminar topics themselves.

However, program directors Elizabeth Truesdell and John Vonder Bruegge are seeking to correct this with the new program changes.

In the new program, general education courses will have honors sections set aside for program members. A structured schedule will guide Honors Program students through the program and gradually prepare them for their honors research and final senior seminar as well as offer honors students exclusive travel opportunities throughout their college experience.

By implementing the suggested changes, Truesdell and Vonder Bruegge hope to give the program the structure and definition it has been lacking.

“(The current Honors Program) is vague just because of the poor nature of this program’s design,” Truesdell said.

According to Truesdell, the changes that will be implemented in the new program were the product of collaborated ideas and inventory of resources available and resources lacking.

One lacking resource is a large budget.

“Our budget is lousy,” said Dr. John Vonder Bruegge, Honors Program co-director. “The pay professors are given is very small. It’s not exactly a big incentive to put a seminar on top of their load. The faculty is doing it as an extra, so there’s a tendency to treat it as an extra.”

This situation presents a challenge.

“Trying to find professors to teach honors seminars is just ridiculous,” Truesdell said. “It’s like pulling teeth. And I don’t blame these people for not wanting to teach them, because they don’t get paid hardly anything. It’s like ‘Oh yeah, I’ll work extra for, uh, nothing.'”

The budget will still leave something to be desired, but the new program will eliminate some of these difficulties because honors coursework will work with — and not on top of — the professors’ normal teaching schedule.

By becoming part of the everyday curriculum, the Honors Program will be designed to express the ideals of NW’s mission statement: promoting “courageous and faithful learning.”

NW tuition increases by nearly five percent

BY JONATHAN DE REUS

The rising cost of college tuition is something many students worry about.

With tuition consistently increasing, some students question whether they can afford a quality college education.

Many at Northwestern want to know why tuition continues to increase year after year and whether the school is doing anything to keep prices as low as possible.

“I’m not a big fan of how much it costs to go to college, especially a private college,” junior Josh Hollinger said. “But it’s a systemic problem resulting from the government subsidizing higher education. I don’t know the ins and outs of NW’s finances, but I would bet there’s no easy way to avoid tuition increases.”

According to a survey of 445 colleges conducted by The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, tuition rose 3.9 percent for the 2012-13 academic year. This was the lowest increase in tuition in at least 40 years. In comparison, NW’s tuition increased 4.5 percent for the same year.

The report also said institutional student-aid budgets at private colleges increased approximately 6.2 percent for the 2012-13 year.

Northwestern provost Jasper Lesage reminded students to keep things in perspective when examining tuition rates.

“People look at the posted tuition rate, and they forget about the fact that we also do a lot of scholarships,” Lesage said. “We’re actually giving first-year students an average of over 30 percent of their tuition back in scholarships and grants. So what we have to work with is actually half of what we say tuition is.”

Lesage also said students are in an environment in which every school offers discounts.

“Our tuition could be half of what it is, but if we do that, and no other college does, the academically gifted students are going to go to the other schools,” he said.

In other words, if NW discontinued its scholarship programs and gave everyone a base tuition rate, there would be no competition among students. Students with exceptional abilities or athletic capabilities would not have as much of an incentive to choose NW because they would receive the same financial aid packages as students with weaker abilities.

Similarly, students do not necessarily want to attend the cheapest school they find because they might believe they’re attending a second-rate school. If NW raises its tuition price, students are more likely to believe the school offers a higher-value education.

When compared with nearby colleges such as Dordt College, Morningside College and Buena Vista University, NW has similar overall costs. When taking each college’s financial aid programs into consideration, the schools’ tuition rates grow even closer in price.

“From a business perspective, tuition seems to be a fair price,” junior Chris Meyers said.

Some students question whether NW’s recent construction projects contributed to the increase in tuition.

The Learning Commons cost $14 million, the North Suites cost $3.5 million, and the renovation to the four-court area in the fitness center cost $1.5 million.

Northwestern also plans to renovate the mini gym for an undisclosed amount.

Lesage wanted to assure students that the rate at which tuition increases has nothing to do with what NW chooses to build or purchase.

The Learning Commons received 100 percent of its funding from donations.

“The money for the mini gym was money that the board (of trustees) made available from accumulated savings, and we received some significant gifts,” Lesage said. “It’s not coming out of the tuition money that students pay.”

Ultimately, students can remember there’s a lot more to consider than base tuition costs when examining the overall cost of attending a private college.