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decreased substantially over the last several years. Congresswoman Schroeder's study, I believe, indicated that the average across the country was around six hours, six hours of classroom instruction per semester and per week. And I think that's just not adequate classroom time given to our students. And, obviously, the problem is acute with the first two years of instruction, when freshmen and sophomores are being taught primarily by graduate assistants. All of these problems seem to come together under the...and we need to look at the subject in greater depth next year, and that's why it's too big a subject to take up now. But it is a serious concern of mine. And it's not simply a UNO problem, it's a problem that exists at UNL and at UNK as well. One of the...there are a couple other issues that are part of this issue. One is the admissions requirements, and that may have some impact on classroom size and on how in the system. So I'm sure we will hear more about that in January. Also the transfer of credits from community colleges is another issue that could impact the class sizes throughout the system. But I know at UNO we're dealing with a student population of 17,000, approximately 17,000 students. The old classic differentiation between class...between traditional and nontraditional students has somewhat evaporated, and even though the...there are approximately 8,500 full-time students at UNO, it's sort of hard anymore to differentiate those 8,500 students from the other 8,500 students that are classified as nontraditional. So things are changing in the university. Research is clearly important to our university in the long run, but our primary mission must be, it seems to me, to educate the children and the young adults who are attending our university...colleges and universities, and that was the reason for my amendment. I intend to withdraw it, b t I see Senator Moore's light on, his light is on and I know he may want to speak on this, so I will withdraw it after he speaks or after some other senators have an opportunity to speak. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I do appreciate Senator Ashford has expressed and consistently concerned about the budget cut impacts on the university. And I think some discussion of that is in order. Whether the research issue is one that we pursue, or whether the Curtis issue is another one we pursue, I think the ultimate question is, what are the impacts of the cuts on the university system? And that's appropriate and important. And I would have liked to