

Instructors consider evaluations useful

By Gene Gentrup
Daily Nebraskan Senior Reporter

Although the significance of course evaluations may be questioned and sometimes disregarded by UNL students, at least five university instructors said they think the evaluations are valuable.

Toni Santmire, chairman of the educational psychology department in the Teachers College, said all evaluations in that department are compared with other evaluations from over a three-year period.

"I look at those areas that seem to be consistent in student views over that period. Usually it's a matter of reassigning an instructor to teach a different course," Santmire said.

Santmire said she doesn't look at the course evaluations until May, when all faculty must be reviewed.

Frederick Link, chairman of the English department, said course evaluations are only one of three things his department uses to determine the effectiveness of an instructor.

"We look at the evaluation and the syllabus the instructor puts together as well as the instructor's self-evaluation. You just can't make a fine distinction or ranking of an instructor from a course evaluation alone," he said.

College of Architecture Professor and Chairman Ernest Moore, said some instructors in his department give evaluations at mid-term so that they can apply stu-

dent ideas for the rest of the semester. He said evaluations are based on what students think about the instructor, the textbook and class assignments. Link said about one-third of all students complete the evaluations "adequately."

Delivee Wright, director of the Teaching and Learning Center, said the center "scored" about 60,000 evaluations last semester. She said the center uses a computer processing service for instructors who wish to tabulate evaluation results. About 52 departments used the service last semester.

Santmire said she likes the idea of course evaluations, but said objective questions are "useless."

"Objective questions tend to lean toward the positive end," she said. "They can be useful, but only if they indicate a negative side of an instructor, which is when I know there is something definitely wrong."

English Professor Stephen Hilliard, an associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, said he favors computerized evaluations because "they're easy to read." He said written answers are more accurate though and said a comment sheet should be included.

Beth Franz, secretary specialist to the dean of agriculture, said the agriculture college is using a standard evaluation form for all agriculture classes. She said it is the first time the college will use the form, called a "common course form."

Students offered tips for finals preparation

By Colleen Kenney
Daily Nebraskan Staff Reporter

Selectivity is the key word to remember this week and finals week, said Carol Lotven, coordinator of UNL's Educational Learning Center.

"This is the time to sacrifice a little recreation for good grades," she said.

Lotven lectured on study techniques at a "Preparing for Finals" workshop.

"Preparation for finals begins the first day of class," Lotven said. She said many UNL students face stress because they have not put the semester's notes and their free time in the proper perspective. This leads to intense pressure, she said.

"The student takes his anxieties into the class then, and freezes up on the finals," she said.

Lotven recommends the use of a summary sheet, which condenses a course to its main points.

"It's asking too much to memorize every little detail," she said. "But you could learn 10 pages couldn't you?"

Such a summary would allow a review of the semester's notes, categorize the information and give the students "a feeling of mastery," she said.

Students should write out a schedule for finals week, plan-

ning in detail the subject that will be studied. One subject should not be studied for more than two hours at a time, she said, because it will not be retained as well.

"Your eyes might be working but your mind won't be," she said.

When a student is totally unprepared and cramming is the only solution, Lotven said, intense concentration should be aimed at chapter summaries, bold faced or vocabulary words, and the course's main objectives.

"But tell yourself that this will never happen again," Lotven said. Lotven gave these other hints for finals preparation:

- Find out what kind of test is to be given. If it's essay, write out answers to possible questions. For multiple choice or true-false tests, study details and learn the facts in reverse.
- Make flash cards with terms on one side and definitions on the other. Go through the cards both ways.
- Look over the syllabus and think about the course's goals.
- Use mnemonic devices such as rhymes or word associations.
- Get together with other students from your class to study.
- Review old tests, quizzes and handouts.
- Don't skip class, meals or sleep.

Student Watch...

Continued from Page 1

The watch program was partly responsible for the decrease in crime, Decoster said, but other factors also helped. Some of these include increased outdoor lighting, closed-circuit television in the library — where some sexual assaults occurred — and a university committee formed to look into campus crime.

UNL Police Chief Gale Gade,

however, said the watch program's effectiveness could not be measured because it was in operation for only one year.

If the watch program starts again, it will not be able to patrol the campus like it previously did, Wozny said. Patrolling takes too much time and manpower, he said. A new watch group could, however, provide a nighttime escort service.

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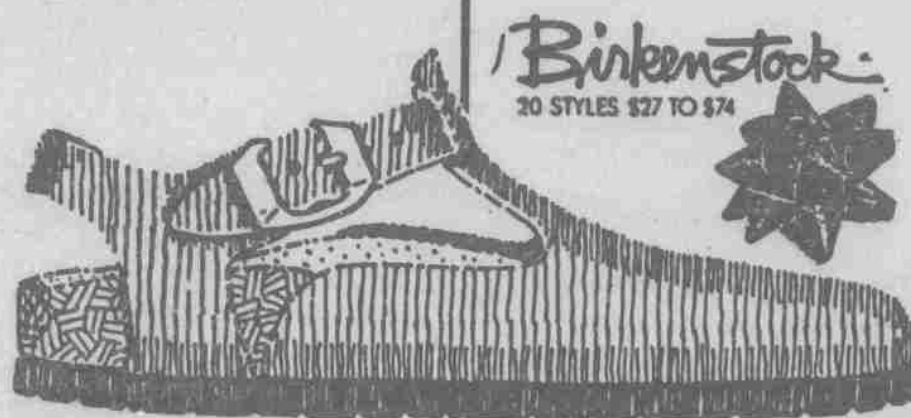
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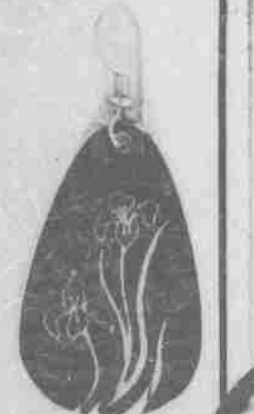
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