

# Departing faculty critique their world

**Jim Davis**

by John Dvorak  
Nebraska Staff Writer

Academic prestige goes to the professor who gets into a corner and teaches a very few of the very best graduate students. The lowest professor on the scale is involved with the most students; he is the one who teaches the introductory courses.

"This is my major complaint with the role of the faculty," continued Jim Davis, assistant professor of journalism. "Some people are more concerned about academic prestige than with really helping students." The classroom is only a minor part of a teacher's role, Davis continued. A professor should have more social contact with the students.

"THIS IS a touchy area. Where is the line drawn?" he asked. "It's hard to be close friends with someone and then have to flunk them in class."

It is a painful thing, he said. But it is the price you have to pay.

One of the primary reasons that Davis is teaching is that he enjoys the give and take with students. Students are much more alive, much more concerned and much more attuned to the times than any other group, he said.

"It is a stimulating thing to be involved with students," he said. "But it also causes some concerns. I'm concerned about the treatment students are getting at the University. I would like to see some basic changes made."

TO BEGIN WITH, the faculty should come down out of the sky and get to the nitty gritty, Davis said. The faculty should help students find jobs.



Jim Davis

## Football tickets now on sale

Full-time students now on the campus will be permitted to purchase student football tickets from May 12 through May 16 at the Coliseum, according to Jim Pittenger, ticket manager.

The price of the tickets is \$12.25 for six home games next fall. The Coliseum ticket office will be open from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. each day.

Students not purchasing tickets during this week may purchase them in the fall when the new students do.



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"If we are really concerned about students then we ought to realize that four years is only a minor part of the educational process. What a student does after he leaves the campus is more important than what he did on campus," he said.

The faculty is just not concerned about a lot of things, he said. This apathy is an interchangeable thing. Students don't care because the faculty doesn't care and vice-versa.

"THERE IS some room for creativity here," he went on. "There is by no means a repressive atmosphere around this University."

The assistant professor compared the atmosphere at NU with the atmosphere at the University of Iowa, where he earned his masters degree. The general size of the Iowa school equals NU. Both schools draw students from the same general areas.

"There is a far different atmosphere at Iowa City," Davis began. "It is hard to describe. It is a culturally aware atmosphere. There is not a good reason why it is there and not here."

"IN COMPARISON to Iowa U. Davis is disappointed in the University of Nebraska. There should be a more active role on everyone's part at NU, he said.

No overt pressure is threatening potential academic freedom, Davis said.

"I could have felt it," he said. "I've been in that position. Academic freedom is not nearly what it could be, however."

There are subtle press forces within the state, he stated. The legislature, mainly, and the governor on occasion.

"THESE PEOPLE do not have the foggiest notion what a academic freedom is all about," Davis stressed. "There have been threats to close NU down. Nothing is done on campus to counter them. They are expected. These threats ought to be intolerable. A howl ought to be set up. There is no good reason to be intimidated."

Sure, the legislature appropriates money to run this University, Davis admitted. The people who threaten to shut the institution down are the very people who benefit from it, he said.

"Where do the graduates go?" he demanded. "Do they go to the ghettos or to industry? This state can't function without graduates of the University."

Perhaps it is the students that have the primary obligation to create change, Davis suggested. And some very basic changes must be made in all schools and particularly the University of Nebraska.

"ANYBODY WITH any sense can look around the country and see what is happening," Davis said. Students, particularly black students, are making some basic demands. After a great deal of trouble, college administration concede to some of the demands.

Universities shouldn't wait for threats, Davis said. They should look around and see what is happening at other places. Then they take the initiative to correct problems before demonstrations erupt.

continued on page 9

**Lenore Buford**

"I think students frequently forget that we faculty members are former students. As a result, a Berlin wall is often built between students and teachers where in reality it doesn't exist at all," said Lenore Buford assistant-professor of romance languages.

There should be more exchanges of ideas between students and teachers, she said. If the student has any ideas, he shouldn't keep them to himself.

"Now I love teaching," she said. "I can't imagine myself doing anything else. I like the contact with young Americans."

A lot of teachers at NU work very hard, but there are some stinkers among the faculty, too, she added.

"I can't understand how students put up with mediocre teachers in absolute silence," she said. "The University should have some kind of official mechanism for student evaluation of teachers."

MISS BUFORD remembered how one freshmen girl who took a class on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The teacher didn't like to meet on weekends, so the class met only two days weekly. The student made no effort to change the situation.

"I was aghast," Miss Buford said. "This girl was perfectly content to miss out on one third of a course she was paying for and desperately needed."

Now this is not a big problem, but it shouldn't go on at all, Miss Buford said. It is tragic when students are satisfied with something like this.

Does the student have a right to question teaching?

"ABSOLUTELY," emphasized Miss Buford. "The student is paying for it, isn't he? Or his parents are paying for it."

Miss Buford also acknowledged that too many graduate students are teaching. It is a rare university now days that doesn't employ many grad students to teach. There simply are not enough qualified regular teachers.

"Some of these graduate students do a magnificent job," she commented. "If we didn't have them, a lot of courses just wouldn't be covered. In French, about one half of the classes are taught by graduate students."

The role of any University teacher stretches far outside the classroom, according to Miss Buford.

EVERY UNIVERSITY in the country is going through an agonizing self-scrutiny now, Miss Buford said. The schools are being forced to rethink the functions of a university. The old answers won't do any more.

The potential of NU, as well as other universities, is fantastic, she said. The thing of greatest importance in a university should be the encouraging of intellectual curiosity. If that axiom is continued, the very foundation of the university will be preserved.

"I wish I knew more of the new answers," Miss Buford said. "But one of the major functions of a school must be able to make a framework where students and faculty can decide what values are significant to them."

It is said that so many schools and people think that humanities have no

place in the modern curriculum, she said. The humanities have never been needed more.

"IF THE university experience can help students really find humanism in a way that will shape values, then the university is fulfilling its most important and fundamental role."

In regards to the specific role of NU, Miss Buford could only hedge. "This is a large school and I don't know what's going on in other parts of it. Problems are more critical in one area than in another."

Continued on page 10

**Richard Woodard**

The faculty and administration are insecure in their role at the University, according to Richard Woodard, assistant professor of law. They remain powerful only because the students are transient.

"By the time the students realize what has to be done and how to do it, they either leave school or graduate," Woodard pointed out. "They come and go."

"If the students would just realize how powerful they are," the law professor continued. "They have as much power as they want, but they don't know it."

The attitude of people and students at the University of Nebraska is sheltered, he charged. People are often not receptive to new things. But then, that's part of the job of a teacher — to open minds.

Woodard, a graduate of George Washington University and Catholic University said he likes some things at NU and dislikes other things.

"I don't like the institutional attitude here," he said. "Certain patterns get set up in education. The school is being run by those who want to continue the patterns. In many areas, these patterns are no longer applicable."

Today, most law students spend their time on commercial law. A lawyer should do a lot more. He should be involved in civil rights and examining the role of the United States in the world, Woodard said.

Students in colleges today are continually boxed into a schedule. They wonder what they are going to do. They worry about grades.

"We are just serving patterns," he said. "A lot of them are nothing but petty stuff that means nothing."

"The University of Nebraska is just a little bit horse blinded," he charged. "NU is a little bit behind the times."

Teachers should try to bring about new patterns, he feels. "I urge that any ideas be discussed in my classes," Woodard said. "No matter how old, how new or how revolutionary they may be."

Continued on page 9



Lenore Buford



Richard Woodard

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