

English special topics courses probe behavior, police, lyrics

By Mary Shackelton

Ever wonder why you have those terrible nightmares, or what your favorite rock lyrics really mean? Or maybe what the folklore of the Northern Plains Indians is?

Answers to these questions currently are being explored in the English Dept.'s 398 Special Topics courses.

Les Whipp, an associate professor who teaches one of the courses, said he thought of the idea for a special topics class in imaginative behavior two or three months ago.

Student interest in the class is "enormous," Whipp said.

"In every class there's been the feeling that we're going to get an English course that deals with us."

"17th century literature doesn't sell too well," he said.

According to Whipp, high student interest in a class which deals with the non-literary significance of dreams, jokes, games, body language and other such activities, results from the "self-definition" problems 18 to 21-year-olds face. A university should help individuals know themselves better, he said.

"It isn't inherent in the study of English that it has to be irrelevant," Whipp said.

Other instructors also said they have similar success with special topic courses.

Bob Pierce, Policeman as Fictional Hero instructor, said student interest in the course is great and that his students are very responsive.

The course is open to all students, as are all special topics classes, but is designed especially for students in criminal justice, corrections and related areas.

In one class, there are 14 members from the Lincoln Police Dept., three state patrolmen, two Campus Security officers, two student security employes, one U.S. marshal and two ambulance drivers, Pierce said.

Roger Welsch, an assistant professor who is teaching Introduction to Folklore and Folklife said class enrollment and interest are magnificent. The class is filled to capacity and will be offered again next fall, he said.

Rock Lyrics, taught by assistant Professor

David Hibler, is one of the oldest special topics courses. It's been taught for three years.

Although Hibler said rock lyrics is a difficult course to approach because of its somewhat anti-intellectual flavor, he said he has great expectations this semester.

"Rock is one of the significant influences in society right now, and it needs more attention from universities than it's getting," he said.

Cinema well may be an offshoot of conventional literature and drama, and rock may be the poetry of the contemporary culture, Hibler said.

The time may come when studies such as rock lyrics and other special topic courses will be in a Popular Culture Dept., he said.

David Hilliard, associate English professor teaching Critical Approaches, said the special topics courses "reflect a changing definition of English."

The courses are an outgrowth of the 1969-70 UNL student strike, he said.

"The new courses reflect a change in society. Their new approaches and new subject matter are especially useful to us," he said.

Tony Williams, an elementary education major and rock lyrics student, is enthused about the special topics course he's taking.

"I think it's going to be great. It's so informal, much better and more together than any other English class I've had."

Both faculty members and students can organize special topics courses in the English Dept. The special topics idea originated when the English Committee for Curriculum Reform created a course numbering system that had open slots to allow new courses. Because of the new curriculum's flexibility, English majors now can determine their own curriculum in English.

Other special topics courses include Sex Roles in Literature, taught by Louis Crompton; History of the American Film, taught by Edward Longacre, and Criticism of Children's Literature, taught by Gene Hardy. One course, the Literature of Religion, was dropped because of insufficient enrollment.

Crossword puzzle

ACROSS

1. Indian coarse meal
5. Remain
9. Steal
12. Winglike
13. Preposition
14. — Le-Gallienne
15. City in Kentucky
17. Obtain
18. Disorder
19. Trips
21. Biblical leader
24. Medication
25. Romanian city
26. Criterion
30. Male name
31. Excite
32. Digit
33. Cases for holding lights
35. Body of laws
36. Spar

DOWN

1. Girl of song (colloq.)
2. P.b. specialty
3. Male nickname
4. Prepared
5. Perukes
6. Insects
7. Japanese name
8. Kind of annuity
9. Governor
10. Above

DOWN

11. Clubs
16. Gist (colloq.)
29. Aged
21. Summon
22. Region
23. Machine of suburbs
24. Fail to bid
26. Classify
27. Large cask
28. Was conveyed
29. Exploit
31. Set aside
34. Sunburn
35. Picked
37. Hint
38. Strike
39. Grotto
40. Fail of the mark
41. Poker stake
44. Possesses
45. Constellation
46. Insect egg
47. Scottish river

Average time of solution: 23 min.



Answer to last puzzle

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13					14	
15				16					17	
			18				19	20		
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25					26	27			28	29
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51				52				53		

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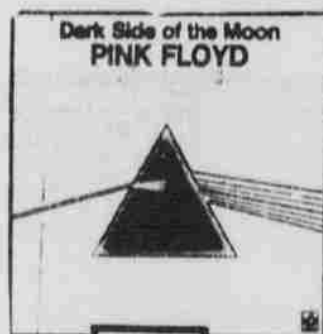
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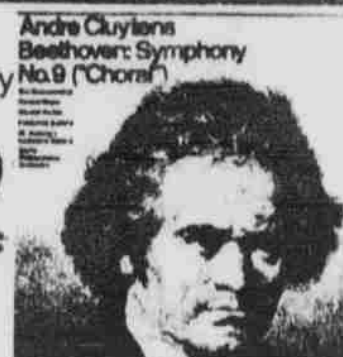
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