

Australian visitor compares his country to America

By Martha Murdock

As in the United States, the first Tuesday in November is an important day in Australia. But their contest is not a political one. Rather, it is a horse race, the Melbourne Cup, that they are concerned with.

"It stops the whole country," said visiting Professor Robert Irwin, "Everyone is watching it on television or listening to the radio."

America and Australia are alike in many other respects, Irwin said, culturally as well as in his special study area.

He is studying adolescent use of addictive substances and he said drug abuse in the United States is similar to that in Australia.

"The same sorts of substances are used," he said. "Alcohol is the main drug used by far in both countries. Tobacco is the next most abused substance."

Methods don't work

Drug prevention methods in Australia are very like those used in the United States.

ASUN credit union off to a slow start

By Shelley Smith

A lack of publicity is causing the ASUN Credit Union, established in August, to move a little more slowly than expected, according to one of its volunteers.

The credit union was designed as a means for students, faculty, staff, alumni, regents and university organizations to easily obtain small, lower interest loans.

However, John Kreuscher, one of the credit union's organizers, said people aren't aware of the benefits the credit union provides.

To join the credit union, he said, a person deposits \$5 into an account and is charged 25 cents for services.

Members are then eligible to apply for loans up to \$500. Savings account deposits receive a higher interest rate than is offered at most banks downtown, according to Kreuscher.

He said about \$25,000 has been deposited, but that originally he had expected it to be \$100,000.

He said the credit union is still striving to obtain the extra \$75,000 to meet its goal, and is planning to appeal to student organizations.

He said that right now two of the largest depositors are Greek houses.

"They realized the interest paid on their deposit is higher than it would be in a regular bank. They also realized that they would be helping out a lot of students and staff," he said.

The credit union has about 40 members, and Kreuscher said he felt that people were being very cautious about depositing into the new organization.

"I'm a little surprised at their caution because we are insured by the federal government up to \$40,000," he said.

The insurance will cover the depositor in the credit union if it should fold either voluntarily or involuntarily, he said.

He said about \$2,400 has been loaned and \$400 has been repaid.

People who are granted loans have the option to repay the loan either at the end of the school year or in 12 months, he added.

He said a lot of loans have been denied because some people don't have the ability to repay.

"The ability to repay is if he has some sort of income, usually a part time job," and debits don't exceed the income, he said.

"Just as here, most methods don't work," Irwin said. Irwin, from Canberra, the capital of Australia, is visiting the UNL Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation until November 19.

Irwin, who teaches at the Canberra College of Advanced Education, has been a guest lecturer in numerous UNL classes, working in the health department's masters program as well as in several undergraduate courses.

"We're swapping information," said Irwin, "Not only am I helping out here, but I'm also looking at UNL surveys on drug use to find methods of drug intervention we might try in Australia."

Irwin is on a study leave from his university. Before coming to UNL in mid-October, he visited the University of Illinois, where he did doctoral work during a previous stay in the United States.

Research project

His next stop will be England where he will work on a research project gathering information on curriculum development. He is especially interested in smoking education and adolescent drug intervention.

Irwin is on an expert panel of the World Health Organization of the United Nations.

"The organization looks after international treaties on drug importation and immunization. One of its achievements is the elimination of smallpox," said Irwin.

Creation of international agreements on drug practices and procedures is a main job of the organization. Irwin is one of 150 members on the expert panel which works on

Schools' teaching methods are examined by the UNL Office of Academic Affairs

By Martha Murdock

Four Nebraska schools, UNL, UNO, Chadron State, and Kearney State, are taking a survey examining teaching methods and their uses, according to Dr. Eugene Trani, UNL assistant to the vice-president for academic affairs.

"We are interested in teaching procedures and if students are being exposed to different methods," Trani said.

Trani, who is the project's director, explained, "There is literature out on the use of instructional methods comparing the percentages of the uses of different procedures. We want to see how Nebraska statistics compare."

Surveys have been distributed through classes to 10 percent of the students on each campus. A cross section of classes were chosen at random.

"We tried to send surveys to beginning and senior classes," Trani said. "so that we'd get a good sample

of age groups and interests."

The computerized surveys ask students what modes of instruction they have encountered at college and what methods they believe should ideally be used. Questions also concern grading procedures. Students are asked if they have been satisfied with the learning situations they have participated in. Lecture, discussion, laboratory, field trips, guest speakers, independent study, audio-visual aids, simulation games and self-paced programs are some of the methods touched on by the survey.

Faculty members

Surveys were sent to all faculty members at the schools. Faculty members are asked what instructional methods they use most often, according to Trani. Both the student and faculty questionnaires were written by Dina Finkler of the UNO psychology department.

According to Ned Hedges, UNL vice chancellor for academic affairs, the survey will answer the question, "How widely are students exposed to various instructional procedures? Do students in different areas of study encounter certain practices more often than students in other disciplines? Which techniques would students like to see used more often? Which

drug identification, control, and treatment. The organization's headquarters are in Geneva, Switzerland.

Chance for research

Irwin said he sees little difference between students in Australia and in the United States. "The questions American students ask show that they seem to understand the material as well or better than students in Australia," he said.

"The faculty members do the same sort of work in Australia, but here there is more chance for research. Organizations here want a university to do research, but groups in Australia are smaller and have fewer funds. It has to do with our small population mainly."

Comparing his homeland with the United States, Irwin said, "around the world Australia is probably the country most like the United States."

Like Nebraska

"The biggest difference is that the two countries are about the same size but the United States has a larger population. You notice the big numbers of people here." He emphasized that Australia has its big cities, but that most of the country is sparsely populated. "Much like Nebraska," he remarked.

Because of its location, Australia's seasons are not at the same time of year as in America. "We have no pumpkins for Halloween, because in Australia it's spring in October."

Irwin believes that Americans and Australians are very similar in their hospitality. He said, "Americans may have more initiative in welcoming visitors. Australians still have more of the British reserve."

would they like to see used less often?"

Trani said, "We are looking forward to the results because there has been a lot of instructional innovation in the last few years."

"It will be interesting from a research point of view to see how much of it has been used on the UNL campus."

Keller Plan used

One of the new methods used at UNL is the Keller Plan that allows Psychology 171 students to work at their own pace.

The project is sponsored by the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

"We plan to make a report of our findings and share it with Ned Hedges and others who will probably pass it on to facul-

ty members," Trani said. "What will be done because of the results is up to the faculty."

"What the survey's ultimate effect will be, I don't know. There is no definite plan to form policy from it." A composite report for the four campuses will be sent to FIPSE.

"We're starting to get some surveys back now," Trani added. "I expect we'll have a report ready by the end of the first semester." He emphasized that the results will be available to students.

Universities in other areas of the country are not conducting similar surveys, according to Trani.

"The last one we know of was done 15 or 20 years ago in some Southern and Southeastern schools. We will be comparing our results with that survey."

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