

12 poetry students not contacted in investigation

By Rocky Strunk

All English 253A students interviewed by the Daily Nebraskan Monday said they were not contacted by the English Department in its investigation of an Aug. 29 incident concerning the two male students who were in the class.

Twelve of the 20-member "Women and Poetry" class, taught by Linnea Johnson, said they had not been contacted and were unaware of an investigation into the alleged exclusion of two males from the class. The investigation was conducted by John Robinson, chairman of the English Department, who presented a report Thursday to Max Larsen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

Although the report was confidential, Larsen said then that no formal vote was taken in the class and that the male students were not excluded.

When contacted Monday about why the poetry students hadn't been questioned during Robinson's investigation of the Aug. 29 incident, Larsen refused to comment because he said he had been misquoted in Friday's Daily Nebraskan. Robinson was unavailable for comment.

"There was no actual vote but a vote was suggested,"

said Kindra Foster, who has dropped the class. "The class was discussing whether to exclude the male students, and the teacher (Johnson) suggested that maybe a democratic vote would decide."

Ten other students in the class said no vote was taken. Another student maintained that there was a vote to exclude the men.

"She (Johnson) said the class could decide what they wanted to do, whether they did it democratically through a vote or whatever," the student said. She said she did not want to be identified because she still is in the class.

"There was a vote and I'm positive it was concerning the men being excluded," she continued.

Several students contacted denied voting on the men. They said there was a vote taken concerning whether the class would permit smoking.

"There were two votes and I remember the distinction because the vote on the men raised several hands, while the smoking vote received no hands," said the unidentified student. She added that several of the women had taken previous classes from Johnson and suggested that was why the discrepancy occurred.

When contacted earlier by the Daily Nebraskan, Johnson said that the decision to vote "arose out of the class." She did not specify whether the class actually carried out the vote.

Johnson said Monday there was no vote in the class and that she had been misquoted by the Daily Nebraskan. She said a prepared retraction would be presented to the student newspaper Wednesday.

Another student who wished to remain anonymous said, "I was really mad about it (the Aug. 29 incident) when I got home, but didn't say anything while in class." She added that she is graduating in December and doesn't want any problems.

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Due to a typographical error in Friday's Daily Nebraskan, Max Larsen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, was misquoted. The sentence should have read: "Larsen said no formal vote was called by the instructor." The word "no" was inadvertently omitted in production.

Police chief: potential fires spark department concern

By Randy Essex

Lincoln Police Chief Dean Leitner said Monday that his department "will make every effort to identify those involved in starting and feeding" any future illegal bonfires near the UNL campus.

Leitner said the department's first objective will be to prevent fires like the one held last Thursday at 15th and R streets. Failing that, he said, identification and arrest of those involved will become the department's main objective.

"We have to deal with what appears to be an escalating problem," he explained.

Last week, university officials met with representatives from the Lincoln Fire Department and city and UNL police to discuss a plan of action concerning mass disturbances. The group revised a policy of "containment" to a policy allowing the police to be more assertive in enforcing the law, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Richard Armstrong said.

Armstrong said the containment policy, in effect since March of 1978, called for

police to contain the disturbance to as small an area as possible and to end it as quickly as possible.

But, according to Armstrong, that policy was not working.

ARMSTRONG and David DeCoster, dean of students, cited bonfires before the Oklahoma game last year and in the spring when live turkeys were burned, as well as the bonfire before the Penn State-Nebraska football game. DeCoster said the most recent fire produced several dangerous situations, including throwing of shotgun shells and beer containers and several students jumping through the fire.

"When one of these things is over and nobody is hurt, we breathe a sigh of relief," DeCoster said.

Financial liability for any injury occurring at a bonfire could fall on the city, Armstrong suggested, because most of the illegal bonfires have been on city, rather than university property.

"Police have been criticized and commended for the same act," Armstrong said of the containment policy.

"There is no planned confrontation or mass arrest," he said of the new policy.

"The extent of confrontation would depend on the deterioration of the crowd situation," Leitner said. Circumstances, he said, will determine police action. He added that the Lincoln police do not issue night sticks.

LEITNER SAID increased use of plainclothes officers and the use of police photographers will aid in identification of those involved. Charges could be filed for arson, destruction of property and "a host of other violations," in connection with the fires, Leitner said.

University police Capt. Robert Edmunds said campus police will help city police with the policy. He said he hopes the plan to prevent the fires from getting started will work, eliminating the need for arrests.

"But somebody is going to get pushed into one of those fires sometime," he said. He added that he had heard an unconfirmed report that city police were able to prevent a fire after Saturday's New Mexico-

Nebraska football game by talking to students who were gathering materials for the fire.

All officials contacted said they hope students find other means to release their tension, or if bonfires are held that permits are obtained.

DeCoster and Armstrong said the incidents caused concern among citizens of the state as well as among students. Armstrong said one regent has expressed concern that constituents in the regent's district have had a negative reaction to publicity about the bonfires.

"We want to clean up our own act before somebody from outside the university asks that we do," he said, adding that he knew of no pull-out of support for the university because of the incidents.

"I'm sure it hasn't helped our image," DeCoster noted.

"We just wish students simply would not engage in such activities," Armstrong said. He said the idea of a bonfire is not opposed by officials, but rather the illegal starting of fires and the potential for injury and destruction of property is the concern.

Vice chancellor Hedges: job sometimes like umpire

By Shelley Smith

This is the third in a series of six profiles on top UNL and NU administrators.

Ned Hedges, vice chancellor for academic affairs, said sometimes he feels like an umpire.



Photo by MaryAnne Golon

Ned Hedges, vice chancellor for academic affairs.

"It's the last half of the ninth, the score is 2-2, there are two outs and the count is full. The batter doesn't swing on the pitch and I have to decide whether it was a ball or a strike," Hedges said.

"And I don't have the luxury of all the people in the stands telling me what to do," he added.

Hedges, who was a former assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs before coming the acting vice chancellor in 1977, said this was especially true during debate about an independent Journalism college.

"It was a close call. There were advantages and disadvantages but I was in support of a separation because I thought it would be in the best interests of the faculty, students and for the program itself."

Although the separation, which was approved unanimously by the NU Board of Regents last month, will mean extra work for Hedges, he said he felt program considerations should not be sacrificed to administrative convenience.

EXCLUDING THE DEANS from the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, all college deans and many directors report to Hedges and his two assistants. He meets with each dean weekly.

"There are a lot of ways to make things easier, but I am neither a czar or a king and I don't have the luxury of getting to make decisions without consultation," he said.

The decision making process at UNL is neither democratic or autocratic, Hedges said. He said the system UNL uses is inefficient, but not bad, because it thrives on communication between many levels of administration.

And it is the nature of the communication, Hedges said, that depresses him most about his job.

"I would like to spend more time with these people in creative enterprises and positive situations than with negative problems and pieces of paper."

Hedges explained that as an administrator, he must take care of the demands of students and faculty that are at UNL now rather than the new programs, and innovative issues he dealt with as a teacher.

HEDGES SAID, however, a little of his teaching background keeps tugging at him, and calls for him to return to the classroom.

Hedges received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Nebraska Wesleyan University in 1956. He received his master's degree from NU in 1961 and his doctorate degree also from NU in 1968. He taught English at UNL for 18 years before becoming acting vice chancellor.

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