

Foreign students bridge culture gap

By Margaret Maloney
Staff Reporter

Last semester, more than 1,000 students traveled from other countries to attend the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, giving students a chance to learn about other countries.

During the spring semester of 1987, international students represented 92 countries. Among them were 240 students from Malaysia, 83 from the Republic of Korea and 81 from China.

Judy Wendorff, foreign student adviser of International Educational Services, said international students come to UNL because their own countries do not have the facilities to educate them at this level.

Osman Suleiman, treasurer of the Malaysian Student Association, said most colleges in Malaysia teach liberal arts but do not offer many studies in technical fields.

Suleiman said most international students are here on government scholarships. Twenty percent of Malaysia's national budget is for education. To prepare for education in the United States, Malaysian students attend a six- to 12-month program to learn English. Although UNL does not recruit students from foreign countries, catalog information about UNL is available for them.

Soong-Hwan Chung, president of the Korean Student Association, said some students come to UNL to study under a nationally known professor. Chung said many Korean students come to UNL because it is more affordable. Chung also said he believes that the conservative Midwestern lifestyle is similar to Korea's.

Jorge Villar, a graduate student in agronomy from Argentina and president of the Latin American Student Association, came to UNL to study with an agriculture professor. Last semester, six students from Argentina attended UNL.

Villar said that on the average it's uncommon for Latin American students to attend school in the United States. Most undergraduates study in their own country. Villar said Latin

American students attending UNL are graduate students, and most of them study agronomy.

Suleiman, a senior architecture major, said he is happy with UNL. Although international students are here for an education, Suleiman said, they also need to interact with Americans and learn more about their culture.

However, most UNL and foreign students do not interact with each other unless they are in a special-interest program. Suleiman said he believes part of the reason may be Malaysian custom.

"It is part of our culture to be humble or shy," Suleiman said. "We treat someone as a guest. Usually we would not come up and talk to a stu-

parent or teachers. Suleiman recalled his first few months in Lincoln when he would not look into his professor's eyes and had to explain why when his teacher asked him what was wrong. It also surprised Suleiman when students would question the knowledge of their teacher.

Attending UNL has given Suleiman the opportunity to get to know Americans. He describes Americans as honest, open-minded and humorous.

"Americans have the ability to laugh at themselves," Suleiman said. "I wish Malaysians would not be so serious. When the Malaysian students study, they study right through, and even when they party, they party right through. But American students can

by learning to be patient.

"Americans are always rushing," he said. "They are very competitive. They need to slow down and be themselves."

Most international students don't slow down when it comes to their studies. Suleiman said he averages 17 credit hours per semester. His determination for good grades is just another part of his culture.

"There is much pressure from home for good grades. It is a part of the family name."

Suleiman said he wants to go home to Malaysia after graduation. Nationally, about 80 percent of international students return to their countries. Malaysia, an independent nation, is a member of the British Common-

years.

Although Suleiman has a positive attitude toward Americans, he would like to see American students understand other countries better.

"I would hope Americans have a better awareness of the world. Most American students just think of the U.S. They should learn more about other countries," he said.

Students can learn about other cultures through programs offered by international student organizations. Malaysian students organize Malaysian Night, featuring Malaysian food and displaying their culture and customs. International students also organize an International Banquet with food and customs from their home countries.

Rod Merta, program coordinator for International Educational Services, sets up programs to encourage interaction between American and foreign students.

The English Conversation Program matches American and foreign students who want to gain a better understanding of each other's culture and language. About 50 American students usually participate, but this year IES increased publicity for the program and already 45 Americans have signed up. Every year about 80 foreign students apply.

When students are matched, IES sends each student a packet of information on each person's culture. The students meet on their own to get to know each other. At the end of the year, IES asks participants for feedback.

"Some have a great time," Merta said. "Some just don't click. It's hard to quantify. But even five or 10 meetings is a good experience — or even those who meet once."

The International Student Athletic Committee also provides interaction among foreign students. Through Oct. 11, American and foreign students will compete in 13 different sports events, from basketball to table tennis. Last year 540 participants represented 13 international groups, one independent group and one American group.

English seldom heard on Raymond 2

By Darcie Weigert
Staff Reporter

Listening to speakers, watching films or attending dinner tables are common activities that occur on Raymond 2 in Neihardt Residence Hall, but with one difference: they don't occur in English.

Residents of Raymond 2, the Modern Language Floor, and anyone with an interest in a foreign language may attend activities or use the language lab facilities located there.

Spanish, German and French language assistants live on the Modern Language Floor. They help language students with their studies, run a language lab and provide weekly activities for students, said Kelly Anders, French language assistant.

In return for their time spent working on the floor, assistants

receive a free room in the residence hall.

The assistants agreed that learning a language shouldn't be a chore, but that active use of the language is a definite asset to learning.

"Language learning is a lot more than classroom work. It requires active work," said Chris Smith, director of the Modern Language Floor.

Residents of the language floor, Smith said, want to have activities where language is not a prerequisite but will possibly cultivate interest for other students, since the floor is not entirely made up of language majors.

"I would influence someone to live here because of the people," German language student Marian Aufdemberge said. "There is so much more that you can get out of this floor that just wouldn't exist in

other dorms."

The floor has 16 French-, 14 Spanish- and 18 German-speaking residents. Chinese, Japanese, Greek, Danish, Italian, Russian and African languages also are spoken.

"The people on the floor are a lot closer because of the common interest," said Wendy Winslow, a Chinese language student.

Smith said that through announcements and a weekly floor newsletter, the Modern Language Fair, the floor hopes to increase the number of language students.

Sonna Voss, German language assistant, said they just need time to improve activities and gain residents.

"Any foreign language requires practice and this floor offers students the chance to speak it," said Tim Erickson, a German language student.

dent unless we were addressed first." Respect for authority is also a part of Malaysian culture. In Malaysia children do not raise their eyes to their

study and then go party. They have a better balance."

Suleiman said he believes Americans could benefit from Malaysians

wealth. Because it is a developing country, Suleiman said he wants to help his people by teaching and working for the government for a couple of

Air traffic controlling

Women adapt to jobs in 'men's' field

By Chris Tipton
Staff Reporter

Two University of Nebraska-Lincoln students spend their time away from classes keeping Lincoln's skies safe for air travel.

Cecilia Burgman and Theresa Haecker work as air traffic controllers at the Lincoln Municipal Airport.

Burgman and Haecker became employed at the airport through the UNL's Internship/Co-operative Education Program. Burgman, 21, a senior meteorology major, works full-time at the airport. She said she became interested in air traffic controlling because she knew of another student who was involved in the program last year.

Burgman began working at the airport May 18 and will continue through the end of December. She works at the flight service station, where she prepares daily weather maps, takes flight plans and briefs the pilots on the weather. The flight service station also performs these duties for the Nebraska Air Guard, she said.

Next May, Burgman will go back to the airport to work in the tower. When she finishes her second 15 weeks, she will be offered a permanent job at the airport, she said.

Burgman said she had no previous air traffic controlling experience and learned everything at the airport. "Meteorology was a good background, though," she said.

Haecker, a senior math major with minors in computer science and geography, began working at the airport in June. Now she attends school full-time. Haecker, 21, works in the tower, where she has learned to identify aircraft, and issue clearances and hourly weather forecasts.

Haecker said she became interested in air traffic controlling after talking to Millie Katz, coordinator of the Internship and Cooperative Education Office.

Although air traffic controlling in the past has been predominantly a man's field, more women are becoming involved. Only one other female air traffic controller now works at the Lincoln airport besides Burgman. Being em-



Cecilia Burgman works at the radio desk in the Lincoln Municipal Airport's flight service station Friday.

ployed in a predominantly male field is an advantage, Burgman said.

"You are guaranteed a job because they have to hire a certain number of women," she said. "Also, all of the other controllers are really friendly. There was already a woman working here, so they're used to her."

Haecker agreed with Burgman's assessment.

"Although it's more or less a man's field, there are more women in it now. The other controllers accepted me really well because another female co-op student had worked there previously."

"I play softball with them," she added.

Air traffic controlling can be a highly stressful job. However, both women said they don't think their jobs include unbearable tension.

"I tend not to worry too much (about the responsibility) because if you really think about all of the people in the airplane, it just causes more stress," Haecker said. Also, the media

creates stress, because there is so much tension on the Federal Aviation Administration, she said.

"Besides, I think every job is stressful at times; it all depends on how well you adapt," Burgman agreed.

"Lincoln isn't that busy," she said. "It would be a lot more stressful in a larger airport like Chicago, for example."

As for the danger attached to air traffic controlling, Burgman said, "I haven't seen a crash yet."

Katz said students apply for the jobs through the internship and co-op program. They then must take an aptitude test and pass a physical examination.

Applicants are screened by the regional office of the Federal Aviation Administration. Students who are accepted into the program alternate between full study and full working periods of about 15 weeks.

Teachers must stress values, Griesen says

Increased interaction between students and profs essential

By Bob Nelson
Staff Reporter

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln needs to stress values in undergraduate classes, said James Griesen, UNL vice chancellor for student affairs.

Griesen, who spoke Monday in the East Union, said class sizes, testing methods and faculty detachment make students more likely to cheat or not take a sincere interest in a subject.

Cheating is rampant in many of UNL's large classes, Griesen said. He said he has heard students say they cheat because they need to "get by" since everyone else is cheating.

Undergraduate classes should be structured more like graduate classes, with more interaction between instructor and students, he said. The relationship between students and professors is more constructive in graduate courses, he said, because in smaller classes the professor is more in touch with the students.

Griesen praised the colleges of Journalism and Law for exemplifying the ideal relationship between students and professors in and out of the classroom.

Humanities courses are important, he said, because knowledge of the great written works of mankind is essential to good values and ethics.

Griesen cited a recent survey to prove the lack of humanities in today's schooling.

"The survey asked juniors in high school if they knew when the Civil War took place," he said. "Two-thirds of them couldn't place it within a half century of the actual date."

Griesen said he saw similar historical ignorance when he taught a University Foundations course at UNL.

Humanities courses need to be stressed at all levels of education, Griesen said, but he found it disheartening to see UNL students' ignorance of humanities.