

Students unprepared

New economics missing, ag expert says

By Dave Weber
Staff Reporter

Students today are ill-equipped to understand the complexities of globalized agricultural trade, said Edward Schuh, director of agriculture and rural development for the World Bank in Washington, D.C.

Schuh encouraged about 100 faculty, students, administrators and other citizens Wednesday afternoon to change the current curriculum direction to one more relevant to the needs of today's economic picture.

"I think we've wasted an inordinate amount of students' time and I don't know why they put up with it," Schuh said during a seminar in Plant

'Our students know precious little about the cultures in other parts of the world.'

--Schuh

Don Hutchens, assistant director of the Nebraska Corn Board, said UNL doesn't offer courses in global agriculture. After farming for 14 years, he recognized the importance of international agricultural trade and finance.

"The first thing you do is to look to see what the university offers in international trade and finance," Hutchens said. "I found nothing."

"What is important to me is that we look at the international sector and ask, 'How does the international trade policy affect the Nebraska producer?'" Hutchens said. He added that the university should take advantage of foreign students who understand the political and social environments of their country.

Azzeddine Azzam, assistant professor of agricultural economics, said, "Sometimes we're guilty of needing a quick solution to problems that require long-range research. Graduate students could be taken out of the university payroll and be paid by the commodity board money to provide those short-term answers to specific problems."

Schuh said, "Our students know precious little about the cultures in other parts of the world. Our citizenry is also economically illiterate. They don't understand that, with flexible

exchange rates, it is very difficult to dump domestic economic problems abroad."

He also cited a lack of understanding of Marxist thought and knowledge of U.S. history as weaknesses of land-grant colleges.

"Financial markets are driving the commodity markets, affecting the price of financial markets to affect exchange rates," he said.

Schuh said he's astonished that people in power understand the current economics system so poorly.

"How can we expect our citizenry to understand it?" he said.

This was the first in a series of four seminars designed to give members of the search committee for a new director of the agriculture economics department a better chance to understand their needs. The other seminars will be on Thursday afternoons in the East Union. Bill Miller, the previous department director, left in July.

The search for a replacement ends Dec. 18, and interviews will begin early next year, said Dr. Larry Bitney, professor of agricultural economics and chairman of the search committee.

"I think these seminars will help to find the direction that this department ought to be going," he said.

Science Hall on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln East Campus.

"We need to go back to the drawing board," Schuh said. "We don't need five courses in farm management."

Rapid changes in the international economy have resulted in a great knowledge gap, he said.

"When we loaned Brazil \$500 million, uninformed lobbyists raised their voices in protest, although we made \$4.3 million and that Brazil has traditionally provided very high subsidies to its farmers."

Schuh said he left the University of Minnesota three years ago for the World Bank.

The bank has provided \$19.5 billion in farm loans worldwide this year and has had an 87 percent return rate, he said. The World Bank is a branch of the Department of Agriculture, established after World War II to provide loans to eligible countries as well as a list of consultants available.

UNL has been represented in Morocco for the last four years because of Nebraskans' expertise in dry crop production.

David Keith, an extension entomologist, was chosen in July to live in Morocco because of his expertise with the Hessian fly, to replace the previous agricultural engineer there, said Doug Jose, a professor of agricultural economics.

Keep on cruisin'; Big finish coming for Homecoming

By Lee Rood
Staff Reporter

Activities for this year's Homecoming, "Cruisin' Through the Years," will continue with a parade and pep rally today and a party on the plaza Saturday.

The parade will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will march through downtown Lincoln. It will return to City Campus in time to start a pep rally in front of the Nebraska Union at 7:30 p.m.

KFRX will broadcast live from the pep rally. Featured guests include the UNL Marching Band, the Nebraska Yell Squad, some Nebraska football players and the Homecoming Royalty.

If it rains, the pep rally will be moved into the Nebraska Union, said Heidi Bergmeyer, Homecoming committee chairperson.

Saturday's "On the Plaza Pep Rally" will be emceed by John Bergmeyer, second vice president of ASUN. The Women's Chorale, Varsity Men's Glee Club, Yell Squad, Scarlet and Cream, and the winners of Wednesday night's talent show will perform. Royalty candidates will be introduced again.

The pep rally will begin at 10:30 a.m. and continue until noon.

Kick off for the Nebraska-Kansas State game is set for 1:30 p.m. The Homecoming king and queen will be announced at halftime.

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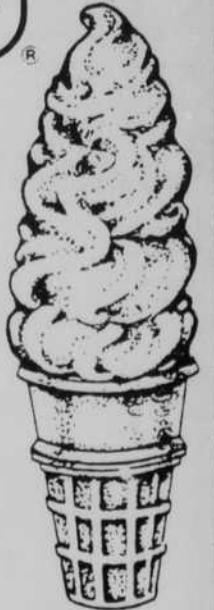
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