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Courses designed for changing world

By Stephanie Gustafson
Staff Reporter

Two new courses designed to update curriculum for a changing world will be offered by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln this year, said Stephen Hilliard, chairman for the general education steering committee.

"There is a tendency for students to see knowledge as a huge body," Hilliard said. "Knowledge is more dynamic than that and changes are needed."

Contemporary Math 203, which was taught experimentally last year, now is beyond the piloting stage, said Melvin Thornton, associate math professor. Thornton said the new course, which was designed for students with a minimal background in math, has been much more successful than he had thought it would be.

"I am most pleased by the reaction of students," Thornton said. "Students that are reluctant about math leave the course excited about math."

The modified math course uses very little algebra. It focuses mainly on reasoning and management and teaches students to apply math to everyday life, Thornton said.

UNL will offer three sections

of Math 203 this fall. Sophomores who had no math deficiencies in high school can take the course.

A new composition course being offered this fall will focus on the parallels between speaking and writing, said Jack Kay, chairman of speech communications.

The course, which is offered by the English and speech departments, will count as credit toward freshman composition.

Students enrolling in English classes will not know if they are in one of the 20 sections of the new composition course offered this semester, Hilliard said, because it will be listed among the other freshman composition courses.

He said the English department wants a random sampling of students in the new course instead of students who specifically select it.

The course is designed to last two semesters. One semester will focus on the student's own background and identities, and the other will focus on the community, ethics and judgments.

Robert Brooke, assistant professor of English and chairman of the communication task force, said work is being done to make the two courses stand on their own so they won't have to be taken in sequence.

The course still is in the pilot stage. Evaluations will be conducted to ensure that the teachers try to

improve and develop the course, Brooke said.

People observing the classes will take examples of student writings and interview selected students and teachers during the semester. The evaluators will be looking for a disparity between what the students are learning and what the teacher is trying to teach, Brooke said.

The course was designed by four departments: English, speech communications, agricultural communications and business education. Teachers will come primarily from the English and speech departments. Faculty members in agricultural communications will teach some sections.

Other new courses are being designed in history, Hilliard said, but math and communications are the only new courses being offered this semester.

Hilliard said he thinks students are too passive in learning. The new courses are designed to get students more involved by putting more emphasis on discussion and writing, he said.

Hilliard said he thinks the diversity of courses at the university causes students to lose direction.

"With these new courses there will still be a choice, but there will be more coherence," he said.

Number of students living in residence halls reaching all-time high, housing director says

By Diane Brayton
Staff Reporter

More students than ever before will be living in the residence halls at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said Doug Zatechka, UNL director of housing.

In the past the residence halls have been full, but for the first time in the past four or five years, they are "very, very close to absolute capacity," Zatechka said.

About 5,250 beds are now filled and contracts are still coming in, Zatechka said. Last year at this time, about 5,000 beds were filled, he added.

"We still have 10 to 20 contracts coming in every day," Zatechka said. The housing office also is receiving fewer cancellations than in the past, he added.

To cope with this, a number of students will be housed in temporary

triple rooms during the beginning of the semester, Zatechka said.

The housing office also will open Husker Hall, a student cooperative located at 23rd and U streets. The coop will offer single rooms. A kitchen also will be available, and students will have the option to purchase a food contract.

Zatechka cited low costs, a low crime rate, convenience and a wide variety of students as possible reasons why more students are choosing to live in residence halls.

"Our room-and-board rate is among the lowest in the Big Eight," Zatechka said.

Although the housing rates are considered low, students will face an increase of \$130 from last year's rates. The cost of a double room with a 20-meals-a-week plan and linen is \$2,445 a year.

Inflation is the biggest contributing factor in the increase, Zatechka said.

As a result of the higher number of students living in the residence halls, lofts rented through the housing office have been in high demand. About 550 lofts have been rented to students, exceeding the amount of lofts available, according to Sue Schlondorf, a housing employee handling loft and refrigerator rental.

"We had to order 200 more," Schlondorf said. "We still have 60 students on a waiting list," she said.

Despite the increased number of students, refrigerator rental is going slower than last year, Schlondorf said.

"We expect more rentals at the beginning of school," she said.

Housing officials are making several improvements to the residence halls to benefit students, Zatechka said. Air conditioning and an elevator will be installed in Selleck Hall, he said.

These improvements will allow Selleck to remain open all year, Zatechka said. In the past, students attending summer school had to move to other summer housing.

"This is a real big advantage to international students, graduate students and handicapped students," he said.

Selleck also has added a private dining room, which will be open to student groups on campus, Zatechka said.

Other improvements include the installation of sprinkler systems in all high-rise halls and the addition of university main-frame computer accessibility in 50 rooms in Abel Hall.

Students in these rooms can access the university's main-frame if they have a computer.

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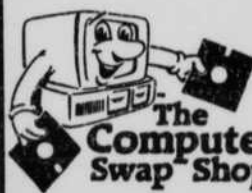
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