

Daily Nebraskan

WEATHER:

INDEX

Tuesday, partly sunny, high 55 to 60, south winds 5 to 15 miles per hour. Tuesday night, becoming windy, partly cloudy, low in the mid-30s. Wednesday, windy and cooler, partly cloudy, high of 50.

News Digest 2
Editorial 4
Sports 5
Arts & Entertainment 6
Classifieds 7

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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General studies a 'war zone' prior to firing

By Victoria Ayotte
Senior Editor
and Laura Smith
Staff Reporter

Tension between Mary Jane Visser and her co-workers caused a war-like atmosphere in the Division of General Studies in the spring of 1988, her doctor and former supervisor testified Monday.

Dr. Jeanette Masek, a physician of internal medicine at Health America, testified in the fifth day of a U.S. District Court trial that Visser had an increased heart rate, sweaty palms, diarrhea, and menstrual and stomach problems as a result of gross work-related stress.

"It was as if she was in a battle situation at work," Masek said.

General studies Director Donald Gregory agreed that general studies was a war zone. Visser became disruptive after Gregory criticized her in January and March 1988, Gregory said.

"Ms. Visser was clearly, overtly angry," Gregory said. "It was an atmosphere of just incredible tension. Her demeanor was always angry, abrupt. There was no real sense of cooperation or of anything except

hostility."

Gregory, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Griesen and the NU Board of Regents are named in a lawsuit in which Visser says she was fired for uncovering athletic irregularities. The university maintains she was fired for poor work performance.

Gregory said he asked the other general studies advisers, Michael Shada and Susan Carpenter, if Visser was disruptive. They said yes, he said.

Gregory said Visser first became disruptive after he reprimanded her March 30, 1988, and she distributed a confidential memo to office staff members with her response.

"It was kind of like a bombshell," Gregory said. "Everyone felt suddenly they were being accused of being unprofessional by Ms. Visser."

Gregory said Visser called the other general studies employees into her office after this "asking them to take sides."

Gregory said he was concerned about the situation in the office and discussed it with Visser.

"I said her efforts were counterproductive," Gregory said. "Her attitude was very negative."

Visser's attorney, Thom Cope, repeatedly questioned Gregory about

the reason cited in her termination letter as "unavailability."

"(At) the same time you're criticizing Visser for taking time off, Shada also took time off," Cope said.

Gregory said the calendar showed, among other things, Shada taking time off to take his comprehensive exams for a doctoral degree and to see his adviser. It also showed appointments made under Gregory's wife's maiden name, he said.

"Having an appointment with your wife is no different than Visser having an appointment with her children," Cope said.

University officials claim that Visser's work performance declined because she missed work for family and health reasons.

Visser's notice of termination stated that she had unethically advised four UNL students. Gregory testified that he witnessed or received first-hand information about the four advising sessions.

The university says Visser was fired in part for the advice she gave Steve Zatechka, John Kragh, Bridget Heimes and Nickole Kehm. Between Sept. 8, 1987 and May 23, 1988, Visser advised about 764 students, Cope said.

"I had always considered Ms.

Visser to be a very good adviser," Gregory said. "I felt, based on these incidents, that the conflict with me had begun to affect the quality of her advising."

Gregory said he did not discuss his concerns about her advising with Visser because he did not want to "hassle her." Cope pointed out that although Gregory did not want to hassle Visser, he did use the incidents as reasons for her termination.

Heimes testified that Visser advised her after receiving a dismissal letter from the university 1 1/2 weeks into the semester.

She was registered for classes at the time, however, and was doing well in them, Heimes said. Visser advised her to continue going to classes until she had appealed the dismissal.

Heimes testified that, contrary to some accounts, Visser never told her to have "instant amnesia" about the advising session or her dismissal from the university.

Heimes said she later went to see Gregory, who told her that "rules are rules" and she should not go to classes until her appeal was finished.

Steve Zatechka, a UNL sophomore, testified that he was advised by

Gregory in June 1988 to take science and English classes. Zatechka said Visser told him during New Student Enrollment that Gregory's advice was "highly unusual" for a pre-med student and that he should take science and math.

Zatechka said Visser did not know that Gregory had advised him to take math and English until he told her.

"I didn't feel she abused me in any way," Zatechka said. "I had no idea of what was going on."

Under cross-examination, however, Zatechka said he was very confused by the conflicting advice.

"I felt I was receiving the 'cold shoulder,'" Zatechka said. "I didn't know who to believe or who to trust at that point."

Nebraska football coach Tom Osborne and Al Papik, assistant athletic director for administrative/academic services, testified about a transcript the university claims Visser circulated on campus.

Osborne said he was concerned about a Dec. 1, 1987, Lincoln Journal article about a health class athletes were taking in the summer. He said he was worried about public perceptions.

See VISSER on 2

UNL to develop markets for recyclable materials

By Emily Rosenbaum
Senior Reporter

A project sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will research and develop markets for recycled materials in eastern Nebraska and western Iowa.

"We want to develop markets for these recyclables and make sure we have a demand for them," said Martha Gilliland, head of the university's Center for Infrastructure Research and the project director.

By locating companies that will re-manufacture the collected materials, the project will solve the potential problem of demand for the materials, she said.

"We want to make sure that isn't a prob-

lem," she said.

The project, which began Nov. 1, is designed to identify companies interested in the recycling program, determine the technology for recycling and "make certain (recycling) is attractive to the markets."

Financial arrangements and contracts also will be handled by those involved with the project, Gilliland said.

The recycling program eventually could work with plastics, glass, aluminum and paper and will use materials collected primarily in Omaha, Lincoln and Council Bluffs, Iowa, she said.

See RECYCLE on 3

New courses created

Class mixes English, science

By Amie DeFrain
Staff Reporter

Food science and English may seem to be at opposite ends of the academic pole, but next semester some University of Nebraska-Lincoln students will be studying the subjects together in an optional English composition course.

James Carr, a UNL professor of chemistry, said English 150, section 013, is an optional class for students enrolled in a new food science course offered in the departments of chemistry; human nutrition and foodservice management; and food science and technology.

The English course was combined with the science course to give students different per-

spectives on the subject of food science, Carr said.

Peter Carriere, the graduate-teaching assistant teaching the composition course, said he will attend the science course to become familiar with the topics and then assign his students papers to write based on what was discussed in the science class.

Although there is only one 131 food science class, Carr said, the course is listed separately in each department as Chemistry 131, Nutrition 131 and Food Science 131. The course is aimed at teaching students food science "from the farm to the body," he said.

Students can enroll in the food science course without enrolling in the English class and still receive credit, he said, but students

See COURSE on 3

White waives right to hearing

By Pat Dinslage
Staff Reporter

Lamont A. White, University of Nebraska-Lincoln sophomore and Cornhusker running back, waived his right to a preliminary hearing at Lancaster County Court Monday on charges of possession of a controlled substance.

According to Janice Gradwohl, county court judge, an agreement was reached between White's attorney, Richard Scott, and William Mickie of the Lancaster County attorney's office.

The agreement stated that White would

waive his right to a preliminary hearing in exchange for copies of police reports to be given to White's attorney, Gradwohl said.

According to the county attorney's office, the Lincoln police reports contain information on White's arrest and the subsequent investigation by the police.

Gradwohl explained to White that a preliminary hearing is held when there is evidence that a crime has been committed and "probable cause" to believe that the person charged committed the crime.

Gradwohl set a trial date of Nov. 29 in Lancaster District Court for White's case to be heard.



Eric Gregory/Daily Nebraskan

Nomads exhibit

R.J. Timmermann shows off a mannequin and artifacts that are part of a new permanent exhibit being put together in Morrill Hall called "Nomads of the Plains." Timmermann, acting supervisor of the exhibit, said it is due to open to the public Dec. 1.