

Daily Nebraskan

Tuesday

WEATHER

Today, mostly sunny, northwest wind 10-20 miles per hour, high in the low to mid 60s. Tonight, mostly clear with a low in the low 30s. Wednesday, partly sunny, high 55-60.

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English professor James Ford reflects on poems and their meanings. Ford has been teaching at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for eight years.

Literary theorist expands minds

By Stacey McKenzie
Staff Reporter

A typical English teacher might ask students, "What does this poem mean?"

James Ford, an associate professor of English at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, would ask, "What does it mean for a poem to have a meaning?"

Ford is not talking in circles. He is talking theory — literary theory.

Ford, whose specialty is the philosophy of literary criticism, said he knows literary theory may be daunting to some students but believes learning it teaches students to tolerate "intellectual discomfort."

"Our culture doesn't encourage students to have much tolerance for intellectual discomfort," he said.

"Sometimes in life, feeling uncomfortable because you don't know very much about something can be exciting. But you have to have some faith that somewhere down the line it will start to be a little more comfortable."

It is possible to define things by their effect, rather than their material makeup, Ford said, but most students are not taught to think that

way.

"If you ask students what a poem is, they will generally say it is a kind of language," Ford said. "If you ask them what a cathedral is, they will not say that it is a building made of stone. They will say it is a place designed to create a certain mood of worshipfulness or reverence."

Teaching critical theory involves creating categories in students' minds, said Ford, who has taught at UNL for eight years.

"If you don't have a category to attach some information to, it is like throwing something against a wall and it has no place to lodge," he said.

Besides pushing students to expand their minds, Ford has coordinated the UNL English as a Second Language program and has expanded it to its maximum capacity.

The program has grown 62 percent during the last five years. The current ESL program offers 16 sections with about 20 students each.

The ESL program first interested Ford while teaching at Brigham Young University-Hawaii campus because the campus had many foreign students, he said.

The BYU-Hawaii campus has the highest percentage of second language speakers of any school in the United States, Ford said. Because he is inclined to become in-

terested in whatever is going on around him, he said, he became interested in the ESL program.

As part of an exchange program, Ford plans to go to the Tadzhik Soviet Socialist Republic in March and April to help develop an English as a Second Language program at the University of Tadzhik.

The need for people who read and speak English is great since the Soviet Union and East Bloc countries are opening up to the West, he said.

There are 30,000 Russian as a second language teachers in Czechoslovakia, but nobody wants to learn Russian, he said.

Ford said he is more interested in visiting Albania than Tadzhik, because he has studied its national hero, Scanderbeg, he said.

Ford said he plans to write a screenplay about Scanderbeg, a 15th century military hero who kept the Turkish army out of Europe for 40 years. Scanderbeg lore became a part of Ford's life because of a political science class in which Ford was assigned to research Albania.

When he found little information, he contacted the Albanian delegation to the United Nations for more. Ford said he was surprised when a box full of books and magazines about Albania arrived at his home.

See FORD on 6

Officials: Spending lid could endanger Nebraska's growth

By Stacey McKenzie
Staff Reporter

The proposed 2 percent spending lid could jeopardize Nebraska's ability to compete nationally for industrial growth, two officials said.

The lid "makes no allowances or adjustments for inflation, emergencies, or economic growth," said Charles Lamphear, director of the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, in an article in *Business in Nebraska*.

The lid amendment, which will go before Nebraska voters Nov. 6, would limit spending increases for state and local governments to 2 percent a year.

In the article, the 2 percent lid law is applied to budgets representative of Nebraska's municipalities and

school districts. It uses probable decisions of a representative city of Nebraska to make projections.

The budget of the city is broken into the following categories: general government, building and insurance, public works, public safety, street maintenance, parks and recreation, library, capital improvements and contingency.

"The actions of municipal government officials used in this article are pure conjecture," Lamphear says in the article. "We believe, however, that these conjectures represent probable decisions that a municipal government would make if the 2 percent lid amendment passes."

Some ramifications of the 2 percent lid would be reduction of staff

See REPORT on 3

Minority enrollment up; official credits efforts

By Tabitha Hiner
Staff Reporter

Better recruiting efforts, more scholarships and an improved campus atmosphere helped UNL's minority enrollment climb 16.5 percent this year, an official said.

James Griesen, vice chancellor for student affairs, said that while 866 minority students attended the University of Nebraska-Lincoln last year, 1,009 currently are enrolled in the university's undergraduate, graduate and professional schools.

Foreign, black, American Indian, Asian and Hispanic student enrollments were used to determine the minority enrollment, Griesen said.

The figures only take into account students who are taking classes on the Lincoln campuses. Some students take classes through UNL but attend them at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The effort to increase minority enrollment started getting more attention about two years ago when officials realized that UNL's minority enrollment wasn't adequate, Griesen said. More staff members then were devoted to recruiting minorities, he said.

Scholarships and endowments also have been important in attracting minority students, Griesen said.

The \$1 million R.H. "Rick" Davis Minority Scholarship Program and



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the \$250,000 Vin Gupta Endowment are two UNL minority awards recently started up, Griesen said. An \$800,000 state appropriation also is available for minorities.

UNL has encouraged major donors who are concerned about low minority enrollment at the university to specify that their gifts to the NU Foundation be targeted to minority students, Griesen said.

UNL received the state appropria-

See MINORITY on 3

Committee's proposal to combat apartheid

By Jennifer O'Clilka
Senior Reporter

Members of the President's Special Committee on South Africa say the group has refined its goals to include a program to combat apartheid and to benefit students.

James McShane, president of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Academic Senate and a member of the committee, said the group sharpened its focus by "looking at what we might reasonably do."

"The University of Nebraska is not likely to be able to bootstrap South Africa," McShane said.

But, he said, NU could have input into changing the apartheid system in South Africa and some things to learn from black South Africans.

Phil Gosch, UNL student regent and a member of the committee, said the goal of the committee is to submit a proposal to Martin Massengale, NU interim president and UNL chancel-

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The University of Nebraska is not likely to be able to bootstrap South Africa.

McShane
president, Academic Senate

lor, that would "in some way combat apartheid and prepare black South Africans for post-apartheid society," while benefitting students.

The committee was appointed by Massengale earlier this fall. Its target date for submitting the proposal is December.

Committee members are looking at several avenues by which to achieve their goals, Gosch said. These include instituting a general scholarship program, expanding existing African studies programs at NU and creating new programs.

"One thing we want to do is talk to other universities that have programs" of this kind, McShane said.

The group is examining the University of Missouri South African exchange program, semi-arid agriculture programs and African studies programs, Gosch said.

"We have a lot more specifics now," Gosch said. "The past few months have been spent seeing what other universities do. Now, we are in the process of seeing which are beneficial both for black South Africans and university students."

McShane said UNL does not have a major black studies program, but the University of Nebraska at Omaha does.

Gosch said that one of the most important focuses of the committee is to use the special-

ties of UNL and apply them to South Africa.

McShane said he would like to see the university develop programs dealing with agriculture on semi-arid lands.

"Our institution has a great deal to offer black South Africans," he said.

Gosch said bringing black South Africans to UNL would not benefit all students.

"But I think every student who has some type of interaction with black students from South Africa will benefit, because I think it's difficult for us to even imagine that kind of oppression," Gosch said.

To achieve its goals, McShane said, the committee must "tap into the experts on the conditions in South Africa."

One reason the committee's research takes so long is that many of its members have little or no expertise in South Africa, McShane said.

"What will eventually happen is the president's committee will be dependent on other folk to shape the program," he said.