

Multicultural awareness emphasized

Campuses develop new teaching course

By Dionne Searcey
Staff Reporter

A multicultural awareness course to help fulfill teacher recertification requirements is closer to development, a University of Nebraska official said.

Betsy Kean, associate professor of curriculum and instruction at UNL, said a steering committee with repre-

sentatives from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Kearney State College has been meeting to develop the framework for the course.

Each campus will develop a course, but the classes will share common characteristics, Kean said.

The course is being developed to comply with LB250, which requires teachers seeking recertification after

January 1993 to receive training in human relations.

Teachers must be recertified periodically depending on the amount of teaching experience they have. Recertification requires teachers to take six credit hours of graduate courses in their fields of endorsement.

Kean said that under the law, which passed two years ago, teachers will

take courses designed to lead to an awareness and understanding of a multicultural society.

"The law puts good options in teachers' hands for dealing constructively with the need of students to deal and prosper in a multicultural society," she said.

Jim Walter, chairman of curricu-

lum and instruction in the Teachers College, said the steering committee set up to develop the course has met twice a month this fall to discuss how to structure the course.

The required course may be added as a graduate course, Walter said.

The course then could be taken by students studying in a degree program, as well as by teachers seeking recertification, he said.

Professor questions legislators' priorities in education

By Michael Ho
Staff Reporter

In its quest to chase national grants, higher education is forgetting its true purpose, a UNL electrical engineering professor said.

Teaching students is the whole purpose of education, Ezekial Bahar said. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has performed well in this area, but legislators and administrators seem less interested in students than in money, the former Faculty Senate president said.

"These guys, these bureaucrats, forget what education is all about," he said. "Our job here is to make a kid from high school move into the real world."

Not just the top 1 percent of students, he added, but all students. Top-notch students probably don't even need professors to graduate, he said.

The true duty of UNL, he said, is to motivate and teach students who may need a little more hand-holding.

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electrical engineering professor

That's different from the role of private schools, he said, and UNL shouldn't be judged

the same way they are.

Bahar recounted the story of "J.G.," a C+ student who made it through UNL, with a little help, and went on to take a job at a big-name research company.

The personal attention that J.G. got at UNL probably was what saved him, Bahar said.

"If he went to one of those posh schools like MIT (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) or Stanford," Bahar said, "he would have been washed out. That's what's unique about Nebraska."

Other schools, he said, don't have the same commitment to their students. He said his daughter, who went to the University of Illinois, never saw a professor until her senior year.

Illinois is "an excellent university," he said. "Otherwise I would never have sent my daugh-

ter there. But it's a different kind of place."

Trying to lump UNL together with such schools is a mistake, he said. UNL probably will never catch up with schools like Illinois in federal grants, he added.

"They always lose in this race, but it's their mistake," Bahar said. "They're running the wrong race."

"What are we here for?" he asked. "To teach students."

In order to demonstrate a commitment to teaching, Bahar said, the University of Nebraska might try a new approach when submitting this year's budget request.

"(NU President-elect) Martin Massengale should keep his aides locked up at the university," he said, and take one student — just one — with him to see state officials.

And all the bar graphs, Bahar said, should be left at home.

Peer

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peer groups forced on them. The University of Wisconsin-Madison is using a peer group that was picked by the state, rather than by the school.

The university had drawn up its own list, said Steve Schumacher, assistant director of UWM's news service. On that list, designed mainly to compare faculty salaries, UWM ranked last.

The Wisconsin Legislature balked at the inclusion of private institutions like Harvard and Stanford, Schumacher said.

The state then designed its own peer group for the university. This group consisted of the public Big Ten institutions with some large public research schools thrown in.

Iowa State's Stanley said the UNL peer group, made up of the 11 land-grant institutions in the Association of American Universities, is reasonable.

"It's a legitimate choice," she said.

In some ways, it's even more useful than Iowa State's peer group, Stanley said. The AAU schools are more closely knit and share more information, she said.

Bill Splinter, interim vice chancellor for research and dean of graduate studies at UNL, said peer groups — chosen within reason — can help make schools more competitive.

Many faculty members have been recruited from UNL's peer institutions recently, he said, which is a marked change from the exodus a few years ago.

"I think we've turned the corner on that," Splinter said. "We were really losing some quality faculty."

The peer institutions are all state-supported research universities, he said, and they serve as a good benchmark for UNL's progress.

"Nebraska may not ever rank as an MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) or a Harvard," Splinter said, "but there's no reason why we should not be ranked with other major state universities."

Condoms

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that there's very little use of these things."

At the University of Missouri at Columbia, he said, about \$50 in condoms is sold every year.

In addition to health concerns, he said, the university must not ignore the beliefs of students who oppose condom dispensers on moral grounds.

"I think they're legitimate points of view that are very hard to reconcile," he said.

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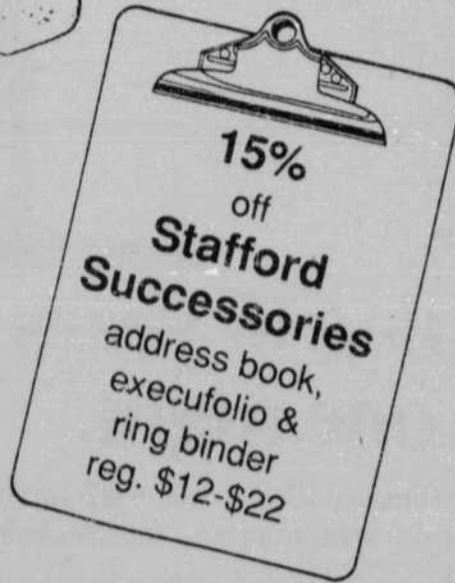
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