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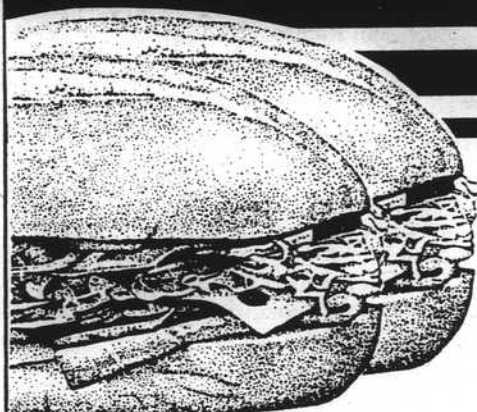
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# Female faculty percentage low

Recent report shows  
several departments  
are short on women

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Reporter

Elizabeth Walter-Shea says being part of a male-dominated field doesn't bother her.

"I've been going through the sciences and that is typical," she said. "I'm just accustomed to having more men than women."

Walter-Shea, a UNL professor of agricultural meteorology and guest faculty member in the department of biological systems engineering, is listed as one of 14 faculty members in agricultural meteorology. In biological systems engineering, she is one of 48.

The recent release of a report from the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women shows that the University of Nebraska is lagging behind other universities in hiring women faculty.

The report states that in 1993-94, 17.7 percent of faculty at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln were women.

University records show that areas with large gaps between the number of men and women are mostly in the science areas.

Administrators in the sciences said the number of female professors in that area was low and recruiting was difficult.

William Splinter, interim dean of the College of Engineering and Technology and emeritus professor of biological systems engineering, said that right now, there were few women in the biological sciences.

More women professors across the nation will earn Ph.D.'s in the next five to 10 years, Splinter said.

For now, Splinter said, the college is actively seeking the female faculty available, Splinter said.

"Nationally, there just aren't that many (women professor candidates)," he said. "I could probably count them

on one hand."

However, Walter-Shea said, times are changing.

When she was going through secondary school, the sciences were not presented as an option. She said that may be a reason why few women were in the sciences.

In the past few years, more female faculty members have come to science departments at the university, she said. Walter-Shea said more young women were getting interested in science.

"There's more of a public awareness now," she said. "The young girls are becoming aware that this is an option to them."

The study shows that areas in the arts, humanities and teaching had smaller gaps between the number of men and women.

Specific areas with small gaps included English and sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences and educational psychology in the Teachers College, all with about a 2-1 ratio.

Administrators in these areas said history was the primary reason for more women in these fields.

David Moshman, chairman of the educational psychology department, which has 10 women on the 22-member faculty, said the areas of education and psychology traditionally had more women.

Currently, the number of men and women in those fields is equal, Moshman said.

Some areas showing the largest gaps were the math department in the College of Arts and Sciences and agronomy in the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, both with a 13-1 ratio.

Administrators in those areas said the ratios would shrink with recent changes in hiring practices and in higher education.

Jim Lewis, chairman of the math department, said that in the early 1970s, only 5 to 8 percent of Ph.D.'s in math were awarded to women. In the past few years, he said, that number has jumped to 25 percent, up from a decade of staying at 20 percent.

## Lagging behind

Female faculty at UNL.

■ In 1993-94, 17.7 percent of the faculty at UNL were women.

■ Areas showing the largest gaps between the number of men and women faculty members include the math and agronomy departments, both with ratios of 13-1. Biological systems engineering has a male-to-female faculty ratio of 48-1.

■ Areas showing the smallest gaps include the arts, humanities and teaching. English, sociology and educational psychology all have male-to-female faculty ratios of 2-1.



Source: Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women at UNL

Lewis said his department, which has three women out of 39 tenured faculty, had been trying to increase the number of women available for hire by actively seeking female graduate students. Fifty percent of the graduate students in the department are women, he said.

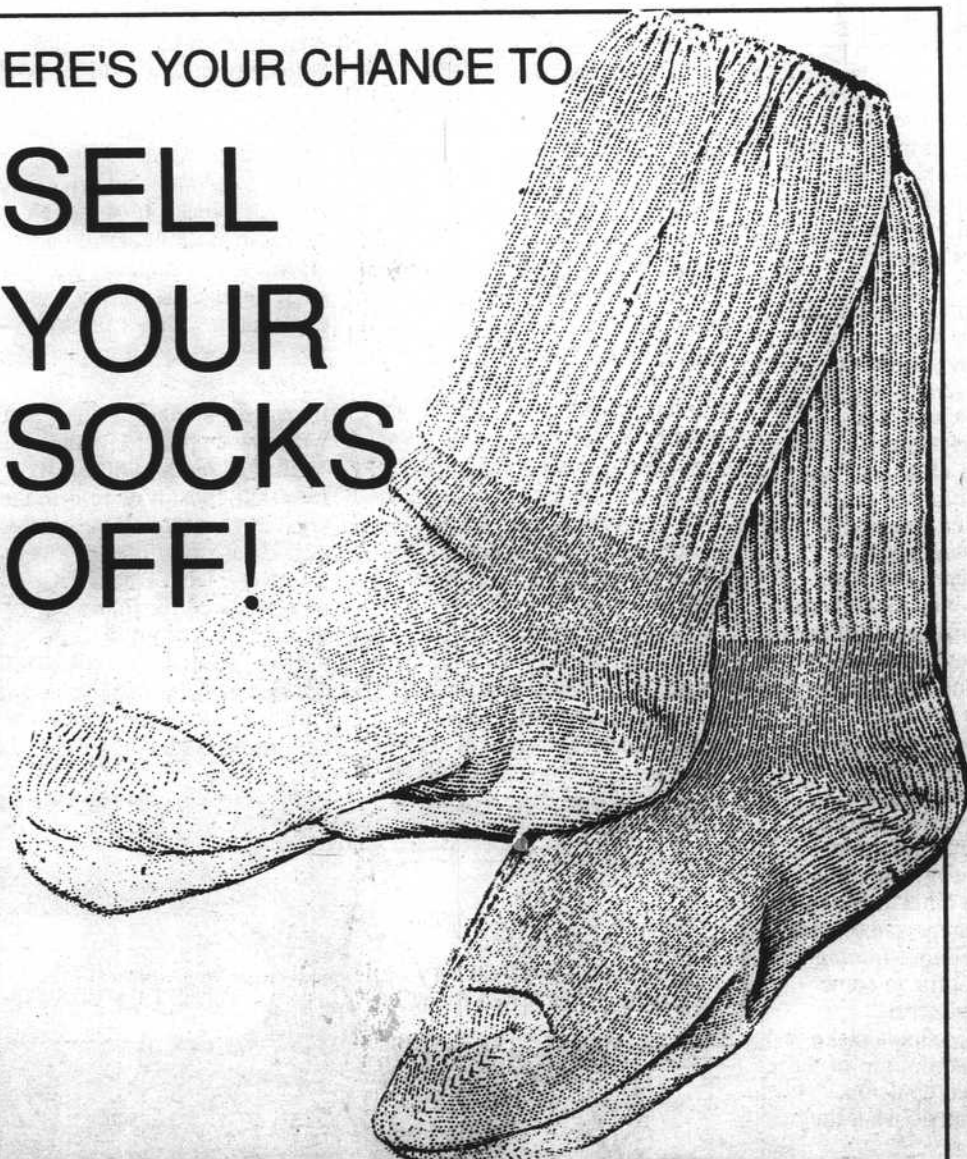
Seven years ago, Lewis said, the department started actively seeking top women faculty. He said 30 to 40 percent of job offers in the department went to women.

Brian Foster, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said, however, that large changes in faculty numbers were slow because only a small number of faculty were replaced each year. Universities want faculty members to stay, he said.

"You wouldn't want to have the faculty turning over every five years," Foster said. "You'd have chaos."

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## Employers should be careful to screen immigrant applicants

By Paula Lavigne  
Senior Reporter

Nebraska's low level of unemployment is drawing illegal aliens from Central America, and the numbers are growing, say Immigration and Naturalization Service officials.

Although INS raids, such as the one at the Excel plant in Schuyler last weekend, try to keep the numbers down, INS District Director Dean Hove said tracking illegal aliens was hard because they used assumed names and fake documents.

An illegal alien is someone who resides in the United States without authorization.

Proposals such as California's Proposition 187, which would deny welfare and education to illegal aliens, and increased border patrol are being used to slow the growing illegal immigration problem nationwide.

About 1,000 illegal aliens reside in Nebraska, he said, with the majority from Mexico and other Central American countries.

A small percentage of illegal aliens also are composed of foreign students who overstay their visas, he said.

Most illegal aliens find work in meatpacking plants or other food-service industries — jobs that are in abundance in central and eastern Nebraska, he said.

INS agents are working with employers to prevent hiring illegal aliens, Hove said.

"We want to have employers state that they're not interested in hiring people who are not legally able to work," he said. "We have to get the message out that job opportunities in Nebraska should be reserved for U.S. citizens."

Citizenship may be hard to get, he said. Someone who wanted to immigrate legally to the United States would have to start by applying with the American Consular's office in his home country.

An immigrant has to achieve resident alien status — permanent residency — before becoming a U.S. citizen. Nebraska approves about 2,000 immigrant visas a year.

Resident aliens are given a green card, which also grants them the rights of citizens, except the rights to vote and hold public office. People wishing to immigrate who have a

*"We have to get the message out that job opportunities in Nebraska should be reserved for U.S. citizens."*

DEAN HOVE

INS district director

spouse or other relative who is a U.S. citizen or are guaranteed employment once they enter the United States have better chances, Hove said.

"If you're just wanting to immigrate," he said, "it's not that easy."

Establishing permanent residence involves several years of processing documents and cutting through red tape.

Kevin Smith, an assistant political science professor at UNL, immigrated to the United States about 15 years ago from Bambury, England, as a resident alien with no intention of becoming a U.S. citizen.

"I have an English soul, and I shouldn't give that up," he said. "I'm just British. So sue me."

Smith said achieving resident alien status was "a huge bureaucratic hassle with lots of hoops you have to jump through."

The INS officers are swamped, he said, and the agency has too much to do for the resources allotted to it.

Smith's application was processed without many complications because he said he had "all his bureaucratic ducks in a row."

He had relatives who were U.S. citizens, his father's employment skills were in demand, the United States and the United Kingdom had close ties, and there was no language barrier.

"I'm not blowing up the World Trade Center," he said. "But for a lot of people, it's a huge hassle. And for a country based on immigrants, that raises a few questions."