

Biology students learn on-line

By John Fulwider
Staff Reporter

Biology 101 students can't quite cuddle up with their computers and skip their crowded lectures just yet. But William Glider's biology students can get a wealth of information about their class — even find out their current grades — on the Internet.

The information is available on a World Wide Web page created by Glider, an assistant professor of biology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Glider was the first UNL professor to create a web page for his course. Since he began his page in January, five other chemistry and engineering instructors also have made their own web pages.

Glider doesn't post lecture notes on the web, he said, because that would encourage people to skip class. But he does post the course syllabus, sample exams and answers to homework problems.

As a bonus feature, Glider said, he includes biofacts — "gee whiz" bits of information about biology that aren't found in the textbook and are hard to find anywhere else. Topics range from "Why cats purr" to "The Grapes of Wrath" — how ethyl alcohol found in wine and beer is considered to be a cancer-causing agent.

To encourage students to use his web page, Glider puts a bonus question on each test that covers information from one of the biofacts. On a recent test, he said, 95 of the 190 students got the bonus question right.

Glider's web page makes use of graphics, something he said was not possible last year, when he offered much of the same information through Gopher, a text-only Internet information browser.

In the future, he said, he wants to include graphics from his lectures on the web page so students don't have to sketch them during class.

He said that in large classes like

his, students didn't have much contact with their professors. But the biology web page, combined with free e-mail accounts for all his students, helped.

"This puts them a little bit closer to me as the instructor," he said.

In addition to graphics from lectures, Glider said, he wants to put biology tutorials on the web page to help struggling students, maybe using animation and video clips.

Eventually, he may have alternative homework assignments, where students would search the Internet instead of their textbooks for answers.

Alison Frazier, a freshman pre-radiology major, said she used the web page often and found it helpful. The most useful feature, she said, is the grade list. She also contacts Glider through her class e-mail account.

But what would she like to see added in the future?

Lecture notes.

Rainy weather signifies start of spring season

By Angie Schendt
Staff Reporter

A spell of cool weather in Lincoln recently is not unusual for this time of year, a climatologist said Monday.

Allen Dutcher, state climatologist at the High Plains Climatology Center, said temperatures the past two days may have felt cool but have been only slightly below normal.

Dutcher said Nebraska's winter was unusually mild, which made recent weather feel cool.

What is unusual, however, is the winter storm in eastern Colorado and western Nebraska.

In the last four years, at least one big snow storm has hit in April. But this is the third storm this month, Dutcher said.

Cold rain from the storm should

continue today in Lincoln, he said.

While cold temperatures and snow associated with the storm may be unusual, he said, the rain is not.

"We are going through our normal rainy period," Dutcher said.

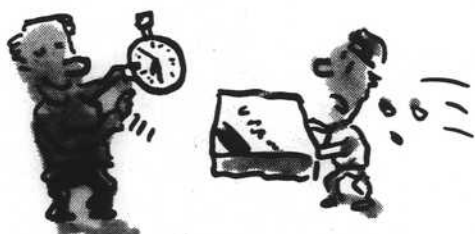
April, May and June are Nebraska's three rainiest months, he said.

The National Weather Service forecast today calls for a high of 50 degrees, with a 60 percent chance of rain. Wednesday will be dry and cool with a low between 25 and 30 and a high in the upper 40s or low 50s. Thursday and Friday will be similar, with lows in the 30s and highs in the 50s. More rain is possible both days.

Highs in the mid 50s and low 60s and lows in the 40s are average for April, and next week should be more like that norm, Dutcher said.

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Benefit game increases awareness

From Staff Reports

Cornhusker basketball fans will have a chance to watch the men's and women's teams in action tonight when they play in a benefit game with the UNL Rolling Storm Wheelchair Basketball Team.

The second annual game, which will be played at the Campus Recreation Center, is sponsored by the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska and the Office of Campus Recreation. The game will start at 6:30 p.m.

Ashley Wittwer, one of the game's organizers, said the game would help create awareness of disabled students' capabilities.

Shad Dahlgren, a member of the wheelchair basketball team, said proceeds from the game would go toward the team's travel and training expenses for next year.

Wittwer, who is a member of ASUN's Students with Disabilities Subcommittee, said members of the Cornhusker football team would be available to sign autographs at the game.

No admission will be charged for the game, but donations will be accepted at the door.

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