

Indiana University students protest lack of diversity

FROM THE INDIANA DAILY STUDENT
Indiana University

(U-WIRE) BLOOMINGTON, Ind. — While most students at Indiana University will attend classes Jan. 20, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a core group of "progressive student activists" will boycott classes and protest the university's "failing" commitment to diversity, one student activist said.

Junior Ryan Vertner, a protest organizer and editor of the publication "griot," said that in addition to the publication's support, other groups would participate in the protest. These groups include the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Asian-American Association, Asian Student Union, OUT, Conscious Oppressed Unified People and other nonaffiliated interested students, Vertner said.

This week the coalition issued a list of demands that will improve the "dismal reality" of IU's commitment to diversity, Vertner said. The coalition plans to work with the administration to put the demands through the proper channels. The group expects to talk to administrators to find out where to go

and which departments or programs to work with, Vertner said.

"A key to the process is going to be talking with administrators to see how we should go about using the system," Vertner said. "We want to make it clear to the administration what we want from the beginning."

"They could tell us to use the proper channels, and what we would tell them is 'Well, you use the proper channels,'" he said.

And Kenneth R.R. Gros Louis, IU vice president of academic affairs and Bloomington chancellor, said he had a productive meeting with some of the protest organizers. He said he looks forward to working with them to resolve this issue.

"I plan to gather information on student and faculty numbers, as well as budgets, and meet with them again either before Christmas or shortly after," Gros Louis wrote in an e-mail message. "Much of the discussion was on current status of some of the proposals. It was a good meeting."

Junior Regan Rush, a protest organizer, said these issues need to come out to the public because the university made hollow promises about its commitment to diversity, and also recent funding has been disappointing.

For example, the Lilly Grant, which endowed the university a three-year grant for \$1 million to implement the Office of Diversity, ran out this summer. The university had promised to continue the funding.

But Steve Birdine, coordinator of diversity programs, said the university did not keep its promise to match the funding. The office received \$3,000 this semester for programming — not even enough money to pay for brochures to hand out to students at diversity seminars. In addition, the office lost its only full-time secretary. After June 30, 1997, the secretary will work only part time. He said the university's lack of action has caused him to reconsider coming back to IU in the fall of 1997.

"That is just the petty stuff that I don't have the time or the inclination to deal with," Birdine said. "I simply want the opportunity to do the job I am paid to do. In a campus with about 35,000, you can't educate people or do anything with substance or purpose with \$3,000 a semester."

Vertner said the protest will serve to find out what the university really is going to do, as opposed to what administrators say they are going to do.

"We have been duped as far as (the

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STEVE BIRDINE

IU diversity programs coordinator

Office of Diversity funding) goes," Vertner said. "(One of the purposes for the protest) is to truly find out if we've been had. All of this should weed out the truth versus the fiction."

Besides disappointment surrounding the Office of Diversity, other issues are out on the table, such as implementing a support system for Asian-American students, said junior Joon Park, who is involved in the protest as president of the Asian-American Association. During the spring semester and the summer, a minority coalition put through proposals to create an Asian-American Advocacy dean and an Asian culture center.

Park said little progress has been made with the initial proposals.

With no support system from the university, students who want to celebrate their Asian heritage must do it themselves, while African-American and Latino students have the support of their advocacy offices.

Birdine said students putting forth these demands to the administration is the right first step.

"I am appreciative of the fact that students have stepped up and said 'enough is enough.' Nothing will change unless students make it change," Birdine said.

Retired UNL professor Jack Sosin dies at 68

By ERIN SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

Retired UNL professor Jack Sosin, called one of the most widely published faculty members in the history department by a former colleague, died Monday of undisclosed causes.

Sosin retired this spring after nearly 38 years at UNL and after publishing eight books and many articles and reviews in trade journals. Patrice Berger, a colleague of Sosin's in the history department, said that record made him one of the most prolific writers in the department while still maintaining a heavy teaching load.

"He was one of the pillars of the history department," Berger said. "He has done an enormous amount of research on colonial American history, the Revolutionary period, and American constitutional history."

Students, Berger said, often commented that Sosin's classes were exceptionally thought-provoking.

Sosin, who was born in Hartford, Conn., received his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Connecticut, and his doctorate degree from Indiana University. He came to teach at UNL in 1958.

After retiring last spring, Berger said, Sosin was awarded professor emeritus status, which meant he did not have to teach classes, but could use his office space in Oldfather Hall for research. And use it he did, Berger said, as he came in every day after retiring to work on research.

"He was very consistent in that regard," Berger said. "You could set your watch by him."

"Jack was exceptionally professional."

Services for Sosin, who was 68, are today at 11 a.m. at Roper & Sons Mortuary, 4300 O St.

Firm may be hired to evaluate education

OMAHA (AP) — Nebraskans will be asked what they think about plans for statewide academic standards.

The Nebraska Board of Education is considering hiring a consulting firm to conduct eight town-hall meetings across the state next year in addition to eight sessions with focus groups.

The state board has said it wants to hear from a cross section of Nebraskans on the proposal.

The focus groups would be scheduled during three months in early 1997, said John Clark, a Department of Education spokesman. The town-hall meetings would follow in the spring. The consulting firm would provide a report to the state board based on the focus groups and town hall meetings.

Clark said it's possible that the state board, after reviewing the report, would revise the standards

before taking final action on them.

The Department of Education will solicit estimates from consulting firms, including New York City-based Public Agenda Foundation.

Public Agenda had given the Department of Education a \$65,000 estimate in October, but that was for only four town hall meetings and four focus-group sessions.

The state board's next meeting is Jan. 17. Clark said he was uncertain whether the board would be choosing a consulting firm then.

The state board approved the draft standards this fall. The intent is not to challenge local control of schools, State Education Commissioner Doug Christensen has said. Even though the standards will tell schools what students should know and be able to do, he said, it will be up to local districts to decide how to put them into practice.

Professor to give speech on Singapore's government

From Staff Reports

A professor who was punished for trying to expose oppressive practices by the government of Singapore will be delivering his opinions to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln today.

Christopher Lingle, a visiting associate professor of economics at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland will deliver a speech entitled "Capitalism and Authoritarianism in Singapore" from noon to 1:30 p.m. in

the Nebraska Union.

In 1994, the Singapore government charged Lingle with slander after he published an editorial in the International Herald Tribune that alleged some Asian regimes rely upon a "compliant judiciary to bankrupt opposition politicians."

In January 1995, a Singapore court found Lingle guilty in absentia, even after admitting the government had repeatedly sued opposition politicians for libel and forced several others into bankruptcy.

Vice chancellor search nears end

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During interviews, Moeser said, he discussed candidate's pasts as well as their plans for UNL.

"We talk about them and their experiences, and what their perceptions of this university are," Moeser said. "Having the outside candidates come in, it's interesting to see what they perceive as potential opportunities and problems."

On Thursday, Palm met with ASUN first thing in the morning. She spent

the rest of the day talking with faculty, deans and the vice chancellor's staff.

Palm said the statewide support of UNL was evident during her visit, and she said she was impressed by the emphasis placed on undergraduate teaching.

Palm said two things she would make priority items if she were chosen for the job were increasing investment in the honors program and strengthening interdisciplinary programs.

A candidate will be chosen for the position in early January, Moeser said.

First penguin hatches at Omaha zoo

OMAHA (AP) — It took three tries for the Henry Doorly Zoo to hatch a newborn penguin, but this week was a charm. A king penguin chick emerged from an egg in the zoo's aquarium early Monday — the first such hatching at the state's largest zoo.


The baby penguin weighed in at 5.7 ounces, a weight not normally reached until five days after hatching, said Lisa Jorgensen, supervisor of aquatic birds at the zoo. She said the parents had been feeding their little one, regurgitating herring and serving it in digestible bites.

Last year's two king penguin eggs never hatched. In one case, the chick died in its shell. The other egg was broken in a struggle with a penguin couple referred to around the zoo as "the rogue pair."

A second egg this year was taken from its timid parents and is being kept in an incubator in anticipation of a Dec. 18 due date.


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