

New dean chosen for Family Sciences college

By John Hejkal
Staff writer

The new dean of the College of Human Resources and Family Sciences was announced Tuesday.

Marjorie Kostelnik, professor and chairwoman of family and child ecology in the Michigan State University College of Human Ecology, was named.

The decision was made pending approval by the University of Nebraska Board of Regents.

Kostelnik will start Nov. 1. She is replacing Karen Craig, who retired last year after 12 years as dean of the college.

"This college has tremendous potential," Kostelnik said. "It has wonderful tradition, it has wonderful roots, and I think it has a wonderful future."

She said the prominence of the college attracted her to the position.

"I think the most important thing is that the college has a very good reputation nationwide," she said. "People in the college have done really good things and have been recog-

nized nationwide."

She said she had a strong interest in multidisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research. UNL placed a high priority on these things, she said.

Visiting UNL confirmed Kostelnik's desire to come to the university, she said.

"I'm certainly looking forward to working with the faculty and students," she said. "I was impressed with the students. They seem quite dedicated to their various fields."

Kostelnik has been at MSU since she got her doctoral degree from Pennsylvania State University in 1978. She became permanent chairwoman of the department of family and child ecology in 1994 after serving as acting chairwoman for one year.

Richard Edwards, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, and Irv Omtvedt, vice chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, announced Kostelnik's appointment.

In a statement, Omtvedt said Kostelnik's strong background and leadership abilities will make her a

"This college has tremendous potential."

Marjorie Kostelnik
Dean of College of Human Resources and Family Sciences

positive addition to UNL.

Kostelnik, co-author of nine books, said she had heard only good things about Nebraska and UNL, so she was excited about coming to the state and the university. She said she wanted to work toward goals common to all people.

"Philosophically, I have a belief toward working for the collective good," she said.

Her new job as dean will give her the opportunity to look at things that affect the day-to-day lives of people.

"This is a college that really focuses on human beings in their natural systems."

Students 'learn to learn' in class

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And so far, the class has been successful, Kiewra said.

The three sections of the class being offered this semester filled up quickly, he said.

Kiewra also said the class has attracted a diverse mix of students from different class levels and majors.

And the students say they truly are learning how to learn.

Kyla Crom, a freshman psychology major, said the class has helped her to understand "you don't have to be a genius to be smart."

Crom said she has learned to organize information and to better manage her time.

Bob Soukup, a freshman architecture major, said he has also learned better time-management skills because of Strategies for Academic Success.

He said the course has helped him replace bad study habits with better ones.

For example, he now jots down notes in the margins of his textbooks as he reads rather than highlighting the information.

Both students said they were amazed they hadn't been taught the techniques earlier.

Beverly Benes, a professor of nutritional science and dietetics, has been sitting in on the course all semester and is a strong advocate of it.

She said she often wonders how she can help her students learn more effectively.

"Last semester I was so frustrated," Benes said. "As an instructor, what can I do?"

She said the course provides insight for instructors and students.

Kiewra said a similar one-credit-hour course was offered about eight years ago through the now-defunct Academic Success Center, of which Kiewra was director.

A wave of budget cuts about eight years ago forced the center to close its doors. With the center's closing, support for the course disappeared.

Kiewra had been trying to reincarnate the course ever since. He met with little success.

Kiewra said he periodically spoke to various departments and always met with the same answer.

"Everyone thought it was a good idea, but they always thought it was someone else's ball to handle," he said.

Kiewra also said he was told the type of course he wanted to offer was remedial, to which he would reply: "How can something that's never been taught be remedial?"

Finally, James O'Hanlon, then-dean of the Teachers College, allocated money for the course.

Now that the course is established, Kiewra has high expectations for its future.

Kiewra said although only about 100 students are enrolled in the class, he expects that number could exceed 500 in future semesters.

He also said several colleges are considering requiring freshmen to take the course.

Some students and professors agree the course's benefits should be as far-reaching as possible.

"I personally think it should be required in high school or junior high," Crom said.

Benes said the connections the course makes are vital to students' academic success.

"I am convinced now that all incoming students to the university in some way should take this course."

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