

Distance entomology course gives high school students a head start

Getting a live cockroach in

the mail would be unwelcome to most people, but not for those enrolled in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources' first science-based distance learning course offered to high school students.

Insect Biology is being taken by students at Mead, Laurel-Concord and Nebraska City high schools and the Lincoln Public Schools' Science Focus Program. It is taught by Tiffany Heng-Moss, assistant professor, and Connie Reimers-Hild, distance education coordinator and lecturer in the Department of Entomology at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Insect Biology is offered to college students, but this semester it expanded to high school students, who are required to complete the same level of work as students taking the course on campus, Reimers-Hild said.

Five high school students began the class by viewing a videotape introducing the faculty. As the semester went on, they communicated with each other on Internet discussion boards and took proctored exams.

One assignment includes studying the biology of hardy hissing cockroaches, tobacco hornworms

and mealworms, determining food and shelter requirements and even naming them, Heng-Moss said. Once that assignment was over, the students could send the insects back to the department or keep them as pets.

"We're trying to promote active learning through the insect pets," Heng-Moss said.

Insect Biology is part of an emphasis toward seamless education to ease transition from high school to college, said Susan Fritz, head of the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication, who helped promote the concept of seamless education through UNL.

"It's the wave of the future," Fritz said of the concept. "It's a way for us to bring post-secondary education into the high schools for those students who are ready."

Reimers-Hild said extending the course to high schools is a way to reach out to new audiences.

"By offering this course, CASNR is being very proactive in reaching both rural and urban audiences," she said.

Heng-Moss said the students



Tiffany Heng-Moss, assistant professor of entomology, shows a hissing cockroach that is part of CASNR's Insect Biology course.



benefit from the interactive course because they get a head start on their college careers, which will make it easier for them to earn their degrees in four years.

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The Dean Says:

I really enjoy a good graduation ceremony. Ditto student recognition banquets. Inductions into honor societies. Well-done student presentations.

I beam when I hear the applause. I look at pair after pair of enthusiastic hands showing their approval of our students' accomplishments with such pleasure and pride, and I share in the joy behind the sound. I think of all the hands that aid each student along the way.

There are hands that teach; hands reaching back in understanding and hands stretching forward in anticipation; hands that push and hands that pull.

How grateful I am for those hands.

Some belong to the parents and guardians, the grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins who saw our students through the first 18 or so years of their lives to get them here, who support them still and always will. I know I've said it before, and I say it again: When I talk with our students, when I hear their plans and experience their enthusiasm, I want to say to a whole lot of parents, "You did good." I applaud you.

When I see the rapport our students have with our faculty, and hear the wonderful stories of individual help with studies, internships, travel abroad and jobs, applause echoes in my head.

When I observe club sponsors who share their time and expertise so students can learn and grow in their interests and leadership skills, I hear that sound again. Ditto the faculty advisers who work with our students to see they get the courses, the experiences and the opportunities they need to develop skills for life.

Alumni and others who provide our students shadowing opportunities so they can learn more about a career; people who offer internships and provide scholarships; guest speakers — all are helping hands.



Steve Waller

Sometimes our alumni turn up at career fairs as recruiters for the companies that now employ them. They come because they know the quality of the education provided here, and the quality of the students who receive it. What a wonderful reason for applause!

Watching our students give someone else a hand makes my heart glad, too, and I see it done in a variety of ways. Sometimes it's in mentoring younger youth with the same kindness and concern with which our students are mentored; other times it's in working with people of all ages.

I think of all the good our students will go on to do in the world, advancing their careers, caring for their families, leading in their communities, and I can't help it.

I applaud.

Steve Waller
 Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

DSEL program motivates and involves freshmen

More than 40 College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources freshmen are getting a boost in building confidence and leadership skills, thanks to the Dean's Scholars in Experiential Learning (DSEL) program.

DSEL, now in its second semester, was developed by Dean Steve Waller to provide first-year CASNR students with success skills in and out of the classroom, both now and in the future.

"We try to remove that 'I don't count' perception that freshmen often have," said Sue Voss, CASNR student development and events director at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Voss organizes DSEL meetings, orients students to university activities, advises on volunteer opportunities, and regularly reminds students of upcoming events and deadlines.

"She's been not only a friend, but like a second mom," said Natalie Hart, a biochemistry major from Cozad and DSEL participant. "She's very interested in how I'm

doing, not just as a student but as a person."

"She keeps me on course," added Geoff Ruth, another DSEL participant and an agribusiness major from Shelby.

DSEL participants identify and build on their leadership strengths. They hear guest speakers such as Eugene Glock, who was state agriculture representative to former U.S. Sen. Bob Kerrey. They've also toured businesses and attended open forums on campus bus passes and parking.

"By meeting the people who shape or enforce the policy through our speakers and events, students are challenged to see and understand policy development and participate, not just accept the results," Waller said.

Waller encourages DSEL students to set high goals, then strive to attain them.

"The DSEL program gives students a responsibility to be



Brett Hampton

Geoff Ruth, an agribusiness freshman from Shelby, and Natalie Hart, a biochemistry freshman from Cozad, visit with Sue Voss, CASNR student development and events director.

active," he added. "And they seem to be excited about the program. This is a volunteer, noncredit activity that does become a high priority for these students. We've had exceptional attendance all semester."

Ruth, who plans to farm and perhaps eventually enter politics, definitely recommends that incoming CASNR freshmen participate in DSEL.

"It changes your idea of what other people are like," he said. "It changes your perception."

Hart joined the program because it "seemed to be a prime opportunity to meet other freshmen leaders." She has found it motivational, enthusiastic and supportive as she looks to her future as a physician.

"As freshmen, we may overlook opportunities that are down the road for us, in our junior or senior year," Hart said. "Sue and Dean Waller show us those opportunities now, so we can be ready for them."

— Barbara Rixstine

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Calendar of Events

April

6 Honors Convocation
6-12 CASNR Week

May

10 Graduation Breakfast and Graduation

June

4-6 Biotechnology Camp
12-14, 26, 30 New student enrollment (dates tentative)
16-20 Golf Camp
30-July 1 Premier Animal Science Events

July

1, 8, 10 New student enrollment (dates tentative)
13-17 Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute

August

21 Move into residence halls
24 Big Red Welcome
25 Classes begin
28 Adviser Advantage

September

1 Labor Day
5 Prairie Stomp (date tentative)

October

2 CASNR Career Fair
20-21 Fall break

CASNR-sponsored clubs gear students toward professional contacts

Tom Person dreams about tractors.

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources mechanized systems management senior from Albion is co-captain of the Quarter-Scale Tractor Team, one of 34 CASNR student organizations at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

He becomes so totally involved with the quarter-scale tractors he has helped build at UNL that “I never stop thinking about it — I have tractor dreams,” Person said.

Each year tractor team members design and build a new tractor. They seek donated parts and funds, analyze the economics of mass-producing their product and compete in an international tractor pull, Person said.

“It’s taking the book learning and putting it to practical use. We see the project from start to

finish,” Person said. “Nobody’s opinion is excluded — some of the smallest suggestions have made the biggest changes.”

Although team members can earn academic credit, Person said most are involved “for the fun of it.”

Last year the team placed eighth of 34 at an annual competition sponsored by the American Society for Agricultural Engineers at Moline, Ill. The contest attracts company representatives interested in both the tractors and the students who build them, Person said.

The Quarter-Scale Tractor Team is just one example of many CASNR student organizations providing students opportunities to enhance responsibility and teamwork skills, network with professionals and gain experience applicable to their fields and lives, said CASNR Dean Steve Waller.

“These organizations are a

wonderful way to develop professional skills, insight and experience that go beyond the transcript,” Waller said.

The UNL chapter of the National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA) is another example of a CASNR student organization offering students learning and networking experiences.

Kylee Wagner, NAMA president and agricultural economics senior from Winnetoon, said the club has developed marketing plans with the help of businesses such as James Arthur Vineyards and Data Transmission Network.

By developing a real-life plan, “we get a new understanding of what it is to put together a market analysis and report,” Wagner said, noting the club has developed plans for a plastic made from corn and for a service to manage feedlot waste as fertilizer.

Members of the UNL chapter of the National Agri-Marketing Association include from left: President Kylee Wagner, an agricultural economics senior from Winnetoon; Gibson Nene, an agribusiness and agricultural economics senior from Zimbabwe; and Eric Sweeney, an agribusiness senior from Loomis.

Cheryl Alberts



Quarter-Scale Tractor Team co-captains and mechanized systems management students Rich Siefken, left, of Wayne and Tom Person of Albion take axle measurements as they build this year’s tractor.

Wagner said club members value interactions with business professionals at local club meetings, as well as at the annual national conference, this year in San Diego. There, professionals critique student marketing plans entered in a

national contest, she added.

Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) is another example of CASNR-sponsored clubs. MANRRS welcomes and promotes involvement in these subjects for students of color. The club brings in speakers, provides



Brett Hampton



Chantal Afuh, a CASNR biochemistry freshman from Lincoln, is a member of the Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences club.

MLK speaker is CASNR freshman

The only youth speaker at the 2003 Chancellor's Martin Luther King Day observance at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources freshman.

Chantal Afuh, recipient of a youth award from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and a CASNR biochemistry major, plans to be a geriatric physician. Her mother and several aunts are nurses; she will be the first in her family to become a doctor.

"Health is something that has always been very important to my family," said Afuh, who has a summer internship at the Univer-

sity of Nebraska Medical Center at Omaha.

Afuh graduated in the top 3 percent of 641 students at Lincoln High School in May 2002. She said she became interested in CASNR after Dean Steve Waller spoke about CASNR's offerings at a six-week UNL Summer Institute for Promising Scholars last summer.

Afuh said she was impressed that the size of CASNR classes allows individual academic instruction from professors, and that CASNR has so many academic resources. She added she has really enjoyed the Introduction to Agricultural and Natural Resource Systems class, where students discussed topics such as biotechnology and nuclear energy.

— Cheryl Alberts

Visitors appreciate Fall Open House contacts

The first College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Fall Open House at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln attracted more than 250 participants, including more than 70 prospective students and their parents.

CASNR Dean Steve Waller welcomed participants from Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Colorado to the Nov. 23 event, which offered information on the breadth of CASNR's academic programs and the personal contacts CASNR offers, such as faculty advising.

UNL Dean of Admissions Alan Cerveny discussed with high school seniors the benefits of attending UNL, admissions guidelines and advantages of early application. Cindy Cammack, UNL associate director of admissions, discussed similar topics with high school sophomores and juniors.

"The Fall Open House gave students the opportunity to match their career interests with academic programs in CASNR," said Rosalee Swartz, CASNR

college relations director. She said some students applied for UNL admission that day, adding that "one transfer student decided to come a semester early, based on the open-house experience."

Participants expressed appreciation at being able to talk one-on-one with professors and unit administrators, the fact that professors went out of their way to help students find out more about a class or major, and at the overall help and friendliness of CASNR faculty, staff and student assistants.

Once prospective CASNR students apply to UNL and are admitted, that friendliness and help continue from advisers, faculty, staff and other students. For example, a number of CASNR students, including freshmen in the Dean's Scholars in Experiential Learning program, contact admitted students each month prior to their coming to campus to enroll in June and July, Swartz said.

— Barbara Rixstine

tours of businesses and helps find internships for students.

Chantal Afuh, a CASNR biochemistry freshman from Lincoln and a MANRRS member, said she has enjoyed hearing speakers from ConAgra and the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service discuss employment possibilities.

Students received tips from the speakers on how to make their resumes stand out and be remembered, Afuh said, adding she was eager to attend this year's national MANRRS conference in Atlanta.

"CASNR and employers value these extracurricular opportunities," Waller said. "The activities of these three clubs are examples of the diversity and value of all of our student organizations."

— Cheryl Alberts

A brief glimpse



Lori McGinnis

Ron Hanson

For the first time in more than three decades, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty member has been named president of the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture (NACTA).

Ron Hanson, Neal E. Harlan professor of agribusiness in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources' Department of Agricultural Economics, is serving as president of the organization for 2002-03.

NACTA is an international professional society that promotes and recognizes excellence in the post-secondary teaching of agriculture and related disciplines. It will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year.

Hanson is NACTA's first president from UNL since Franklin Eldridge in 1968-69. Hanson also received NACTA's Teaching Award of Excellence at the 2002 annual conference. It was the first time in the award's 34-year history that it was presented to a faculty member from UNL.

In addition, in January Hanson received a certificate of recognition from the UNL Parents Association for outstanding advising and contributions to students. Hanson has achieved this honor 13 times — more than any other UNL faculty member.

"It's quite an honor and a privilege to be chosen by NACTA, particularly when it's an organization whose sole purpose is to improve undergraduate instruction and student advising as well as reward faculty members who have demonstrated excellence in those regards. It's great to work directly with such talented faculty across the nation dedicated to college teaching and impacting students. The whole focus of my career at UNL has been interacting with students both in and out of the classroom."

— Lori McGinnis

Animal science academy develops technical,



Lori McGinnis

Vicki Wray wanted some direction in choosing a career path, so she became involved in the Animal Science Leadership Academy at the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

The academy, which began in spring 2002, promotes career development by providing animal science majors with co-curricular opportunities to develop their technical, leadership and communication skills.

Wray, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln animal science and agribusiness sophomore from Scotia, saw the program as a good opportunity.

"It got me thinking further down the road and provided me with insight about where I want to go," Wray said.

The academy is led by Linda Moody, assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication (AgLEC); and Dennis Brink, professor in the Department of Animal Science. Participating students major in animal science and minor in leadership and communication through AgLEC.

"It's innovative because it takes

Brent Nelms, right, an animal science freshman from Benkelman, job-shadows Mark Blackford, research feedlot manager at NU's Agricultural Research and Development Center.

existing curriculum from two departments and packages it for (animal science) students," Moody said.

"Leaders in the industry see this as something that's valuable," Brink said of the leadership training. "It's the foundation of what I believe is education."

Students take four one-credit hour classes that incorporate job-shadowing, service learning and other projects to hone their career development skills. So far they have attended a professional conference and planned to discuss animal agriculture with children and help children with science fair projects at two Lincoln elementary schools. Then they must take at least 18 credit hours of AgLEC courses and complete a professional internship to achieve their minor. Altogether, 27 animal science students now are in the academy.

Donald Beermann, animal science department head, said the academy helps students grow in interpersonal skills, organizational leadership and experiential

Leadership, communication skills

learning. It was developed after discussions with agriculture industry representatives, he said.

“They felt there were competencies that needed more attention and those include competencies we address with the leadership program,” Beermann said.

Brent Nelms, an animal science freshman from Benkelman, shadowed Mark Blackford, manager of the beef research feedlot at NU’s Agricultural Research and Development Center near Mead. Although his father manages a small feedlot, Nelms said spending a day at ARDC helped him learn

more about his interests in beef nutrition and management.

Wray job-shadowed at a hometown bank, and at Farm Credit Services of America and Nebraska Cattlemen, both in Lincoln.

Greg Ruehle, cattlemen executive vice president, said Wray shadowed him at the Nebraska Legislature. He said he is a “huge supporter” of programs such as the academy.

“It helps give students some real-life career experiences. It makes a nice complement to the course work they have in college,” Ruehle said.

— Lori McGinnis

Eight receive Holling Family Awards

Awards for teaching excellence have been given to four senior faculty members, two junior faculty members and two teaching assistants in the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

Senior faculty members awarded were Steven Jones, Department of Animal Science; Donald Lee, Department of Agronomy and Horticulture; Jack Schinstock, Department of Biological Systems Engineering, all in NU’s College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources; and Delmar VanDerWerff, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture. Each received \$5,000 stipends.

CASNR junior faculty members awarded were Tiffany Heng-Moss, Department of Entomology; and Jess Miner, Department of Animal

Science. Each received \$3,000 stipends.

CASNR teaching assistant awards were given to Kevin Delaney and Douglas Golick, both Department of Entomology. Each received \$1,000 stipends.

The Holling Family Awards for Teaching Excellence are given each year for teaching innovation in agriculture and natural resources. Recipients are selected by a faculty committee from CASNR, NCTA and NU Cooperative Extension.

The awards, presented March 12, are made possible through a \$3 million gift to the NU Foundation in 1990 from the Holling family to honor their parents. John Holling was a 1912 electrical engineering graduate and his brother Gustave attended the College of Agriculture.

— Lori McGinnis

A brief glimpse



Brett Hampton

Jill Kruger

While Jill Kruger is focusing on a career in public relations, she has gotten plenty of public attention personally.

The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources agricultural journalism senior was crowned 2002 homecoming queen, an honor that still stuns her. The Arlington native said she applied for queen because she loves the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Photographs of Kruger and king Troy Hassebroek of Lincoln graced several Nebraska newspapers. She received a football signed by the 2002 Nebraska football coaches and players, a ring from the UNL Alumni Association and a medal.

Kruger served as president of Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow and vice president of Chi Omega Sorority, and is a member of Mortar Board, Project Help and Block and Bridle Club. She also is a part-time communications specialist for the North Central Risk Management Education Center in the UNL Department of Agricultural Economics and eventually wants to work in public relations with an agricultural firm.

Kruger says her CASNR experiences are invaluable.

“There are so many opportunities. I feel like I know my professors. If I saw them a year from now I feel like I would still know them.”

“I would not trade colleges for anything in the world.”

— Lori McGinnis

CASNR Week April 6-12

Seasons of Success is the theme for the fourth annual CASNR Week sponsored by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Barbara Rixstine

This year's CASNR Week, April 6-12, is coordinated by Kylie Brand, an agricultural education junior from Seward; Jonie Garwood, an agricultural education sophomore from Central City; and Kay Gangwish, a family and consumer sciences sophomore from Wilmer, Minn.

Activities during CASNR Week include a chili feed, barbecue, rodeos and dances. A Lincoln Fire Department unit and students from three Lincoln elementary schools are invited to the April 7 Community Night for fun events

Kylie Brand, front, an agricultural education junior from Seward; and Jonie Garwood, an agricultural education sophomore from Central City, make plans for CASNR Week, April 6-12.

offered by CASNR clubs and organizations, Brand said.

The week's activities include (*indicates tickets needed):

April 6 — Reception and *Seasons of Success* Recognition Banquet*, East Union; *April 7* — Community Night, parking lot north of the union; *April 8* — Lunch on the Lawn, with live broadcasting from radio station Froggy 98; *April 9* — Adviser luncheon (*by invitation*); chili feed at Love Hall; *April 10* — Alpha Gamma Rho barbecue*, decathlon contest, Idylwild Drive and Holdrege Street; *April 11* — High school Sophomore-Junior Visit Day and Admitted Student event; UNL rodeo* and dance*, Saunders County Fairgrounds at Wahoo; *April 12* — UNL rodeo* and dance*, Wahoo.

Rodeo and dance tickets may be purchased at the fairgrounds door. Barbecue tickets are available from AGR fraternity members. Other events are free or accept free-will donations. Check with the CASNR office for a finalized event/time schedule.

— Barbara Rixstine

Entomology course

from page 1

"They've already taken one college course, so they'll come in with more confidence that they're ready to start college," she said.

Angela Leifeld, principal at Mead High School, said the course is an excellent one for students.

"It's good for them to have some college credit before they get on campus," she said. "It opens up their minds and ideas to what's out there so they can think about a career."

— Lori McGinnis

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