

'Roughing it' charts educational course for students

Paddling across a lake in northern Minnesota while exploring fish, wildlife and plant life sounds more like a vacation than a classroom experience.

But for up to two dozen University of Nebraska-Lincoln students, roughing it for a week in the Minnesota wilderness is all about learning.

"The whole notion is to get them into that area to experience the wilderness," said Scott Hygnstrom, School of Natural Resources professor.

Hygnstrom and assistant professors Larkin Powell and Drew Tyre will lead a trip this summer to the million-acre Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness. They will teach the two-credit hour field course, taken primarily by fisheries and wildlife students in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources.

Fisheries and wildlife students also are drawn to a field course at Cedar Point Biological Station north of Ogallala. The station is operated by UNL's School of Biological Sciences but the course attracts CASNR students and faculty each summer for three weeks.

John Holz, assistant SNR professor, teaches about lakes and streams.

"The real advantage to teaching out there is you're right in the middle of nature," Holz said. "It's an absolutely ideal place to teach."

Kent Fricke, a fisheries and wildlife junior from Monroe, said he went on the Boundary Waters tour last year because he had positive experiences with other

"If we find a beaver dam we'll stop and do a lesson on beavers," Hygnstrom said.

The Cedar Point course consists of morning lectures and afternoon field trips every day for three weeks.

Brenda Woodward, a 2003 fisheries and wildlife graduate from Doniphan and a current SNR



Larkin Powell

outdoor classes and hands-on learning activities. Fricke said he learned about the fire ecology of the area, wildlife species and the function of glacial lakes in the ecosystem.

"I knew I would have the opportunity to learn more in a week's time in the Boundary Waters than I would in a whole semester of classroom lecture," he said.

Instructors separate the students in groups and lead them as they canoe down lakes and streams. The students canoe for two to 10 hours a day, learn to navigate in the wilderness and investigate nature.



Students participating in the educational trip to the Boundary Water Canoe Area Wilderness in northern Minnesota spend some time fishing, canoeing and exploring.

graduate student, said she learned about field data collection from Cedar Point.

"The hands-on field work made the learning experience very fun," she said.

Holz agreed. "We do things there we just can't do on campus," he said. "All the resources are literally on our doorsteps."

— Lori McGinnis

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Chancellor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 Harvey Perlman

NU Vice President and Harlan Vice Chancellor, Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources
 John C. Owens

Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources
 Steve Waller

Editorial
 Judy Nelson
 Cheryl Alberts
 Barbara Rixstine
 Lori McGinnis

Designer
 Gary Goodding

Photographers
 Cheryl Alberts
 Brett Hampton
 Henry Doorly Zoo
 Lori McGinnis
 Tara Pawling
 Larkin Powell

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The Dean Says:

I am a great believer in community involvement.

I know what it has done for me; I've seen what it does for others.

Whether our community is a residence hall, fraternity, sorority, campus, town, state, nation or world, the role each of us plays in that community is important.

It matters.

When I was an undergraduate at Purdue University I was in the student senate, president of the Conservation Club, and president of Fowler House, the residence hall in which I lived that had its own student government.

You know what got me involved in those organizations?

Need.

I needed a friend, and the only friend I had when I started at Purdue was Tom, an outgoing extrovert older than me who already was involved on campus.

An introvert myself, I might have sat in my dorm room if I'd had someone to hang out with there. The only person I had to hang out with was going out — out to be involved. I could sit by myself or go along.

I went along. It was a fabulous ride.

Happily for students in our College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, community involvement is not happenstance. It's part of our culture. We build it into our classwork. We make it part of our lives.

CASNR faculty and staff model involvement by their own participation in a variety of community projects. They work hard to provide a balanced education that inter-

mingles academics and civic responsibility to prepare students for both careers and lives.

That's why you'll see our faculty running in the rain as part of our CASNR Student Fun Run. They're committed to being involved.

That's why you'll find me and my wife and CASNR's associate dean at our students' Snow Stomp dance at 10 p.m. on a



Steve Waller

Friday night. We are so proud to see our students participating and having fun in our campus community. We are so proud to be part of that community with them.

I look at all our students do to support the teams, the clubs, the projects, the people they're involved with — the enthusiasm they show, the caring, the intelligence and the commitment, and I think with such pride of the tremendous future I expect for them.

Steve Waller
 Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Student enthusiasm bolsters beef, education at national convention

When Chris Calkins ran out of ribbons, the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources animal science professor took it as a good sign.

The ribbons were given to the first 100 Nebraska alumni who stopped by the CASNR booth at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show and Convention in San Antonio. Calkins and four CASNR students attended the convention to extol Nebraska beef and education.

"Our producers are proud of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and they want others to know and respect the university as much as they do," said Calkins, whose research includes developing higher-value cuts of meat such as the flat iron steak.

Altogether, the CASNR representatives spent 27 hours at the Feb. 2-5 event. Calkins said the CASNR students were enthusiastic and knowledgeable.

One visitor asked why her child should attend CASNR. Several CASNR students answered, talking nonstop for 15 minutes about beef,



the college's majors, leadership opportunities, internships and student access to faculty, Calkins said.

Student presence and involvement at the national show was a "home run," he said, adding several potential employers approached CASNR students about their post-graduation plans.

An estimated 5,585 people were registered for this year's show. Space for the CASNR booth was

Animal science professor Chris Calkins was joined by four CASNR students and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns at the National Cattlemen's Beef Association Trade Show and Convention in San Antonio this year. From left are: Renee Minary, animal science senior from McCook; Don Moss, animal science graduate student from O'Neill; Aaron Fehring, animal science/grazing livestock systems graduate from Humphrey; Vicki Wray, agribusiness senior from Scotia; and Calkins.

provided through the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, which Calkins said helps emphasize Nebraska's position as a top beef producing and processing state.

CASNR representatives also held a reception and drawings for Nebraska producers.

— Cheryl Alberts

College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Calendar of Events

April

- 9 Burr Hall Bull Fry
- 10 Intercollegiate Regional Championship horse show
- 14-20 CASNR Week
- 15 Admitted-student reception, transfer new student enrollment
- 15-16 UNL rodeo, Elkhorn
- 17-19 Nebraska Youth Beef Leadership Symposium

May

- 7 Senior send-off and graduation
- 16 Transfer, new student enrollment; graduation

June

- 8, 10, 21, 25, 27, 29, 30 New student enrollment
- 12-17 Golf Big Red Academic Camp
- 14-17 "Building the Best Burger" and horsemanship Big Red Academic Camps
- 25 CASNR's 133rd birthday party
- 27-28 Premier Animal Science Events

July

- 7 New student enrollment

August

- 18 Move into residence halls
- 21 Big Red Welcome
- 22 Classes begin
- 25 Adviser Advantage

September

- 5 Labor Day

October

- 6 CASNR Career Fair
- 17-18 Fall break

Riding skills enhanced

from equestrian team coaching, practice, competition

The basket of lollipops on Libby Lugar's desk dispatches assignments. When equestrian team members select a candy there's a horse's name attached, the horse to ride during practice.

Team members weekly perfect their horsemanship, using posture,

Lugar, a College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources equine lecturer, said team members are highly dedicated to riding and helping each other, whether grooming the 17 horses donated to the university for class and team use, or cleaning stalls.

Grim and Hansen agree their equestrian team experiences will be valuable as they seek careers in horse breeding or training. Other fields where horses play a big role include racing, showing, feedlots and ranching, feed companies and more.



Cheryl Alberts

balance and control to test their abilities astride unfamiliar horses and saddles. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Equestrian Team members compete in up to 10 events per school year. Riders accumulating the highest points compete nationally within the Intercollegiate Horse Show Association.

Lindsey Salestrom, an animal science sophomore from Tekamah, joined the team as a first-semester freshman. In 2004 she was national reserve champion in intermediate horsemanship.

"I wasn't expecting to get that far my first year," said Salestrom, current team captain. She credits Lugar's coaching and encouragement for her growth in leadership and riding.

For Mollie Grim of Bonesteel, S.D., and Micah Hansen of Laurel, riding is a passion and the highlight of their weeks. Both animal science juniors agree things go smoother after practice, which they say is therapeutic and energizing.

A skilled rider knows within the first couple of steps how a horse will handle, Hansen said, adding it's easier for the horse to do its job when the rider does his or her job.

Grim, president of the equestrian team and an animal science ambassador, said she has learned self-control and patience working with people and horses of various personalities.

Equestrian team members Mollie Grim of Bonesteel, S.D., and Micah Hansen of Laurel, both animal science juniors, are assisted by CASNR equine lecturer Libby Lugar as they pre-prepare for their weekly ride.

Nationally, an estimated 7 million horses have more than a \$112 billion impact on the economy, Lugar said. Nebraska has about 180,000 horses.

Steve Waller, CASNR dean, said some equestrian team members — especially novice riders — are exhilarated by doing things they never dreamed of accomplishing.

Participation on the team, along with nine equine classes, Rodeo Club and Horse Judging Team, offer a full complement of activities and courses providing an educational experience in equine science at UNL, Waller added.

Interest in horses at UNL is "huge," Lugar said. Three years ago, when she began

working with the equestrian team, 12 people came to an informational meeting about the team. Last year, 59 students came and 28 were selected as team members.

Lugar said because of the quality of facilities, horses and organization, UNL is hosting the intercollegiate Regional Championship show April 10.

— Cheryl Alberts

Challenging golf major provides student excitement



Tara Pawling

Jason Harrell had decided to take a break from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln when, one Saturday, he read a newspaper article that changed his life's direction.

The article was about the new Professional Golf Management program at UNL's College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources. That Monday, the avid golfer of 17 years contacted program director Terry Riordan. On Tuesday he signed up.

"I came back to school for this program," said the junior from Lincoln, who began with 30 other students in fall 2004.

"Once I found out more about it, I was excited about it," said Harrell, now president of the PGM program's student club.

Excitement about golf is what has driven the success of the PGM program in its initial semester, Riordan said.

"This major gives the students an opportunity to study and have a

career path in something they have a passion for," Riordan said.

Plus, they need to be good at it. Going into the program, golfers must have a handicap of 12 or better.

UNL's program is only the 15th in the country and was accredited by the Professional Golfers' Association (PGA) last year. The rigorous program combines UNL courses with PGA requirements. Students take a core of UNL courses in business, the sciences such as biology and chemistry, turfgrass management, and food and beverage management, said administrative assistant Tara Pawling. Knowledge and skills related to golf are covered in the PGA's thick textbooks, which address such topics as rules of the game, tournament operations, golf car fleet manage-

ment, golf club design and repair, and teaching golf.

Scott Holly, left, Professional Golf Management program internship coordinator, works with Garrett Svoboda, a PGM junior from Hastings.

ment, golf club design and repair, and teaching golf.

To complete the PGA Playing Ability Test required for graduation, students improve their skills through club tournaments, and receive individual and group instruction from PGA professionals. They play and practice at Wilderness Ridge Golf Course, and at Yankee Hill and Hillcrest country clubs in Lincoln.

Also required are 16 months of full-time internships conducted during the summers and an additional semester. Scott Holly, PGM internship coordinator, said intern responsibilities may include setting up tournaments, running a junior camp or marketing a golf course.

Josh White is a junior from Lincoln and the son of the head golf professional at Wilderness Ridge. He, too, decided to become a PGM major.

"It has turned out to be my best year in school," White said.

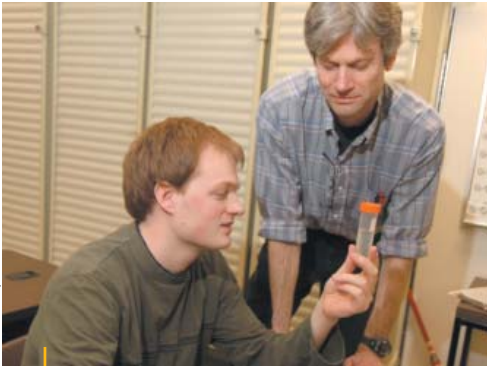
The program is on track to double in size its second year with an estimated 60 students, Riordan said.

— Lori McGinnis



Brett Hampton

A brief glimpse



Brett Hampton

CASNR professor Don Lee, right, discusses with Jared Hartman, animal science junior from Laurel, how DNA test tube results can be interpreted.

Don Lee believes stories involving genetics are everywhere. The College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources professor aims to help students see those stories in the world around them.

When teaching plant genetics, Lee knows his University of Nebraska-Lincoln lab students who actually extract plant DNA into a test tube, versus reading about it in a textbook, find the process more real. Students then visualize how scientists work and are empowered to feel comfortable with the process.

Lee's innovative teaching methods have earned him many awards, including two in 2004: the Crop Science Teaching Award from the Crop Science Society of America, and the Agronomic Research Education Award from American Society of Agronomy.

That national recognition also is partly based on his work with national experts to develop the online Library of Crop Technology, <http://croptechnology.unl.edu>. Site users get unbiased, research-based information on plant genetics, genetic engineering and biochemistry through more than 70 lesson modules, some in Spanish.

"I love to see people learn: to see students learn the ability to solve a problem or see a connection between what we're learning here in class and what they're learning in life. That's the greatest satisfaction I get from my work."

— Barbara Rixstine

CASNR Week

April 14-20

Students — and agriculture and natural resources — build *Foundations for the Future*, the theme for the sixth annual CASNR Week April 14-20.

Amber Holl, agribusiness senior from Gibbon, and Beth Maricle, animal science junior from Albion, are coordinating the week, sponsored by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Scheduled activities follow. Union events designated are in the Nebraska East Union.

April 14 — Blood drive, Union; Alpha Gamma Rho barbecue, Idylwild Drive and Holdrege Street.

April 15 — After Dinner Delights Dessert Competition, Hollywood Squares, Union; UNL rodeo and dance, Chance Ridge Event Center, Elkhorn.

April 16 — Fun run/walk; pancake feed, Union; UNL rodeo and dance, Elkhorn.

April 17 — Student Involvement Reception, Union; CASNR recognition and awards banquet, Union.

April 18 — Undergraduate Teacher Assistants Recognition Luncheon, Union; Community Night, Union.

April 19 — Lunch on the lawn, Union; "Wear Your CASNR Shirt Day."

April 20 — Club Adviser luncheon (by invitation), Union.

AGR barbecue tickets are available from AGR members. For information about the final schedule, or tickets to the rodeo or banquet, contact the CASNR office at (402) 472-0609.

— Cheryl Alberts

Eight awarded

Holling Family Awards

Four senior faculty, two junior faculty and two teaching assistants have been cited for teaching excellence by the University of Nebraska Institute of Agriculture and Natural Sciences.

Senior faculty recipients of the 2005 Holling Family Awards for Teaching Excellence include: Elizabeth Birnstihl, University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension; Judy Bowmaster and David P. Smith, Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA); and Merlyn Nielsen, Department of Animal Science. Each received a \$5,000 stipend.

Junior faculty members recognized are Clyde Cranwell, NCTA, and Brett White, Department of Animal Science. Each received a \$3,000 stipend.

Teaching assistants awarded are Carmen Gherasim, Department of Biochemistry, and Jennifer Moss, Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication. Each received a \$1,000 stipend.

The Holling awards, given annually, were made possible by a \$3 million gift from the Holling family in 1990 to the NU Foundation to honor their pioneer parents. John Holling was a 1912 electrical engineering graduate and his brother, Gustave, attended the College of Agriculture before farming the family's land in the Wood River area.

Awards were presented March 8 at the Nebraska East Union.

— Lori McGinnis

Freshmen provide good examples for second-graders

Second-graders at Hartley Elementary School in Lincoln are learning about college, thanks to their pen pals such as Janae Althouse of Eagle, an agribusiness freshman.

"I wrote that I grew up on a farm and that I have a lot of homework," said Althouse, a member of the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources' Dean's

Scholars in Experiential Leadership (DSEL) program.

Thirty-four DSEL freshmen each correspond with 35 Hartley students, said Sue Voss, CASNR student development and events director. This relationship meets the DSEL service learning requirement for community involvement, Voss said. The two groups usually don't meet in person until the end of the school year, if at all.

Hartley teacher

Karen Heafer said the children enjoy the letter exchanges.

"Many of our kids don't have an older brother or sister in college," she said. "For them to have someone like that to relate to is pretty cool."

In addition to the letter-writing, DSEL students last fall decorated sweat shirts for the second-graders, bought winter hats and mittens, and delivered them with a candy

cane. They also made school supply kits for the children. The Hartley children made treat bags for the DSEL students.

Althouse said going to college may not be something the second-graders have thought about, and she hopes the interaction inspires them.

"It may trigger something in their minds that tells them that they want to do that," Althouse said.

— Lori McGinnis



Lori McGinnis

Janae Althouse of Eagle gives a bag of school supplies to Erin Hoaglin, her Hartley Elementary School pen pal. Althouse is a member of the Dean's Scholars in Experiential Leadership group, which corresponds with the Lincoln second-graders.

A brief glimpse



Henry Doorly Zoo

CASNR graduate Delia Buerstetta works with penguins at the Henry Doorly Zoo.

Sometimes when you jump in and do the work, it pays off.

Just ask Delia Buerstetta, a 2004 University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources graduate.

"Delia was extremely active in our fisheries and wildlife major," said Larkin Powell, CASNR assistant professor and her former adviser. "An officer in Wildlife Club. Received the club's student of the year award. Active student and academically motivated."

At Powell's suggestion, Buerstetta interned at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Omaha, which eventually led to her current position as aquarium birds keeper.

"There's a lot of competition for those positions," Powell said. "Many students have a portfolio or a research project they can use to get them in the door. But with zookeeping, there is no class, no portfolio, no project. You just have to do the work."

Buerstetta said her interest in animals started at age 4, when she was given her first stuffed animal, a tiger. When college beckoned, she thought about careers in both veterinary science and wildlife photography. She decided on zookeeping after reviewing all the CASNR degree options. She credited Powell, her CASNR class experiences and her work with the Wildlife Club as helping her get her foot in the door.

"Wildlife Club gave me leadership experience, experience in being organized, experience in speaking. It also gave me a knowledge base about everything concerned with wildlife."

— Barbara Rixstine

Student input positively affects administration

Wanted: students interested in government, helping others and taking responsibility. Must be interested in volunteer and service learning commitment. Pays in increased leadership ability, enhanced self confidence, task management and resume credentials.

That could be an ad for College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Advisory Board members at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, according to CASNR Dean Steve Waller.

CASNR bylaws stipulate that an advisory board represent students in the college. This year's 12-member board represents the college's estimated 1,450 students in 22 majors. Representatives are elected through the Associated Students of the University of Nebraska (ASUN) for one year, with the option to continue another year.

Those Snow Stomp and annual Prairie Stomp dances? They are CASNR Advisory Board responsibilities. So are listening and responding to CASNR students through an annual interactive survey, and reflecting the majority of student issues to CASNR governance.

"The board is the student voice of the college," Waller said. "They bring in issues and discuss them with CASNR deans and directors. They reflect the common good of servant leadership."

Ryan Walrath is a fisheries and wildlife junior from Primrose, and the advisory board's president. He said that experience is teaching him to delegate and manage tasks.

That fits with Matt Spilker's take on a board member's experience. The agricultural economics lecturer

was a board adviser from 2000 to 2002. During that time, Spilker said he saw positive changes in the leadership styles of advisory board students.

"When they were first elected to that board, they may have felt a little green, a little unsure of themselves," he said. "But after two years, they were a lot more confident and quicker to make decisions."

The advisory board seeks and gives feedback from the 30-plus CASNR student clubs, a practice applauded by William Campbell, biological systems engineering assistant professor and one of two current faculty advisers.

"It's good for them to have input to and from other clubs," he said. "The links are very helpful to them in finding out other issues of interest to students."

Despite their student status, advisory board members do have



CASNR Advisory Board President Ryan Walrath, left, a fisheries and wildlife junior from Primrose, gets help to manage and promote the work of the board from faculty advisers William Campbell and Kim Todd.

impact, Campbell said.

"Being on the board gives students an opportunity to have more input into the administration of CASNR and, ultimately, the administration of the university."

— Barbara Rixstine

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