

STUDENT LIFE

Relations class smooths bumps in road of life

By Marilyn Hagerty
Grand Forks Herald
(KRT)

They come with backpacks, wearing jeans and layers of sweaters and jackets. And this past week, I notice more of them are covering their heads with knit caps. Twenty-two students file quietly into Room 101 of O'Kelly Hall on the University of North Dakota campus. The room has large windows that give a view of the UND School of Law through trees now bereft of their leaves.

I sit there, reading a copy of the Dakota Student I had picked up in Memorial Union. I had asked Mary Haslerud Opp, the instructor, if I could visit one of her classes on Interpersonal Relations. That's something they didn't have when I majored in journalism years ago at the University of South Dakota. As a matter of fact, they didn't have a School of Communication. In those days, you just majored in journalism if you planned to do newspaper work. Newspapers were everything. Radio was a pesky competitor. Television was somewhere on the back burner.

It's hard to explain, but there is something within that makes me want to go back to classes again each fall.

For four years, I visited the UND School of Medicine following the Class of 2000 through to graduation. Then for three years, I was an occasional student of law at UND. I followed the class of 2003. Then, I took a year off. This fall, I wanted a sample of a class in my own field. The students who take this Interpersonal Relations class are from all corners of the campus. It's a popular class, and it's required for several majors.

Surreptitiously, I look around the room before the instructor arrives. It's almost 9:30 a.m., and the students are awake but fairly quiet. Mary Haslerud Opp arrives. Blond hair tousled. Navy jacket over pink shirt and navy jumpsuit.

We're on Chapter 8 of the textbook, "Looking Out Looking In," by Adler and Towne. It's all about relationships between friends and between men and women. Instructor Opp doesn't use a lot of extraneous comments as she starts the class on Chapter 8. Just, "Put everything away. Choose five terms from the readings and define them."

It's all done methodically. The stu-

dents turn in their papers.

Next comes the discussion. They are talking about forming relationships with other people and how the environment you come from is everything. If people have the same attitudes and similarities, we tend to like them. What keeps us in a friendship is respect, psychological support and caring.

When it comes to forming relationships for a mate, it's physical attraction, intelligence and sex appeal. In all personal relationships, Opp is saying, you sometimes notice other people have a trait, such as procrastination, like your own. And you tend not to like that.

The class discussion continues with Opp leading the way and students presenting examples. I am fascinated. They are talking about people who throw open their lives to you and tell you too much. You don't want to hear all that. One student said when he calls his mom, he means to talk for two minutes. She goes on for 20 minutes telling him more than he wants to hear about her problems. Another comments about people who "spill their guts" to you, and you don't even know them.

Another student says his mother is a hairdresser, and people tell her everything. She knows everything that goes on in her town. The discussion continues about the need people feel to be heard. And how barbers and hair stylists hear it all.

Opp guides the discussion to the levels of intimacy between family members: "In some families, they never hug. And that's OK. That's fine." Also, she is pointing out that in any relationship, levels of intimacy wax and wane. "That's how relationships go," she says. "You can't be too demanding."

The class nods in agreement as she talks about women building a relationship on talking. Men are more likely to do something to help out. Change a light bulb. Fix a door. "We need to understand and know where the other person is coming from," she says.

I go away, hoping my parking meter hasn't expired. I am thinking this is stuff you learn on your way through life. Now, students in medical fields, aeronautics and such take a course in interpersonal relations. I think of how good it would have been to pick up some of those skills before starting out on a career.

Soccer player reflects on team trip to Ireland



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The Penn State Behrend Women's Soccer Team spent the summer competing and traveling in Ireland.

Commentary by Colleen
Applebaugh
staff writer

This past summer, the ladies in blue traveled overseas to compete internationally. The team fundraised for nearly 2 years in order for this opportunity to take place. Go Play Sports travel agency planned an amazing journey for these Behrend players.

After eight and a half hours of flights and delays, the women arrived in Dublin, Ireland on August 10, 2004. The ladies were met by their tour guide Nicola Watts, more formally known as Nicky. The team stayed in the 2nd finest hotel in Ireland, the Burlington Hotel.

The first task on hand for the women was to overcome the jet lag. "I was so tired all day, but Nicky forced us to stay awake until after dinner," junior forward Heather "heater" Crawford remarked, "so we walked around Downtown Dublin and found our own 'fun' to make us stay awake."

Day 3 was the beginning of the team's tours and playing schedule. Behrend went to Trinity College located centrally in Dublin's fair city. The tour included the Trinity library where a book stock of 4.25 million volumes, 30,000 current serials, significant holdings of maps and music and an extensive collection of manuscripts, the most famous being The Book of Kells is found.

"Trinity College was a really neat experience because we got to see foreign college life," said Kara Struski, a sophomore wide midfielder, "the Book of Kells was cool too, but it smelled like straight up Italian hoagie in there and people were rude, so we left immediately."

Following their tour of Trinity College, the ladies went to the historical Kilmainham Prison. This prison is a landmark for the Irish people as a sign of their independence from the union with Great Britain. The women explored the prison, learned some Irish history, and were touched by the stories of pa-

triotism, courage, and loyalty.

Some of the women enjoyed the prison so much that they left their mark behind. Captain junior defender Steph Bowen, along with a few others, christened the Kilmainham prison. The team does not wish to disclose any further information, but if you are curious, please direct your questions to Bowen.

At 7 p.m. that evening, the team suited up to play UCD Dublin, the second string national team. Players on UCD Dublin have seen playing time against American greats, like Mia Hamm and Brandi Chastain. Behrend fell to their opposition 8-0, but found the game profitable. We went into the game giving it all we had," senior central midfielder Carrie Smock detailed, "no one told us some of them were on the national team!" The blue and white were able to meet the team afterwards for some refreshments and soccer tips.

The fourth day of touring was spent with a full day of excursions to the Hill of Tara. Trim Castle and the beautiful gardens at Larchill Arcadian. The Hill of Tara dates back to 3000 B.C. and is the birthplace of Christianity in Ireland. St. Patrick preached on the hill and baptized Irish people in the faith.

Trim Castle is the largest and one of the most important Norman military constructions in Ireland. The castle was first constructed in the 12th century and remodeled three more times with technical improvements. Many people have seen Trim Castle in the movie Braveheart featuring Mel Gibson.

The next day the team found more exploration with a trip to the Rock of Cashel and Waterford. The Rock of Cashel is a group of medieval buildings set on an outcrop of limestone in the Golden Vale. There are many legends behind this spectacular site, but the most favored by the team was the love fable. It is believed that if a person hops on their right leg around St. Patrick's cross 25 times, that person will find his true love in 6 months. Juniors Holly Greiner and Jill Vroman

were bold enough to attempt this legendary feat.

Since the team was to play their second game against Benfica FC located in Waterford, they were able to visit the world famous Waterford Crystal Factory. The women received a first hand look at how crystal was made, craved, inspected, and sold.

Behrend lost their second game to Benfica FC by a large margin. The team was unable to score again, but felt the game forced them to play harder. Following the game, the team went out to dinner with the women from Benfica FC. Benfica present the Behrend women with beautiful Waterford token.

August 14, 2004 the team celebrated a special junior midfielder's birthday; Michelle Newland turned 20 Irish style. Unfortunately the birthday luck did not shed light for the women in their third and final game against the Shamrock Rovers FC. They fell again to a strong Irish team, but found out after the match that the team has been playing with one another for nearly 8 years.

The next morning the team ventured to the Guinness Storehouse where they discovered secrets about that ultra dark beer. Later that evening the team embarked some traditional Irish folklore song and dance.

The final day was a free for all. The players could go anywhere, see anything, but most opted to shop. Many of the players visited their favorite spots along Grafton Street, St. Steven's Greens or the Temple Bar. They might have been seen hanging out with their favorite fair maiden, Miss Molly Malone.

The team enriched their lives by visiting this enchanted country. Everything from the nightlife to the food was an interesting occurrence. The team grew together both on the pitch and off the field. The trip truly unified these proud Behrend soccer players. For some, this was their first time out of the country, but for all this was an experience that will last forever in their memories.

Know an interesting student?
Want your band featured?
E-mail us at
behrendbeacon@aol.com

Ask ASCII: What are advantages to search engines?

Dear ASCII:

I heard last week that Microsoft just launched a prototype of a new Internet search engine. Because my Pavlovian response is to type in Google.com, I'd almost forgotten there were other search engines. Google has a cute name and answers all of my questions just fine, so why should I bother using anything else? Is there some advantage that I don't know about to Yahoo or Dogpile, which, frankly has a name I find revolting?

Just wondering while typing in Google to find the correct spelling of Dogpile.
-Searcher

Dear Searcher:

Microsoft has indeed launched its their new search engine, which was specifically designed to compete with Google. Microsoft has had their prototype out for a few months for testing purposes, and now they've released what they're calling a "finished product" for use by the general searching public. As has been Microsoft's pattern, it came out with this new product by copying someone else's. And as is usual for Microsoft, it went to the best to replicate: Google.

Before Google, search engines worked by reading what a web site claimed to be about. That was fine at first, but then site owners began fibbing about who and what they were to get more hits. The two graduate students

who created Google succeeded with an innovative alternative search approach. It works like this: the search engine races around the web, following links and looking at who linked to a site and what they said about it. A site is ranked in the Google search engine based on how many other web pages linked to it and which pages they were. Links on big time sites - such as www.psu.edu - are more valuable than links on some geocities site. So if you type "Penn State" in the Google search window, Google will give you www.psu.edu first because most links that say "Penn State" link to www.psu.edu.

Although Google patented the exact way it performs the search, the general principle of observing connectivity on the Internet can't be patented, so MSN was free to copy the idea, which they did. While it's generally agreed that Google's results are still the best, Microsoft has come very close with their new engine.

You may want to try using search engines other than Microsoft and Google though, depending on what you want. Google's algorithm is great for finding popular or important sites but is lacking if you're searching for something really esoteric. Also, different search engines tend to return a different "flavor" of results because of their distinct ways of indexing sites on the Internet. Dogpile (the name refers to a pile of dogs,

like "puppy pile" rather than a pile made by a dog. It's not supposed to be revolting) is what's called a "meta-search-engine." It doesn't do any actual searching on its own. Dogpile performs your search at a bunch of other sites (including Google, Ask Jeeves, and others.)

There is a long history of "best" search engines, most of which have fallen into obscurity, and there will be plenty more to come. Don't worry about Google though, most of the old "best" engines are still around in some form or another, even after most people have forgotten about them.

MSN's new search engine doesn't represent any real improvement in search technology. It's just them trying to catch up with Google. The next big break through in searching will probably be an engine that searches for images more effectively. Many people are trying to come up with something to improve what we currently have. I'm particularly looking forward to that because there is a comic strip I wanted to show you all about the history of search engines, but I was utterly unable to locate it with any search engine which I tried.

Do you have a computer question? Ask ASCII! Send an e-mail to lws118@psu.edu with "Ask ASCII" in the subject line to get your question answered.

ALL COLLEGE STUDENTS WELCOME!

When: Every 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month from 6:30-8:30PM (right after the Saturday night service that starts at 5:30PM. Come early and enjoy an unusual experience that you would not consider "typical church".)

Where: Grace Baptist Church (3908 West 38th Street Erie, PA)

What: All college-age students are welcome to enjoy some coffee, music and games while relaxing in a fun atmosphere where you can connect with friends.

Directions: go to www.grace-erie.org

Got Questions? Call Scott at 833-5384 or e-mail at truss@grace-erie.org