



Dr. Terrill J. May emphasizes paying attention to a student's individual needs. St. John Fisher College

Prof takes heed of students

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — *Achtung! Achtung!*

Attention, all wallflowers! Beware of taking a language class with Dr. Terrill J. May of St. John Fisher College — you just might wind up blossoming!

Making such a thing happen is one of the major goals of the professor of German and French, as he begins each semester facing a fresh crop of foreign-language students.

May noted that it edifies him greatly to see formerly shy, unassuming students go to the top of his class.

"That's the most exciting part of teaching is the ones who have absolutely no promise or little promise blossom and take off," he remarked.

Interestingly, however, May showed no desire some years ago to stand in front of a classroom and instruct students.

"As an undergrad, I was absolutely determined I wasn't going to teach," May said, recalling that in the late 1960s, he had shunned the idea of addressing large groups of students.

But working as a teaching assistant during his years of graduate school, he slowly became accustomed to enjoying working with students he met in the discussion groups he moderated.

Eventually, he took a job teaching at Ithaca College, where he also ran the school's foreign-study program, a task that he's also assumed at Fisher.

At Fisher, May has applied the same discussion-oriented approach he developed in grad school. "One of the ways to break

the ice is to try and get (the students) to talk about themselves," the professor said, pointing out that he pairs the classmates to practice their newly learned phrases with each other. The method is designed to help them get over any shyness they have of speaking in public.

In his 12-year tenure with Fisher's modern languages and classical studies department, May has also taught English and foreign film classes. His department chairwoman, Margaret Ekstrom, praised May to the skies for his contribution to her corner of the college.

"He's very reliable, very cooperative, very hardworking and very dedicated," she said. "He meets his classes on time. He's almost never absent. He turns in his projects and any special reports that he gets in on time."

Ekstrom recently went further than patting her colleague on the back, nominating May for the Sears-Roebuck Foundation Teaching Excellence and Campus Leadership Award, which he won in June. May was one of 700 teachers nationwide chosen for the award, which recognizes the "resourcefulness and leadership" of a private college educator.

May and the college each received \$1000 grants as part of the award. The college's dean, Thomas McFadden, cited May's attention to his academic charges as reason for the honor.

"I am very pleased that Dr.

May has been honored," McFadden said. "He exemplifies the dedication to student learning, which the college regards as paramount to its mission."

May exclaimed that he was unaware that he was in line for the award. "It was a big surprise to me," he said, noting that when Ekstrom told him she had put his name up for nomination, "I thought she was joking."

Although he emphasizes a lighthearted touch in his own teaching, he takes his students and their individual woes seriously.

"They're all different," he said of those who enroll in his courses. "One general problem for students at Fisher is that they work so much to make money."

He noted that many students have come to him over the years bemoaning their lack of cash, and he usually tries to set them up with some sort of financial aid. May emphasized that he'll tell a student, "There are ways of solving your problem by not killing yourself."

One student who benefitted from bending May's ear recently returned from Austria, where she had studied for a year. Gretchen Paul, a senior majoring in German and international studies, explained that in the year before her Austrian sojourn May frequently helped her deal with some personal problems.

"He helped give me answers, but he wouldn't find them," she

Continued on page 10A

Education office sets milk policy

The Diocese of Rochester's Catholic School Office has announced a free and reduced-price meal (free milk) policy for students in diocesan Catholic schools.

The policy sets specific eligibility criteria based upon income levels and family sizes. A chart stipulating the eligibility figures — as well as a complete copy of the policy — can be obtained from the principal's office at each of the participating schools.

Families whose incomes fall at or below the levels stipulated for their family sizes are urged to apply for free and/or reduced-price meals (or free milk) by filling out application forms that have been sent to parents. Application forms also are available from the principal's office at each school.

Applications may be submitted to the school principal at any time during the school year. Changes in employment, family income or size necessitate the submission of new applications. Information provided on application forms will be held in strict confidence and will be used only for the purpose of determining eligibility.

The school district does, however, reserve the right to verify information provided by parents at any time during the school year. If a parent declines to provide information to the school, his or her children will no longer be eligible for free or reduced-price meals (free milk).

In certain cases, foster children are also eligible for these benefits, and families interested in obtaining benefits for foster children should contact their children's schools.

Under the provisions of the policy, the designated official will review applications and determine eligibility. If a parent is dissatisfied with a ruling made by the designated official, he or she may make a request — either orally or in writing — for an appeal hearing. Each school has designated an official to conduct

hearings, and hearing procedures are outlined in the policy.

Prior to initiating an appeal procedure, a parent or School Food Authority may request a conference in which parents and officials may discuss the situation, present information and obtain an explanation of the data submitted in the family's application and of the decisions rendered.

A request for a conference shall not in any way prejudice or diminish a family's right to a fair hearing.

All questions on the application must be answered completely for the application to receive consideration by the school district. In addition, the form must be signed by a parent or guardian who certifies that the information is true and correct.

No child shall be discriminated against because of his or her race, sex, color, national origin, age or handicap. If any member of a household believes he or she has been discriminated against, he or she should write the the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

A complete copy of the policy is on file in the office of the School Food Authority District Administrator, where it may be reviewed by any interested persons.

Participating schools are: St. Agnes, Avon; Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport; All Saints Academy, Corning; St. John of Rochester, Fairport; St. Francis DeSales/St. Stephen, Geneva; St. John the Evangelist, Greece; St. Ann, Hornell; St. Margaret Mary, Irondequoit; St. Patrick, Owego; St. Joseph, Penfield; St. Michael, Penn Yan; St. Louis, Pittsford; Christ the King, Guardian Angels, Holy Ghost, Mother of Sorrows, St. Boniface, St. Josaphat, St. Lawrence, St. Stanislaus, St. Theodore and St. Thomas More, all of Rochester; St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport; St. Joseph, Wayland; and Holy Trinity and St. Rita, both of Webster.

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