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# UNIVERSITY LETTER

UND'S FACULTY/STAFF NEWSLETTER

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## TOP STORIES

### Faculty Q&A: Da Vinci Code

The Da Vinci Code, the Ron Howard movie based on the best-selling book by Dan Brown, was released Friday in theaters across the United States to a loudly mixed chorus of critics and fans. University of North Dakota pop culture scholar and English professor Kathleen Dixon observes that the Da Vinci Code--love it or hate it--is a cultural phenomenon.

"People study this industry, the text, and the audience," says Dixon, who has a broad expertise in other cultural icons such as the Oprah Winfrey Show. "You find out how the industry regards the work that it's doing and how it produces this kind of book [or movie] even before it becomes a blockbuster. We're talking about the pipeline production mechanics of a popular novel."

And the key fact--often lost in the heated debate about the book's merits and defects--is that the book is, and was intended by its author to be, a novel. "As a novel, it achieved blockbuster status, and you can see that just by going to the bookstores: all those spinoffs, a lot of people making money just by writing about the novel," Dixon notes.

Notoriety--the bad press that Dan Brown's magnum opus is getting in some quarters--adds to that blockbuster energy, says Dixon. "We'd have to ask what Dan Brown's career was before the Da Vinci Code and what it's now like after the Da Vinci Code."

Whatever else may be true or not about the novel and what Dan Brown's message might be, it's now into mega-sell. "That's what Dan Brown is in now, so we want to see things from the perspective of the producers. I mean, you now have a book touting the Da Vinci Code tour. That's for fairly upscale readers. You've got many readers who could never afford to travel to see the Louvre--a focal point in the novel--but you also have readers planning vacations based on the Da Vinci Code."

Dixon says that once the publishers--and now the moviemaker, Ron Howard--realized that they had a cash tiger by the tail, they got their public relations machines working overdrive.

"A lot of times, people in these industries--publishing, entertainment--are beyond the rest of us," Dixon notes. "They are right up on the cultural currents, the trends, the feelings and thoughts among people, what's hot and what's not."

So, Dixon argues, the folks who're taking issue with some of the novels contentions may have failed to grasp that, essentially, the author is telling a story and that the publishers of that story are in the business of making money.

"The Da Vinci Code is fiction, and it's not supposed to be scholarly high art. In fact, it's rare that a truly scholarly, carefully researched book is going to be popular," Dixon says. "Scholars have to be skeptical, have to be objective, and should maintain a cool perspective on something." Novelists, including Dan Brown, are free, within the concept of "artistic license," to spin any tale that they want and take the characters wherever they want to take them.

Of course, it's also rare that a novel--even one turned into movie--is spun off as a large-format, glossy, coffee table version with lovely color reproductions of art, places, and architecture that are mentioned in the novel, Dixon observes.

The Da Vinci Code also is unusual, but not unprecedented, because it has fueled a critical backlash, especially among Catholics and evangelical Christians, Dixon says. "Generally speaking, they don't seem to favor Dan Brown's book, although the Christian Science Monitor gave it a favorable review.

"There are scholars, theologians, historians of religion, and others writing 'responses' to the Da Vinci Code, including some with titles such as 'Cracking the Da Vinci Code,'" she says. "Clearly, something big is going on here."

Among the book's draws, Dixon says, are its portrayal of the Opus Dei (a real-world Catholic religious organization) as a quasi-Mafia organization, shrouded in secrecy and mystery. "And of course, that's clearly one of the book's big draws. In fact, it might be one of the reasons why the Da Vinci Code has made it to this blockbuster status."

Dan Brown is good at his trade, she says, but this is the first book he's produced that's enjoyed both such extended popularity and notoriety.

"Though I haven't researched this specifically for the case of the Da Vinci Code, it appears to me that it falls into the pattern that audience research shows for similar cultural phenomena," Dixon says. "People are reading this book--and will see the movie--for many reasons. And most people will see it for many, not just one, reason."

Among other reasons for its popularity is that the Da Vinci Code "makes people feel smart," Dixon says. "These kinds of novels give people a kind of education. People enjoy finding out about things that they didn't know. They imagine, reading a book that features the Louvre, the Catholic church, that they're learning about high culture, in other words, about art, church history, language."

And what is high culture?

"It's precisely some of the elements in the Da Vinci Code: art in museums, church history," Dixon notes. "The opposite of high culture is low culture, like drag racing."

The Da Vinci Code also is prompting some cultural discomfort because of its feminist subtext, Dixon says. "The Church is supposed to have held down the feminine, or at least that's the argument made in the novel. It's pretty clear that this novel wants to build on feminist popular culture trends, including such things as having a heroine who is the equal of the hero. In fact, she saves him."

The book also gives people a look inside the world of academics, a world not normally open to the everyday experience of most people, Dixon says.

"This is a novel about a professor who doesn't think he's handsome," she says. "It's pretty funny, and it makes scholarly life look a lot more interesting than I thought most people would think it is."

Dixon says looking at Da Vinci Code for what it really is should relieve some people--especially the many who may not have read the book but are critical of, or worried about, its "message"--of the burden of being so serious about it.

"It's popular culture," she says. "I love popular culture because, really, it's just so fun, so playful."

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## EVENTS TO NOTE

### Software license orders due June 16

The last day for submitting software license orders for this fiscal year is Friday, June 16.

Contact your department software coordinator to place any orders. Visit

<http://www.und.edu/dept/undsoftware/SoftwareLicenseCoordinatorList.xls> to find out your coordinator's name.

Refer to the listing below for the renewal schedule of annual licenses:

- SPSS - July 31 to July 30, 2006
- SAS – March 1 to February 28, 2006
- ESRI – July 1 to June 30, 2006
- Mathematica - August 10 to August 9, 2006
- AutoDesk/AutoCAD - October 15 to October 14, 2006

Please contact us if we can be of further assistance.

-- Patti Campoverde, Software Licensing Program, Telecomm/ITSS, [patticampoverde@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:patticampoverde@mail.und.nodak.edu), 777-4112

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## Short course will discuss teaching geospatial technology

If you are hungry for a just a taste of the various geospatial techniques available for your classroom, come to a special academic smorgasbord being held Wednesdays, June 14 and 21, at Mayville State University. During these two Wednesdays in early summer, this workshop is planned to be offered there: GEOG 900: Geospatial Technologies for Implementing National Geography Standards. These two days will be used to introduce in-service educators from all grade levels about the basics of map reading and interpretation, global positioning systems (GPS), remote sensing, and geographic information systems (GIS) in the context of the National Geography Standards. Space is limited to only 20 in-service educators because the credit fee, tuition, and textbook costs (a copy of the latest edition of Mapping Our World) are being absorbed by NDView. There is, however, a non-refundable \$25 reservation fee due May 31, 2006.

This workshop is being sponsored by NDView, a federally-funded program for promoting the use of geospatial technologies in pre-college, college, and post-college settings. Housed at the University under the direction of Bradley Rundquist, this program has awarded a grant to the Dakota Science Center (DSC) to work in collaboration with the North Dakota education group of the Upper Midwest Aerospace Consortium (ND EdPARC) and academic professional geographers from MaSU and UND to provide this two-day program. It is spread over two Wednesdays deliberately on the premise that a person needs some time to absorb being introduced to certain aspects of GPS and GIS in order to avoid "brain freeze" from the amount of necessary instructional details while starting to learn these geospatial techniques. Then, too, having the week between sessions allows the learner a chance to identify problems and to develop questions that can be handled and answered on the second meeting date regarding the exercises from Mapping Our World.

Dr. Vandeberg (geography), is the lead instructor and is noted already by his undergraduate and graduate students as a dynamic, learner-centered individual. He is looking forward to the opportunity to be working with K-12 teachers and administrators in this particular NDView workshop. Ms. Munski will be one of the on-site coordinators with Dr. Meartz, and she is hoping that teachers will consider follow-up activities with DSC during Geography Awareness Week 2006. The off-site coordination will be handled by UND Extension with the assistance of Dr. Munski (701-777-4591). To register please send your name, address, phone# and email address to me.

-- Doug Munski, Professor, Geography, [douglas.munski@und.edu](mailto:douglas.munski@und.edu), 777-4591

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## BPA dedicates new sign, key

The College of Business and Public Administration invites all to the dedication and unveiling of a new outdoor sign and bronze key as part of UND Alumni Days. The unveiling and sign dedication will take place on

Wednesday, May 24, at 11 a.m., in front of Gamble Hall on Centennial Drive.

The new signage is part of President Kupchella's initiative for improved building identification on campus, but it is also fitting that the College of Business and Public Administration increase its visibility and location as it nears the completion of the Creating Business Leaders capital campaign. With so many updates going on inside Gamble Hall, the College of Business and Public Administration believed it was only appropriate to showcase that excitement on the outside of the building as well. In addition to a bigger and more visible sign, the College also added a bronze Beta Gamma Sigma Key and plaque, recognizing all members of Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society and former CoBPA Deans that have served in the College during its 80 year history.

Please join us.

-- CK Braun-Schultz, Director of External Relations, College of Business and Public Administration,  
[ckbraunschultz@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:ckbraunschultz@mail.und.nodak.edu), 777-6937

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## Two candidates for director of TRIO programs will have open meetings

Two internal candidates for the position of Director of TRIO Programs, Elaine Metcalfe and Cynthia Shabb, will take part in open meetings Wednesday, May 24, in the Memorial Union Presidents Room. You are invited to the meetings to visit with the candidates. The meeting with Cynthia Shabb will be at 1:15 p.m.; the meeting with Elaine Metcalfe will be at 2:15 p.m.

Cynthia is the former Assistant Dean of the Graduate School and Elaine is currently the Associate Director of TRIO Programs.

— Alice Hoffert, (Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management), Chair, TRIO Programs Director Search Committee.

-- Alice Hoffert, Associate vice president for enrollment management, enrollment management,  
[alicehoffert@mail.und.edu](mailto:alicehoffert@mail.und.edu), 777-6100

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## University Community invited to launch party for CulturePulse.org

The UND community is invited come and experience culturepulse.org, your online calendar of arts and cultural events.

Bring a friend to this official launch party featuring wine tasting and hors d'oeuvres as well as guided tours of culturepulse.org , Wednesday, May 24, from 4:30 - 6:30 p.m., on stage at the Historic Empire Arts Center in Downtown Grand Forks.

For more information, visit [www.ggfmsp.org/pulse/launch.html](http://www.ggfmsp.org/pulse/launch.html) . The event is sponsored, in part, by the Greater Grand Forks Marketing Services Partnership, North Valley Arts Council, Happy Harry's Bottle Shops, and the Empire Arts Center, with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the Archibald Bush Foundation and the University of North Dakota College of Arts and Sciences.

-- Benjamin Klipfel, Director, Marketing Services Partnership, [benjamin.klipfel@und.nodak.edu](mailto:benjamin.klipfel@und.nodak.edu), 777-0857

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## Dissertation defense is June 2 for Rachel Darrow

The Final Examination for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree with a major in Counseling Psychology will be conducted for Rachel Darrow by the candidate's Faculty Advisory Committee on June 2, at 12:00 p.m. at Montgomery Hall Room 318. The Chairperson for this Committee is Cindy Juntunen of the counseling department.

The dissertation title is "Therapists Experience of Secondary Trama: Influence of Trama Type and Social Support."

Everyone is welcome.

-- Joseph N. Benoit, Dean of the Graduate School.

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## Jon Olson will exhibit at Third Street Gallery

On Thursday, June 1, from 7 – 9 pm, the Third Street Gallery will host a public exhibition opening reception for painter Jon Olson, which is free and open to the public. Olson will be giving a gallery talk at 6:30 for members. Membership can be purchased online at [www.thethirdstreetgallery.com](http://www.thethirdstreetgallery.com) or at the gallery and are \$10 for students and \$225 for an individual. Household and business memberships are also available. Wine and appetizers will be served.

Jon Patrick Olson is a graduate of UND, where he received his MFA in 2001. He resides in Minot, where he is a professor at Minot State University. Olson's work has been part of an ongoing traveling exhibition "Celebrating Explorers: Commemorating the Lewis & Clark Expedition's Bicentennial" contracted through North Dakota Art Galleries Association. This exhibit has traveled across North Dakota, and much of Montana since 2003. Olson has also had many works featured in the North Dakota Museum of Art's Auctions. He will donate a painting to the Third Street Gallery Silent Auction Fundraiser on July 27.

In his painting, Olson uses the paint and image to create a sense of emotion. It is his intention that the viewer take their own meaning from the work, interpreting from the paintings a part of himself. Olson feels that "the best paintings are, after all, a pattern of one's nervous system being projected onto a canvas/surface."

The exhibition is sponsored in part by Alerus Financial. Third Street Gallery is curated by Rebecca Sefcovic Uglem and Amy Lyste. There is no admission charge but a \$2 donation is suggested for adults and change from children. It is located at 28 Third Street South, Grand Forks. For more information call 701 775-5055 or contact [www.thethirdstreetgallery.com](http://www.thethirdstreetgallery.com).

-- Rebecca Sefcovic Uglem, Curator, Third St. Gallery, [becky@thethirdstreetgallery.com](mailto:becky@thethirdstreetgallery.com), 775-5055

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## PPT/COBRE seminar will focus on inflammation

Martin J. Stone, associate professor, of chemistry, Indiana University, will present "Chemokine-Receptor Specificity: The Molecular Basis of Leukocyte Trafficking in Inflammation," Friday, June 2, at 4 p.m. in Room 1360(Clifford Haugen Lecture Hall)at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences Building.

Dr. Stone is invited by the Center of Biomedical Research Excellence Pathophysiology of Neurodegenerative Disease and the Department of Pharmacology, Physiology and Therapeutics. Everyone is welcome.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact Thad Rosenberger, assistant professor of pharmacology, physiology & therapeutics at 777-0591.

-- Dawn Halvorson, Administrative Clerk, Pharmacology, Physiology & Therapeutics,

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### UND offers "Summer at UND" program

The University's "Summer at UND" program offers a wide range of courses and activities for the community during the summer months. Nearly 400 courses for academic credit are available during UND Summer Sessions, which began May 15 and again on June 26. Class sizes are smaller and some courses are held in the evenings to accommodate students' schedules.

An array of summer events and activities are also held on UND's campus, such as cultural or athletic events, youth camps or specialized workshops. Events are typically open to the public. Here is a preview of those events happening at UND from May 17 - May 31:

- May 17, Asbestos Inspector/Management Planner Refresher Training Course, 8 to 5 p.m., Old Ralph Engelstad Arena
- May 17 - 19, Junior High Football Camp, 6:30 to 9 p.m., Memorial Stadium
- May 18, Mold Awareness Training Course, 8 to 5 p.m., Old Ralph Engelstad Arena
- May 19, Katie Lien Dance Recital, 7 p.m., Chester Fritz Auditorium
- May 22 - 25, Boys and Girls Evening Soccer Camp, 6 to 8:30 p.m., UND Soccer Field
- May 22 - 26, Lead Supervisor Initial Course, 8 to 5 p.m., Old Ralph Engelstad Arena
- May 24, Lead Risk Assessor Refresher Training Course, 8 to 5 p.m., Old Ralph Engelstad Arena
- May 24 - 26, Alumni Days, various times, UND Campus
- May 25, UND TV Center Alumni Tour, 2 to 3:30 p.m., Television Center
- May 30 - Aug. 11, School Age Program, 7:30 to 5:30 p.m., University Children's Center

For more information about the "Summer at UND" program, to register for UND's Summer Sessions, or to view a calendar of events from May 16 - Aug. 31, visit [www.summer.und.edu](http://www.summer.und.edu). If you have additional questions on summer credit courses, call the Summer Sessions Office at 777-6284. Or if you have questions on events/activities, contact the Summer Events Office at 777-0841.

### Law library lists hours

Memorial Day weekend hours for the law library are Saturday, May 27 Closed, Sunday, May 28 Closed, Monday, May 29 Closed.

-- Jane Oakland, Circulation Manager, Law Library, [oakland@law.und.ed](mailto:oakland@law.und.ed), 7-3482

### Twamley Snack bar lists menu, hours

Twamley Snack Bar hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Friday, May 26: BLT Wrap, Macaroni Salad, Fruit Cup.

Grilled Patty Melt w/ Soup, Sloppy Joe, Cheese with Ham and Bacon Soup.

-- Tammy Kaiser, Snack Bar Supervisor, Food Service, [tammykaiser@mail..und.nodak.edu](mailto:tammykaiser@mail..und.nodak.edu), 777-3934

### Senate scholarly activities committee lists deadlines

Application deadlines for Senate scholarly activities grants follow.

Friday, Sept. 15, 2006, for travel Sept. 6, 2006-Jan. 16, 2007; Monday, Oct. 16, 2006, for research/creative activity or publication grants; Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2007, for travel Jan. 17, 2007-May 1, 2007; Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007, for research/creative activity or publication grants and new faculty scholar awards; Tuesday, May 1, 2007, for travel May 2, 2007-Sept. 15, 2007.

-- Sandra E. Short, Chair, Senate Scholarly Activities Committee, Physical Education and Exercise Science,  
[sandra\\_moritz@und.nodak.edu](mailto:sandra_moritz@und.nodak.edu), 701/777-4325

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## Brian Jones named head basketball coach

Director of Athletics Tom Buning announced the hiring of Brian Jones as head coach of the Fighting Sioux men's basketball team. Jones, who most recently served as director of basketball operations at the University of Iowa, is the 18th head coach in the history of the program and just the third in the last 36 years.

Jones, a Rock Island, Ill., native, comes to UND after spending the last seven seasons as an assistant on Steve Alford's staff at Iowa. He spent the past five seasons as an assistant coach after serving as administrative assistant coach in his first two years with the Hawkeyes. During Jones' five years as assistant coach, the Hawkeyes went 98-64 (.605), received three NCAA Tournament invitations and won a pair of Big Ten tournament titles. In 2005-06, Jones helped lead Iowa to a 25-9 record, the second-most wins in school history, and the first undefeated (17-0) home record since Carver-Hawkeye Arena opened in 1983.

Said Buning: "Brian Jones is absolutely the quality coach, teacher, leader and recruiter we need to carry on this great tradition of basketball excellence and service to the University. UND and its great fans and supporters should be complimented by the incredible number of quality applicants interested in being our next head coach. The wait is over! It's time to lend your support to Brian and his lovely family, welcoming them to Grand Forks and showing your enthusiasm as he begins the process of building our next championship team."

While at Iowa, Jones guided seven All-Big Ten selections, 17 Academic All-Big Ten selections and four Academic All-Americans. Jones also helped tutor four of the last five Big Ten rebounding champions, three straight conference leaders in blocked shots and the league's 2005-06 defensive player of the year. Three of his student-athletes reached the National Basketball Association (NBA) and two from the 2005-06 Hawkeye team have been invited to NBA camps.

"I'm thrilled for this opportunity to work with the faculty, players and student body at the University of North Dakota," said Jones. "I want to thank Mr. Buning, Betty Ralston and Coach Roebuck for giving me an opportunity to fulfill a lifelong dream. My family and I look forward to establishing deep roots in Grand Forks and the state of North Dakota. I've trained under the best in Coach Alford and he has prepared me to lead a program with great tradition in academics and athletics. It's an honor to follow a class act like Coach Glas and I look forward to building upon his legacy."

Prior to arriving at Iowa, Jones spent the 1998-99 season under Alford as administrative assistant coach at Missouri State University (now Southwest Missouri State), where he helped lead the Bears to an NCAA Sweet 16 appearance and a top-20 national ranking.

No stranger to the North Central Conference, Jones was an assistant coach at the University of Nebraska-Omaha from 1996 to 1998 and recruited many of the players who would go on to lead the Mavericks to back-to-back conference titles. Jones' first coaching stint came at Alleman High School in Rock Island, Ill., where he was an assistant for two seasons.

Jones was a four-year letterman as a guard/forward at the University of Northern Iowa and went on to play professional basketball in Australia and Portugal. He was a two-time all-state selection as a prep at Rock Island High School.

Jones earned his bachelor's degree in communications and broadcasting from Northern Iowa in 1994 and his master's degree in athletic administration from Nebraska-Omaha.

Jones, who is 35, and his wife, Danna, have a 2-year old son, Jaxson, and a 1-year old daughter, Jersey.

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## Call the ADA line to learn about access across campus

Call the ADA Line (which is also the Facilities 24 hour phone number) at 777-2591 voice or 777-2796 (TDD) to report access concerns and find out where roadways and sidewalks may be blocked because of summer construction projects.

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## Students must pick up cards at career services before applying on campus

Students must pick up a federal work-study certification card or an institutional employment blue referral card at the career services office, 280 McCannel Hall, prior to seeking employment.

Summer student employment positions are posted at [www.und.edu/employment](http://www.und.edu/employment).

-- Robin Holden, Director, Student Financial Aid, [sfa@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:sfa@mail.und.nodak.edu), 7-3121

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## Recipes sought for new cookbook

Do you have a great recipe? One you'd like to see in print?

Staff Senate needs more recipes for the next cookbook. Please submit your recipes to Joneen Iverson at Box 7189 or email them to her at [joneeniverson@mail.und.edu](mailto:joneeniverson@mail.und.edu). If you would like to use the recipe collection sheet, it is available on the Staff Senate web site at [www.und.nodak.edu/org/undss/Forms](http://www.und.nodak.edu/org/undss/Forms).

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## Summer swim instructors, lifeguards sought

Swimming instructors and lifeguards are needed this summer at the UND pool. Morning and afternoon hours are available, Monday through Friday. Wages are dependent on experience, training is available.

Call Brian Strom at 777-4451.

-- Brian Strom, Aquatics Director, Athletics, [brian\\_strom@und.edu](mailto:brian_strom@und.edu), 777-4451

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## Memorial Day is holiday

In accordance with State Board of Higher Education directives, Monday, May 29, will be observed as Memorial Day by faculty and staff. Only those employees designated by their department heads will be required to work on this holiday.

-- Greg Weisenstein, vice president for academic affairs and provost, and Diane Nelson, director of human resources.

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## ITSS lists Memorial Day hours

ITSS will close for the Memorial Day holiday at midnight on Sunday, May 28, and will reopen at 5 a.m. Tuesday, May 30.

-- Craig Cerkowniak, Associate Director, ITSS, [itsshelp@mail.und.edu](mailto:itsshelp@mail.und.edu), 777-2222

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## Memorial Union lists holiday hours

The Memorial Union operating hours for the Memorial Day weekend are:

Friday, May 26: Administrative office, parking office, student academic services, student health promotions, U-Card office, learning center, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; athletic ticket office, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.; barber shop, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; computer labs, 9 am. to 4:30 p.m.; craft center, noon to 4 p.m.; Credit Union, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Great Clips, closed for summer; Internet Cafe and Loading Dock, 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; sports center, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Stomping Grounds, 7 am. to 2 p.m.; C-store, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Building hours are 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Memorial Union will be closed Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, May 27-29.

-- Memorial Union.

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## Internal job openings listed

POSITION: U2 Coordinator, Continuing Education, #06-268. DEADLINE: (I) 5/24/2006. SALARY: \$30,000 - \$35,000.

POSITION: Lead Instructor/Flight Manager, Aerospace Sciences, #06-267. DEADLINE: (I) 5/24/2006. SALARY: \$24,000 - \$30,000.

POSITION: Administrative Secretary, Teaching and Learning, #06-270. DEADLINE: (I) 5/26/2006. SALARY: \$21,000 - \$22,325.

POSITION: Office Assistant (temporary, full-time, non-benefitted), Registrar's Office, #06-269. DEADLINE: (I) 5/25/2006. SALARY: \$8.00 - \$ 10.00.

POSITION: Receptionist, Student Financial Aid, #06-266. DEADLINE: (I) 5/24/2006. SALARY: \$20,000 - \$20,800.

POSITION: Maintenance Specialist, Facilities, #06-271. DEADLINE: (I) 5/30/06. SALARY: \$24,000 - \$28,000.

-- Jan Orvik, Writer/Editor, University Relations, [janorvik@mail.und.nodak.edu](mailto:janorvik@mail.und.nodak.edu), 777-3621

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