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VISITING PROFESSOR NOTES DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN UM, FRENCH STUDENTS IN INTERVIEW

By Dennis Sale
UM Information Services

MISSOULA--

Students at the University of Montana in Missoula who studied this summer under Jean (pronounced John) Moreau, a visiting French professor, were enthusiastic, and more relaxed, cooperative and independent than French students, but the UM students also were less able to express themselves verbally in class, according to Moreau.

Moreau, 50, who taught 10 graduate and undergraduate students at UM during the first 4½-week UM Summer Session, which ended Wednesday, July 23, is director of the Lycee Agricole et Viticole, a small agricultural school in Beaune, a community in the province of Burgundy, France. The French school specializes in growing grapes and wine-making.

The French educator was at UM under an exchange program between UM and the French school. Under the program, French educators teach at UM and Montana teachers from the Missoula campus teach in France.

Commenting through an interpreter on his teaching experiences in Montana, Moreau said:

"I have enjoyed the contact with American students most because I felt that they expected quite a bit from me and they were very enthusiastic about getting first-hand information about France and Burgundy."

The French educator, who studied agronomy in Algiers and in Paris and who holds the equivalent of a doctoral degree, said the system of education he noted at UM seems to be more relaxed than in France, but that French students are more oriented toward class discussions.

"In France, the educational system seems to be more rigid, and there is less room for innovations. In the U.S., the students are more cooperative and studious, but French students are more oriented toward expressing themselves orally in class; they participate in class discussions more."

Moreau also noted differences in academic initiative and economic factors.

"In the U.S., the students take more initiative, while in France the college students must be disciplined to a greater degree academically," he said. "American students have to face economic circumstances earlier in life than French students, who remain closer to families until they are older.

"The French students take things more for granted and expect the government to help them more financially by providing them with job outlets," Moreau said.

He said he is very pleased with the teaching experience he obtained during the brief time he spent at the University of Montana, but indicated that he would like to spend even more time in this country.

"If I had a whole year to observe the educational system of the U.S., I would like to see what the final results in terms of achievement are, compared with higher education in France," Moreau said.

Moreau said he likes how people have received him, "both at the University in Missoula and around town in general." He said the French are less friendly than Americans, at least at initial meetings.

He said he is really impressed by the beauty he found in Montana and is particularly pleased "by the upkeep of local property," including the number of gardens Missoula families have.

Since coming to Montana in June, Moreau has visited Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. He and his wife, Jeanine, were invited to spend several days at a ranch near Cameron, 10 miles south of Ennis, before returning to Beaune, so Moreau can resume the directorship of the agricultural school. The ranch near Cameron is owned by Maureen Curnow, an instructor in foreign languages at UM, and her husband.

Maureen Curnow spent last fall in France under the educational exchange program.