

# Priest gives class air of excitement

By Diana Penner  
of the Times

If the Rev. Dennis Brodeur is ever late for the class he teaches at St. Ambrose College, don't laugh if he tells you his plane was late.

Brodeur teaches full-time now at St. Louis University, but flies in once a week to teach a theology of marriage class at St. Ambrose, where he taught for two years.

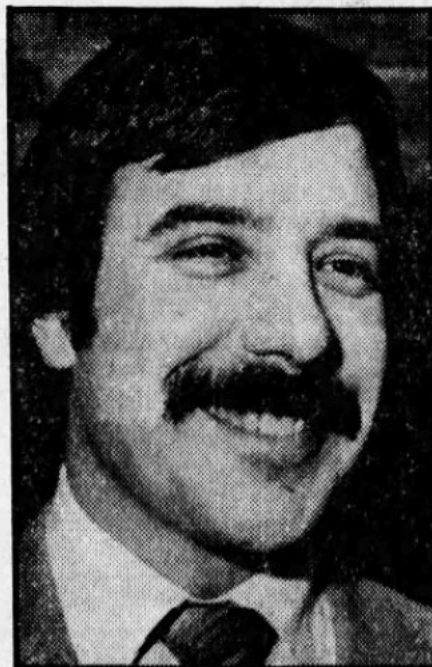
The 31-year-old Rhode Island native was a hit with students during his tenure at St. Ambrose, so when he moved to St. Louis' Center for Health Care Ethics last fall, the Davenport college decided to bring him back to teach once a week.

**HIS MARRIAGE** theology class attracted 54 students — in categories dealing with before, during and after marriage. But what can be taught or learned about marriage in a classroom setting?

"We should educate people about those things most dear and precious in life. Everything you learn doesn't have to be about how to build a computer or something practical," Brodeur says.

St. Ambrose's emphasis on liberal arts is one of the reasons he is fond of the school. People need to learn not only paycheck-earning skills, but also how to think critically of themselves and life, he says.

That belief also ties in with Brodeur's specialty, health-care ethics. The field is broadening beyond medical ethics and issues such as abortion and euthanasia to include the wider



Rev. Dennis Brodeur

spectrum of health care concerns, he says.

Doctors, nurses, hospital administrators, physical therapists and nursing home operators take Brodeur's classes. He says health-care ethics are touching more people and becoming more complicated with advanced technology and medical discoveries.

Health care providers need to learn to reason through those questions, Brodeur says, and think about the kind of health care people have a right to expect.

And after class, he's off to catch a plane to St. Louis — until next week.