

Study hopes to cure students of test phobia

By MICHAEL BRAND
Of the Emerald

Test anxiety is a learned behavior that comes as a result of taking tests, says Waris Ishaq, doctoral candidate in the University's educational psychology department.

"Anything that is learned can be unlearned," he says. It is upon this premise that Ishaq is basing his doctoral research in test anxiety.

Starting this week, Ishaq will conduct a study of more than 60 University students to determine which procedures are best for overcoming test anxiety. The study will involve giving a pre-test, post-test and several variable sets of procedures to randomly assigned students.

If one procedure proves to be most successful, he adds, students who underwent other procedures will be invited to come back for another session.

By participating in his experiment, Ishaq says students "will be able to control and remove interfering test anxiety."

In order to qualify, students must be seniors who will be taking the Miller Analogies Test or the



Graphic by Tom Ettel

Graduate Record Exam during the 1978-79 year. Candidates must be US native-born, native English speaking and Anglo-American.

"I want to avoid any variances that are accountable to linguistic or cultural variety," Ishaq explains.

To aid minority students who will be taking the MAT or GRE tests, Ishaq will offer a follow-up study after the original is completed.

He says the test procedures will be modified to account for cultural

differences. He will offer a session in Spanish for Chicano students.

Ishaq says the conditions under which tests are given can prove to cause anxiety.

He cites the GRE as an example. The test is usually given in a large, warm hall with a hundred or more other students all regimentally facing the front, Ishaq says. Empty seats are left between students, no talking is allowed and the clock is watched to keep track of time, he adds.

Ishaq says a student who suffers debilitating anxiety under

those conditions would do much better if he or she took the same test alone in a cool, well-lighted office with soft FM music on in the background.

Ishaq says he himself used to suffer from test anxiety, so he will use that personal experience to help students.

Besides doing doctoral work at the University, Ishaq has a private practice in behavioral and emotional counseling. He says most of his counseling work deals with families trying to cope with stress and anxiety.

Before his involvement with educational psychology, Ishaq was a journalist who covered World War II and revolutions in Egypt and Syria. He was also a member of the Turkish press delegation to the U.N.

Interested students should contact Evelyn Rowe, psychometrist at the University Counseling Center in 150 Susan Campbell Hall.

Weinstein vows recall fight

Claiming he is neither "incapacitated nor corrupt," Lane County Commissioner Archie Weinstein has presented his opposition to a measure that would recall him from office.

In a prepared statement that will appear on the Nov. 7 ballot with the recall measure, Weinstein said his fight for the "little guy" against special interests was a reason for the recall.

The statement was presented Friday afternoon to county elections officer Don Penfold. It came three days before the deadline for Weinstein to present a statement in his defense or resign from office.

The recall effort began three

weeks ago when Jan Newton and Roscoe Caron, both of Eugene, filed the necessary petition with the elections division. Newton and Caron said Weinstein was at fault for "failure to properly perform his elected duties" as the reason for the recall.

Weinstein, in his ballot statement, disagreed with that reason.

"I knew that if I was true to my commitments that I would incur the wrath of certain special interest groups," Weinstein said.

"One such group—led by a person whose federally funded CETA job was eliminated—instituted this recall," he said.

Weinstein said he had performed his elected duties to the best of his "God-given abilities."

However, Weinstein's view of the recall procedure is confused, a recall representative said Monday.

Ken Miller, a member of the Citizens Cooperating to Recall Weinstein committee, said being "incapacitated or corrupt" has nothing to do with the recall measure. That definition only fits impeachment proceedings.

"Recall is a special political tool to throw any politician out of office for almost any reason," Miller explained. Unpopularity, misuse of office or abrasiveness are all valid reasons for any recall, he said.

By linking the recall to impeachment, Weinstein is trying to confuse the voters, Miller said.

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