



Photo by Jimmi Harris

Classes that take students to the Oregon coast on field trips are part of the University's SEARCH program. Another program called ESCAPE offers a chance for on-the-job training in people-oriented fields such as communication. Both programs present an educational alternative to the traditional classroom, directors say.

Courses promise end to educational 'rut'

By TAMARA SWENSON
Of the Emerald

People don't have to be stuck in a rut, says SEARCH director Wayne Miller. There are educational alternatives.

Realizing that traditional education can be boring, two University programs work to help students get away from the lecture hall.

SEARCH — Student Exploratory Action Regarding Curricular Heterodoxy — and ESCAPE — Every Student Caring About Personalized Education — give students a chance to learn what they want, says Miller.

Although they are sometimes confused, the two programs are separate entities that channel interested students in different directions.

SEARCH is a non-profit clearing house for students who "want a little more than a 101 lecture class," says Miller. "People get caught in that trap and they realize they're wasting their time. They want to learn things they're interested in."

Interest is the primary motive behind taking a SEARCH class. "You are guaranteed you have an interested instructor," Miller says.

SEARCH instructors are not paid or given credit for teaching. "They do it because they believe in what they're teaching," says Miller. "And students take the courses because they know the instructor is interested."

The only credit an instructor can receive is from a SEARCH instructors' seminar, which is not a prerequisite for teaching.

"We try to stress that anyone can teach a SEARCH class," Miller says. An interest in the subject is necessary, but "if people are willing to go out and explore learning, then SEARCH is right for them."

Founded in 1966 and accredited in 1967, SEARCH courses have the potential to do anything an instructor can dream up.

The size of the courses is another reason for SEARCH's accessibility, says Miller. The average course has 20 students, but the instructor often elects to close enrollment before that figure is reached.

Smaller classes are easier to teach and

prevent the class from turning into a lecture, Miller says.

But the relaxed atmosphere doesn't mean an easy class, Miller explains.

Instructors must obtain the sponsorship of a faculty member and the department head before the class is accredited. After the class begins, the sponsors attend to make sure that no problems exist.

Registering for a SEARCH course is as easy as registering for a regular course. SEARCH courses are listed in the SEARCH guide, available at registration or in the SEARCH office in Suite 1, EMU. All SEARCH credits are elective.

Anyone interested in teaching a SEARCH course should contact the SEARCH office or call 686-4377.

ESCAPE gives students elective credit for on-the-job learning. Basically, the program prepares students for a job.

"There's a lot a person can gain from ESCAPE," says Jackie Stearns, director-in-training. "A person can learn a lot of personal-relation skills they couldn't in a classroom. Communication, teaching, interpersonal relations. All sorts of things

a class doesn't teach."

ESCAPE volunteers work in schools, senior centers, handicapped centers and other organizations, in positions that are made available by community groups.

"There are 300 positions available this summer," says Stearns. "We'll only be able to fill about a third of them. It would be nice to fill them all."

"Just about anyone can find satisfaction working for ESCAPE," says Alan Podawiltz, the Graduate Teaching Fellow for community service. "We offer something different than a regular classroom, and have something for just about everyone on campus."

ESCAPE offerings aren't limited to schools and centers, says Stearns. "We have people who write newsletters and slide shows. Anyone can do just about anything."

Credits are awarded on a pass-no-pass basis. ESCAPE students spend three hours a week as a volunteer for one credit, and two hours a week in a coordinating seminar for one credit.

The ESCAPE office is located in Room 327, EMU, or call 686-4351.

ESCAPE

Earn 1-5 credit hours (CI 409 and CI 509) while acquiring practical experience in the Eugene community

PLACEMENT SETTINGS

- Parks and Recreation
- Community Schools
- Adult & Youth Correction
- Handicapped Services
- Day Care Centers
- Senior Activity Centers
- Halfway Houses

WEEKLY TRAINING

- Experimental Learning Theory
- Communication Skills
- Creative Teaching
- Peer Supervision
- Problem-Solving Models
- Leadership Skills
- Counseling & Crisis Intervention

Looking for a Summer Experience?

Register at Mac Court or contact ESCAPE 327 EMU 686-4351

