

ASUO, University lawyer hand out free legal advice

By GINGER BARNES
Of the Emerald

Students battling snarls of bureaucratic red tape or facing legal problems may turn to the ASUO Executive Coordinator or to the University attorney for free advice.

The Executive Coordinator, who assists the ASUO President and vice presidents in administrative and research-related activities, also works as a student advocate.

The coordinator helps students resolve problems with the University as well as legal matters that can be solved without the help of an attorney, said former coordinator Joanne Een.

Een said her approach has been to help students work through administrative problems, instead of working the problems out for them.

"It's a learning experience for the students to learn here how to deal with problems that will occur later on in their lives, such as tax problems. They learn how to work with bureaucrats," Een said.

Appointment of the new executive coordinator will be completed by the beginning of fall term and students with

questions may go to Suite 4 of the EMU or call 686-3724.

Third-year law students hired by the executive coordinator and supervised by University attorney Chuck Spinner serve as student defenders, representing students who have been charged with violations of the Student Conduct Code, including charges of cheating, plagiarism and forgery.

Legal problems not handled by the executive coordinator are referred to Chuck Spinner of the ASUO's Legal Services.

'It isn't my job to expound on morality, but it is my legal opinion that shoplifting amounts to a gamble like going to Las Vegas — but the odds are much worse.'

Any student who pays incidental fees can turn to legal services for help with domestic relations (divorces, adoptions), landlord-tenant laws, consumer-related problems or personal injuries.

Spinner says he also advises students on matters involving criminal law and offers help with insurance work and real

property transactions.

All of Spinner's services are free, but any out-of-pocket expenses — such as court costs or filing fees and any typing fees for such things as divorces or name changes — will be charged to the student.

Legal Services cannot represent students in court in criminal cases or cases that clearly are headed toward contested litigation, Spinner says.

However, opinions vary as to what kinds of cases will end up in contested litigation, and

Spinner advises students to come in with questions.

Spinner also cannot provide "work services" to students with a profitable business or represent one student against another or one student against the ASUO or an ASUO agency.

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