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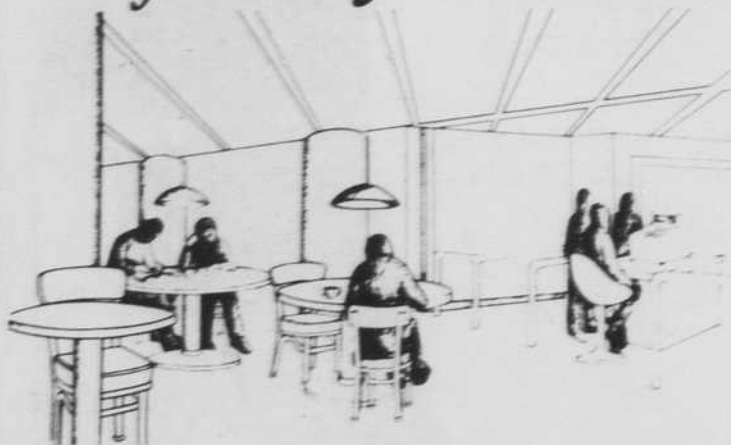
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NSE takes students away

By Diane Winocur
Of the Emerald

Getting away from Eugene for one to three terms becomes more popular each year, according to Joe Wade, National Student Exchange Program coordinator.

Through the program University students can attend any of 37 colleges and universities nationwide at in-state costs.

The program offers students the benefits of transferring schools without the difficulty, long-term obligations, or expense, says NSE student coordinator Renee Mona-Lasky. For the cost of airfare, Oregonians can temporarily attend colleges in almost every U.S. state, while receiving financial aid and often paying lower tuition than they would at the University.

Although travelling can broaden academic opportunities, exchange students at a recent NSE orientation meeting predominantly sought social or personal benefits from the move.

A desire to "make a whole new start, meet new people, get out on my own, and see how I do," prompted senior Madeline McFadden to spend her junior year at the University of Idaho.

She did remarkably well, she says. She cried a lot when she first arrived, but eventually realized the benefits of a smaller school with more advanced and accessible radio broadcasting program.

"I cried because I had to come home," she says.

According to Wade, the proof that students most frequently use the program for cultural, rather than academic benefits, is that 75 per cent request the opposite coast, which is "like the other side of the world," he says.

The most requested campus among University students, he says, is the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, known for its academics and proximity to all major East Coast cities. And since only state schools are available in California, Oregon



Graphic by Max DeRungs

is the primary goal of students seeking the West Coast.

"All schools are about the same, it's the extra-curricular things that are different," says junior Nick Clendenin, voicing a second sentiment common to exchange students.

Clendenin, an accounting major from the University of South Florida, came to the University to "see the West Coast," and escape from a school heavily entrenched in conformity.

South Florida, he says, has its "Northerners and Midwesterners," but none of the variety he has met at the University. He classifies his new peers as "preppies, Californians and Easterners, nature types — they have long hair and wear printed things — and religious types," among other headings.

One student, junior Wendy Davis, did specify that she came to the University to add breadth to her studies. She attends a special marketing program at the University of Delaware in consumer psychology, and she says University marketing classes have been helpful to her.

Davis says coming to a new campus was not difficult for her because she prepared herself

for the worst. "I expected everything to be different and it was, so I made sure I wasn't disappointed."

According to Wade, preparation like Davis' is the best way to guarantee a positive experience. If applicants contact academic departments and financial aid offices far in advance, they can avoid exasperation.

As another part of preparation, he continues, students must realistically assess their school preferences. Since smaller schools accept only as many as leave on exchange, students must take into consideration how quickly the quotas will fill.

The student selection process takes place at the NSE national convention, to be held this year March 15-19 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Wade, who is on NSE's Executive Council, expects to place 88 per cent of an expected 150 University applicants with their first choice school.

Schools prioritize student selection as juniors over sophomores, students requiring a specific program over general studies, and GPA's exceeding the required 2.5 over lesser ratings, says Wade.

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