

SURC clarifies positions and role

By Dane Claussen
Of the Emerald

The ASUO Executive and Student University Relations Council are working to defuse a potentially explosive situation after clashing over the activities and policies of SURC.

A series of agreements and role "clarifications" during the past two weeks are "ironing out" the differences between the two, says ASUO Pres. Rich Wilkins.

The differences surfaced last month when SURC — guided by Curt Simic, University vice president for public services — initiated SHE (Save Higher Education), a program aimed at the Oregon Legislature. The SHE campaign urged students and parents of students to send post cards and letters to legislators, in an effort to prevent state budget cuts.

Wilkins raised questions about how clearly SURC identified itself with the University administration and about its role in lobbying.

"I don't think they (SURC) should be dealing with the Legislature, the lobbying, or any

of those activities — period — unless as volunteers helping the administration carry out its legislative program, not a student legislative program," Wilkins said in January.

"I don't necessarily know if during the legislative campaign they did define their role as working for the administration. That's a question in my mind," Wilkins added.

Wilkins and ASUO legislative assistant Dave Berns met with Simic, SURC adviser Mary Hudzikiewicz, Student University Affairs Board vice chairer Mike Prothe, and two SURC members Jan. 12 to clarify SURC's relation to the University administration. A week after the meeting, Simic and Denise Michel, the SURC member in charge of the SHE campaign, sent Wilkins a letter outlining what they believed to be the agreements made during the meeting.

Among the points apparently agreed upon are that SURC operates under the auspices of the University Office of Public Services, does not represent the student body, and will not actively lobby on its own. SURC also agreed to include "Office of Public Services" on all its literature and to send meeting minutes to the ASUO Executive.

"Things have been ironing out lately," Wilkins says. The letter from Simic and Michel "makes me feel much better."

But he says he still objects to SURC's lobbying efforts.

Simic says SURC's efforts to "save higher education" shouldn't cause a problem with the ASUO. SURC members "only represent themselves and help me represent the University from an administrative point of view," he says.

"Rich made the point that the SURC should not represent the student body per se because they aren't elected by the student body. He's right," Simic

says.

The SHE campaign was not a lobbying effort, but simply a way of making it easy for students to write legislators, and a way of making students aware of the current situation, says Liz Mann, SURC secretary-treasurer. SURC shouldn't get involved in lobbying, she says.

SUAB vice chairer Mike Prothe agrees that progress has been made. "I think we can work a lot smoother than we have in the past," he says. "We know where each group stands and we know where we both want to go so we can help each other carry those responsibilities out."

Current SURC programs — Duck Week, Parents' Weekends, Homecoming, Library Project '82, the "Pigskin Pass," the Civil War Cannon Trophy, and others — are fine, Prothe says, adding that he can't comment on any future activities.

What activities SURC should or should not involve itself in, however, apparently continues to be a point of contention.

SURC can "fill the gaps that open up in the ASUO," says SUAB chairer Gale Graham. "If the ASUO doesn't do the job, then they'll (SURC) be there to

fill those gaps."

Simic agrees. "I would like to keep SURC focused on the external constituencies, and not the internal constituencies. By that, I mean campus politics," he says.

One "gap" is the publication of the Organa yearbook, Simic says.

SURC has no designs to supersede student government, Simic, Mann, and SURC Pres. Molly Poole all say.

ASUO officials should be pleased that SURC does the activities it does so the ASUO Executive can have plenty of time for its administrative and lobbying tasks, Mann says. The different goals of the student government and SURC don't have to be conflicting, she says.

Wilkins doesn't like the gap-filling philosophy, however, saying all organizations will always have shortcomings.

"Why should there be another student group that moves in to do the things we can't do? You should work with the already existing group and try to improve it," Wilkins says.

"I don't want to inhibit any group... as long as it is in the spirit of what the group should be."



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Projects promote University's "image"

The Student University Relations Council has the distinction of being a student group that determines its own projects but works out of a University administration office.

Founded four years ago by Curt Simic, vice president for public services, the organization has grown to a 31-member body sponsoring Duck Week, Parent's Weekends, Homecoming, hosting visitors, the University/OSU "Pigskin Pass" and Civil War Cannon Trophy, and performing other activities designed to promote and help the University. It has a \$2500 budget for the year from Simic's office.

"Library: Project '82," a program encouraging the senior-class members of 1982 to give \$12.50 gifts to the University library, is one of the group's current projects.

Molly Poole got involved because the organization helps the University and works with interesting people, says the SURC Pres., a senior in public relations.

"We promote what is good about the University. We aren't reformers," Poole says.

"I was interested in promoting the University," says Liz Mann, SURC secretary-treasurer and a public relations junior.

The group is great for getting experience in public relations, and public affairs in particular, and working with alumni and the community, she says.

Her involvement in the group has aided her to get practical experience with what she learns in the classroom, Mann says.

Students are selected for the group once a year based on their involvement in other organizations at the University and their enthusiasm, Poole says. Students are not asked their opinions on political questions, but rather how they would tell a parent about dormitory life and other such questions, she says.

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