

emerald

University debates sexual harassment rule

By Gabriel Boehmer
Of the Emerald

The wording of a proposed University rule prohibiting sexual harassment should be changed before its adoption, according to witnesses who testified Monday at a public hearing requested by the ASUO.

The proposed Oregon Administrative Rule states that "sexual harassment of students, faculty or staff by other members of the university community is unacceptable and will not be tolerated."

Sexual harassment is defined as "any sexual advance, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature," when:

- Employment or academic success depends on submission to harassment;
- Harassment interferes with a person's work or academic performance;
- Harassment creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment.

University Affirmative Action Director Bean McFadden would be responsible for processing complaints filed under the rule.

ASUO officials agreed with the proposal's intent, but suggested that alleged victims would be more likely to report harassment to the Student Advocate than the Affirmative Action office.

Students believe that the Student Advocate's office is more responsive to their problems than the University administration, Student Advocate John Moore said.

Moore asserts that naming the Student Advocate's

Office in the Oregon Administrative Rule would encourage more alleged student victims to file sexual harassment complaints.

"It is no secret that women are generally reluctant to deal with instances of sexual harassment in a formal manner," Moore told Hearings Officer Muriel Jackson, assistant for administration to University Pres. Paul Olum. "In effect, to not include the office of Student Advocacy in the complaint and investigation process of this administrative rule will have a chilling effect on the effort to stop sexual harassment on this campus."

The only University student to testify at the hearing, who asked not to be identified, said she feared that the complainant's anonymity would be jeopardized in a sexual harassment investigation.

"If the confidentiality of the alleged victim is not protected, they are obviously in a worse position," said the graduate student. "The (alleged offender's) retaliation may become worse through filing a grievance."

She also characterized penalties for violation of the sexual harassment prohibition as ineffective.

"If the alleged offender remains in a position of power over the alleged victim, this (rule) isn't worth anything," she said.

University faculty, including two representatives of the American Association of University Professors, questioned the proposal's language and scope.

"I am certainly sympathetic to the general thrust of the rule; sexual blackmail is reprehensible behavior and ought not to be tolerated at the University," said Economics Prof. Barry Siegel. "However, in attempting to deal with this important issue, I believe that the

proposed rule is overly broad."

Siegel was concerned about the absence of a definition for "verbal conduct of a sexual nature."

"I assume it would include salacious comments. Would it also include off-color jokes, so-called 'sexist language' or references to the opposite sex as somehow inferior?"

"Attempts to proscribe such language and to back up the proscription with penalties would, in my mind, amount to violation of academic freedom and First Amendment free speech rights."

Siegel said vague definitions of sexual harassment and other terms could easily turn the rule into an "instrument of blackmail." For example, he said a failing student could use the rule to blackmail a professor into a passing grade, or a professor could use the rule into blackmailing an administrator for a raise.

Siegel suggested that elimination of the term "verbal conduct of a sexual nature" would lessen the potential for the rule's abuse.

Peter Swan, legal assistant to Pres. Olum, said complaints and written reprimands included in faculty files would not be disclosed under Oregon Public Records Law. However, the documents could be subpoenaed, Swan said.

Affirmative Action Director McFadden said the anonymity of alleged victims has not been compromised as the complaint process has been developed over the last three years. All complainants resolved their grievances before a public hearing needed to be held, she said.

Drifting into spring

The weather is getting better, the wine is chilled, and the Willamette River is waiting.

Students can spend afternoon hours leisurely floating on the Mill Race throwing bread to the ducks or on a more challenging trip down a local river. The canoes can be rented by the hour, by the day or for overnight trips.

The Waterworks Canoe Company is a new, expanded version of the old "Canoe Shack," which rented canoes to locals since the late 1960s.

The EMU-funded Canoe Company has several kayaks and 20 canoes available for rental. With the additional space, eight more canoes will be added, program coordinator Mal Fiese says.

Rental prices vary from \$22.50 for off-Mill Race rentals to just \$2.80 for a restful hour in a canoe on the Mill Race. The rental price includes two paddles and two lifejackets, with extra paddles and lifejackets costing 75 cents each.

The Canoe Company is open Monday through Thursday from 2:30 to sundown, Friday from noon until sundown, and weekends from 11:00 a.m. to sundown.

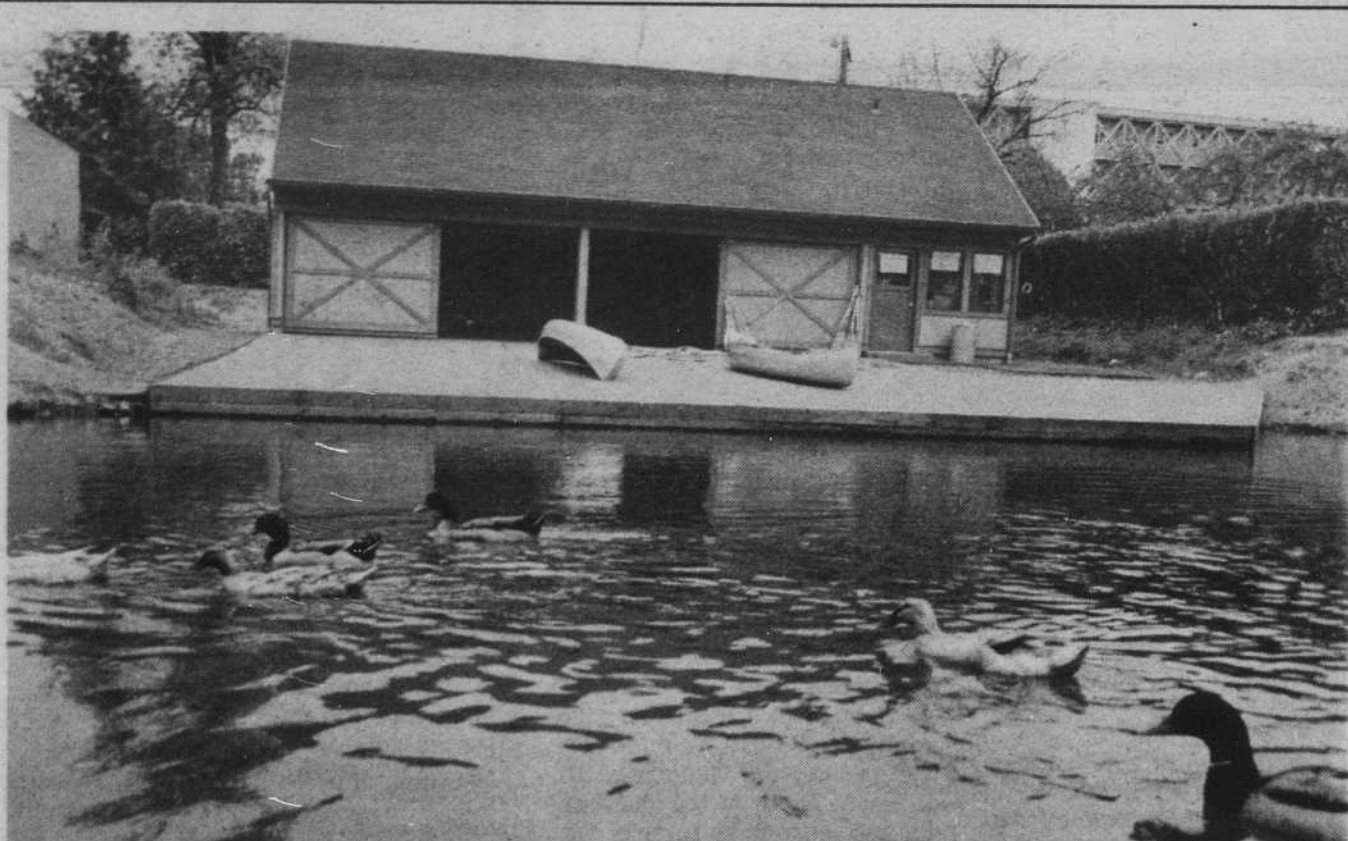


Photo by Bob Baker

Committee approves of leaflets in dorms

By Dane Claussen
Of the Emerald

The Residence Hall Governance Committee narrowly approved a rule that will allow dormitory residents to distribute non-commercial literature under doors of other residents in their own dormitories.

The issue of literature distribution within the dorms has surfaced in recent weeks during ASUO elections, and most recently, when students distributing campaign literature for City Council candidate Susan Sowards were told by a resident assistant that they couldn't do so.

The controversy resulted in the matter being placed on Monday's agenda and in the RHGC receiving letters from Alan Contreras and Susan Sowards, students from the Campus Committee for Susan Sowards, ASUO Pres. Rich Wilkins and ASUO Pres-elect C.J. Balfe.

"RAs are telling residents that it is illegal for residents to distribute campaign literature within their own dorms," said Contreras, also ASUO vice president

for program administration.

Sowards said that University policies should not be hindering efforts to inform and involve students in the elections process, especially during the students' first years of voting eligibility. Two-thousand flyers were printed especially for distribution in the dormitories, she said.

There are no written rules prohibiting distribution in the dorms, Contreras said, adding that Section 19 of the Residence Halls and Food Services Contract only disallows commercial solicitation.

The section reads, in part, "Commercial solicitation, advertising, promotion, and commercial transactions are prohibited in all areas where such activity will, or is likely to interfere with, impede or make more costly than formal, functions of that area."

However, five or six years ago, what was then known as the Dormitory Governance Committee, ruled that individuals or groups wishing to distribute literature within dormitories should reserve tables in dormitory lobbies, said Dick Romm, Residence Life Director and a member of the RHGC. In addition, Student Conduct

Code allows the RHGC or individual dormitories to establish "operating rules," he added.

Contreras said that students are in a hurry in and out of dining halls, nullifying the effectiveness of tables.

For the most part, RHGC members did not agree on the new policy and several voiced a variety of ideas about literature distribution before approving the new rule 5-4.

The only other literature distribution proposal voted on, suggested by Carson:Earl representative Joe Argast, asked that those wanting to distribute literature in dorms get the approval of the dormitory advisory board. The motion failed by a vote of 4-5, with the same four representatives that voted against the final motion voting in favor of Argast's motion.

In other business, the RHGC reviewed a proposed budget for dormitories and food service for next year.

Housing Director Dan Williams said that the 1982-83 rates will be \$2,750 for a multiple room in the University Inn and \$2,115 in other dorms, and \$3,575 for a single room in the University Inn and \$2,750 in other dorms.