

Conduct code changes debated to close gaps

By Frank Shaw
Of the Emerald

Proposed changes in the student conduct code would extend the code to cover students during the admission procedure and during vacations.

But Vernon Barkhurst, student conduct coordinator, says the changes are designed to plug some loopholes in the process, not to increase University control over students.

"The way the code is ordered now it says 'student' is defined as someone who is registered for one or more hours," Barkhurst says.

This definition causes a problem because students who falsify their applications for admission, housing or financial aid are not registered at the University and do not fall under the code, he says.

Even if University officials later discover the student lied on the application, they can do little about it.

The same problem occurs during term breaks, Barkhurst says. While students are not enrolled over the breaks, they may still be on campus or living in the dormitories.

In such cases, the University is forced to go through the criminal process, instead of using the conduct code, Barkhurst says.

He uses an example of a student who applied for a University loan, then had a friend register for him and pick up the loan. After receiving the money, he dropped all his classes and used it to pay tuition at a different school.

"We had a bit of a problem with that one," Barkhurst says. The question came in deciding whether the student was enrolled when he committed the crime.

But extending the conduct code to cover students during vacation does not mean they'll get a call from the University asking where they were the night before.

"If you look at the code," Barkhurst says, "if it doesn't have anything to do with the operation of the University we don't care about it."

Two other proposed changes deal with students who have been accused of violations. The students can take two courses of action — an administrative hearing or an informal procedure.

"Informal means they deal with me," Barkhurst says. "It's best when the individual is guilty, and they know they're guilty. An administrative hearing gives them maximum protection."

When a student decides to go the informal route but does not want Barkhurst as the judge, a "referee" is assigned to the case.

The proposals will give the referees the same powers the student conduct coordinator has, a delegation of authority Barkhurst says has been understood but never spelled out.

Counseling groups start work

There's more going on at the Student Health Center than bandages for bumps and bruises. The Counseling Center, located on the Health Center's second floor, offers a variety of counseling groups.

This term the Center will hold five different group sessions with topics as varied as a Weight Control Issues Group and a Here-and-now Counseling Group.

"The groups offer a way of working on problems and concerns in conjunction with other people," says Greg Alexander, a student intern at the Counseling Center.

People often think they are the only ones with a particular problem, and the groups help combat that idea, he says.

"You find out you're not alone," Alexander says.

Two different kinds of group are offered. One is a particular problem-oriented group and the other is a more open-ended group not dealing with a specific problem.

This term the Counseling Center is offering two open-ended groups, the here-and-now counseling group and a coping-with-stress group. Both meet on Tuesday afternoons. The two problem-oriented groups are a weight control issues group and an eating disorders group, each of which hold two sessions throughout the week.

Groups meet for an average of eight sessions, Alexander says.

"Group counseling is a very widespread form of counseling that research shows helps as much as individual counseling," he says.

One advantage group counseling offers is easy access to a group.

"When people think of counseling they still think of one on one, but group counseling is widely used, too," Alexander says.

Most of the groups are scheduled to start this week, but Alexander emphasizes that most can be joined late, and there is no charge for the groups.

Interested students can call 686-3227.

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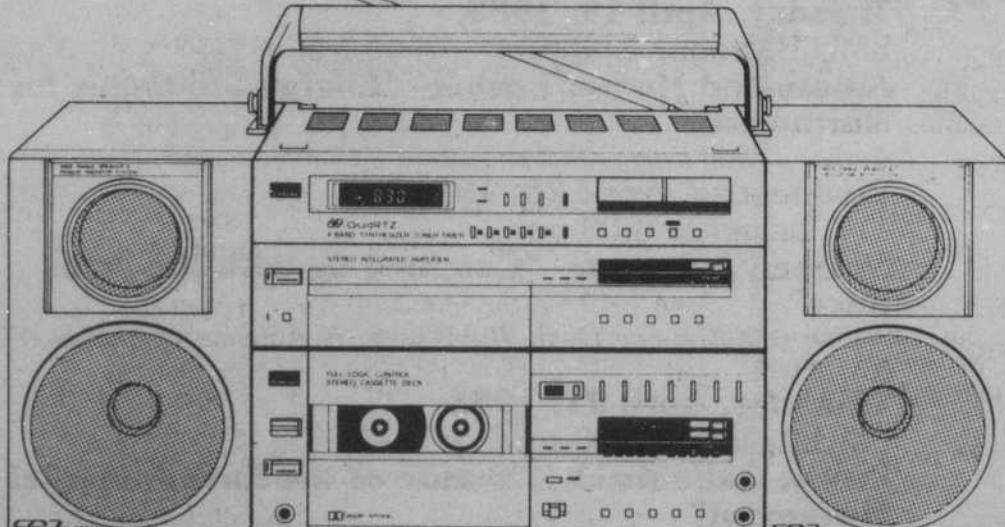
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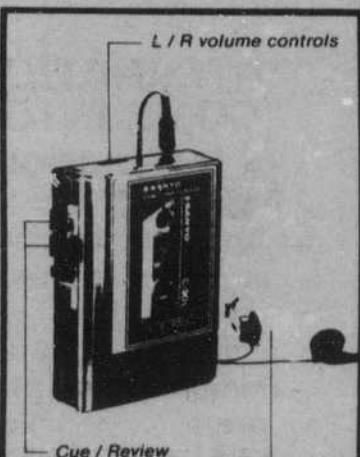
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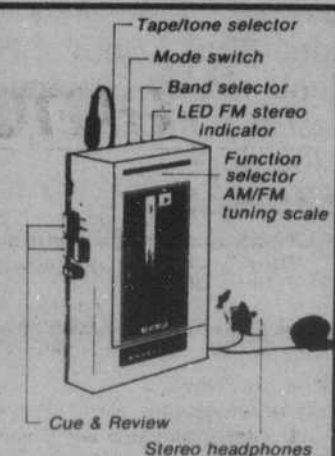
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