

Evaluations: Fear of bias

By Frank Shaw
Of the Emerald

Evaluating a teacher can be a tricky business for both students and teachers, says Paul Holbo, vice provost for academic affairs.

"These are tricky things," Holbo admits. "It's an imperfect world."

But it's not only students who fear bias after giving a teacher bad marks, Holbo says. Students also can retaliate against teachers for a poor grade by filling out harshly critical evaluations.

"You just have to count on responsible behavior all around," he says.

Students have to evaluate the situation fairly, without regard for a professor's race, politics, sex or grade in the class, Holbo says.

Teacher evaluation legislation isn't likely to provide a satisfactory answer, he adds.

"I haven't got any solution to this," Holbo says.

While Joe Hynes, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, says he understands the students' point of view, he has never heard of any cases of teacher retaliation at the University.

An evaluation must be signed to go into a teacher's record, he says. The evaluation goes to the department head or dean and then to the instructor.

But there are "no ironclad guarantees,"

says Provost Richard Hill.

In any kind of retribution, the student could file a grievance complaint against the teacher, Hill says.

"I can't believe retribution would be widespread among this faculty," he says. "I haven't heard of teachers being retaliatory."

Derrick Bell, dean of the law school, sees a different type of problem.

"The problem I have is, I think people have an obligation to tell it like it is," Bell says.

If a teacher falls short of a student's expectations, Bell says the student should write a critical evaluation, take it to the professor, hand it to them — and sign it.

Bell uses the example of University Law School graduate Minoru Yasui, who felt the curfew placed on Japanese Americans was unfair and went to prison for it.

"He, in effect, told it like it was," Bell says.

Although Bell says most teachers won't retaliate against students, he says students should sign evaluations.

Standing up for your beliefs should outweigh insecurities about signing an evaluation, he says.

Evaluations is only part of the problem, Bell says. "It's not simply paranoia (about evaluations)" he says. "It is also that desire to make no waves, ruffle no feathers, even in the most righteous case."

ACLU says remove ROTC

By Randy Cook
Of the Emerald

The University branch of the American Civil Liberties Union is taking students' civil rights as seriously now as the national ACLU took citizens' rights in the McCarthy era of the 1950s.

The campus ACLU is drumming up support among faculty members for Philosophy Prof. Cheyney Ryan's proposal to remove the ROTC from campus, says University ACLU Director Doug Marker.

Ryan's proposal, which goes before the faculty Senate next month, calls for the ROTC's removal because a conflict between ROTC's exclusion of gays from the program and the University's Affirmative Action policy.

Marker says the ACLU deals only with constitutional issues, and therefore could not support another motion, proposed last month by Biology Prof. Bayard McConaughy, to remove the ROTC for "humanitarian reasons."

"The group must stay within civil liberties issues," Marker says. "As soon as you get on the broad political issues the impact diffuses."

Marker says the University must accept Ryan's proposal.

"They must either stand behind the University's Affirmative Action policy or throw it out the window," he says.

David Fidanque, associate director of the Oregon ACLU, says his office isn't involved in the campus ROTC issue yet.

"At this point in time it has been a campus concern, but I've told them (the campus ACLU) that if they need any help we'll back them up," he says.

The Solomon Amendment, which — after July 1, 1983 — will require students to supply proof of draft registration before qualifying for financial aid, is both a campus and a national issue, says Fidanque.

Nationally, the ACLU is lobbying heavily against the amendment in Washington, D.C., because it infringes on the right to privacy, Fidanque says.

The campus ACLU is working to increase student awareness of draft legislation and recent prosecutions of resisters.

Marker says educating students on issues such as the draft and ROTC is the campus ACLU's primary purpose.

"Citizens just don't understand what civil liberties are and how they apply to them."

But University students generally have a better tolerance," he says.

The Reagan administration is less tolerant of civil rights, Fidanque says.

"There's no question that there's a trend in the national government towards intolerance. It's a trend to turn back the clock on civil rights," he says.

But that trend has swelled ACLU membership to an all-time high, Marker says.

Marker estimates 100 to 200 University students — mostly law students — are national ACLU members. Unlike many University programs, the campus ACLU received a slight increase over last year's incidental fee funding, bringing this year's budget to \$248.

Although the Incidental Fee Committee's support this year is encouraging, Marker says the ACLU's reputation is sometimes poor.

"It's always been what they're doing now that seems far out, but when you look back on it later, you realize that the ACLU does some great things," he says. "They met a lot of opposition in 1951 for standing up against McCarthyism, but things look quite a bit different in retrospect."

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