

Classes help ease students into system

Participants' reactions to a new program that is designed to offset the intimidating effects of entering a large university have been overwhelmingly positive, according to a recent survey.

The Freshmen Seminar Project was initiated last fall in order to make the transition to college a little bit easier, said Jeff Pennington, of the dean of students' office.

In the program, freshmen and new students can take seminar-style classes that are taught in dorm lounges and small classrooms.

"Providing small classes taught in seminar fashion will mitigate the effects of the impersonality a large university can often project," Pennington said.

More than 500 University students have participated so far this year in the Freshmen Seminar Project, a brainchild of the President's Advisory Council. And the responses from those participants, as well as from the faculty members involved, have been quite favorable, Pennington said.

According to a survey conducted by Paul Goldman, a sociology professor, and distributed to seminar participants, 67 percent of the students who responded said their expectations were met, while 20 percent said their expectations were somewhat met.

"The class had much contact with the instructor and the discussions were interesting and thought-provoking," one student wrote on the evaluation.

The 11 percent who said that their expectations were not met complained about the difficulty of the course material, Goldman said.

"There were few enough people to have a comfortable atmosphere during discussions," remarked one participant. "I felt I learned far more from the seminar because I was intrigued and excited to study concepts from class on my own."

One-half the participants said that the seminar courses were more challenging than other classes.

"Answers to this question reflected considerable ambiguity because students have different interpretations of what a challenging course is," Goldman said.

Of the 194 freshmen and new students enrolled in the freshman seminars fall term, 54 responded to the questionnaire distributed in the 13 seminars that were offered.

A brief questionnaire also was sent to the 14 participating faculty, Goldman said.

Because of the overwhelming success of the Freshmen Seminar Project, 16 courses will be offered this term covering topics as diverse as "Robots — Past and Future" and "Bicycle Botony." The 199-level courses are taught in several disciplines.

Freshmen and new students can register for classes listed in the time schedule at the Freshmen Seminar table during registration.

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Rulings given in Penk suit

By Scott McFetridge

Of the Emerald

The recent award to Anna Penk and two other successful plaintiffs in the \$33.1 million sex discrimination lawsuit against the State Board of Higher Education is inadequate, said a University plaintiff in the case.

U.S. District Judge Helen Frye ruled Friday that Penk must be promoted to a full professorship at Western Oregon State College, retroactive to the start of the 1983-84 school year. Back pay totaling \$726 in salary, benefits and interest also must be awarded to Penk, the judge ordered.

said. "The whole case is obviously a setback for equality for women, minorities or anyone else."

Although the judgment is less than she expected, Penk said that the ruling pleases her to some extent.

"At least three people did get something," Penk said. "But our main issue involved not the individual plaintiffs, it involved the entire class. The suit was brought for all the women."

An appeal of the case is planned, Penk said.

The judgment said court costs and attorney fees would be decided after motions are submitted by attorneys for both sides. The trial, which lasted nine months, is believed to be the longest federal civil trial in Oregon history.

Waugh said the plaintiffs are worried that they may be charged with the entire court costs. A meeting of many of the plaintiffs is planned for tonight in Salem to discuss the court costs and the upcoming appeal, she said.

The class-action suit originally was filed on behalf of about 2,200 women faculty members.

In addition, G. Joanne Amspoker, also a WOSC faculty member, was awarded \$8,689 in gross back pay and other benefits, plus a salary increase to \$29,452, effective today. The judgment did not state the amount of Amspoker's current salary.

Frye also ruled that the professional record of Mary Ann Petry, a former WOSC teacher, must be amended to reflect an award of tenure in 1982 instead of 1983.

Awarding so much more money to Amspoker than to Penk does not make sense, said Ruth Waugh, an unsuccessful University plaintiff in the case. There is little difference between the two cases, and such a disparity in the awards is not justified, Waugh said.

"I think the awards are woefully inadequate," Waugh

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Law students: court needs vacancy filled

Members of the current ASUO Constitution Court are looking for another person to fill a vacant position on the five-person court.

Applicants must be in their second or third year of studies at the law school to be considered, says Jon Folkestad, a court member. Good writing and speaking skills also are important, he adds, although no real experience is necessary.

Constitution Court members are responsible for appointing hearings officers and issuing advisory opinions, based on their interpretation of the ASUO Constitution, Folkestad says.

Persons interested in applying should contact ASUO President Julie Davis and pick up an application in EMU Suite 4. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

Read Emerald Sports

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