

Older students may find resources limited

By Kelvin Wee
Emerald Reporter

Adult learners returning to college after a break from high school often find there are many obstacles that threaten to mar their move back into the world of education.

Adult learners constitute about 25 percent of the total student population at the University, according to Linda Devine, the internship coordinator with the Office of Student Development.

In October of 1985 Ronald Larsen, a graduate student with the Department of Sociology, conducted the "Survey of University of Oregon Attitudes and Experiences" that also dealt with opinions of adult students on campus.

The survey found older students are less likely to attend any orientation activities, especially those of a social nature, and older students have a harder time making friends connected with the University.

"It's inherent in adult learners to have a lot of different activities in their life that they have to balance," Devine said. "And because of that it is rare

that you will find an older student with the time and energy (to participate in such activities)," she added.

In order to help adult students adapt to college life, the Office of Student Development is encouraging them to organize informal lunches and meeting places where newer students can go to meet other returning students.

"We're trying to help them develop their own informal network," Devine explained, "so that they can have a place to meet other people who are in same age groups, or others who have children the same age as their own, or even people who live in the same town so they may commute together."

The group held its first unofficial gathering during the Orientation Week where about 15 percent of the new adult-learner population showed up. These students got to meet returning students, who advised them on where they could find solutions to problems new students were facing.

"We are also seeing a lot more men get involved with these meetings," Devine added, "and this is mainly because there is no formal group on

campus that serves the needs of older men who are coming back to school."

The office of the Registrars' began a statistical breakdown of the student population by age last year. In the course of their work, it found that adult learners constituted over 6495 of the total enrollment of 17050 students.

"It is not presently possible to know how the older student population has grown because we only began to classify by age last year," said Tom North, the statistician for registrar's office. "But the report for this year will be released in a few weeks and we can begin to monitor that," he said.

As with most students, adult learners frequently come across problems with finances. The Office of Veterans' Affairs has been working to help veterans obtain aid financially.

"Financial assistance for veterans has become complex in the last year," said Hilda Yee-Young, Director of Veterans Affairs, adding: "There's now the old G.I. Bill and the new G.I. Bill, then there's the veterans education assistance program (VEAP), which is also very complicated."

Student dies

University honors student John A. Hocken III, an advocate for better campus access, died of complications associated with Muscular Dystrophy on Sept 23. He was 19.

A "brilliant student," according to Honors College Director Richard Stevenson, Hocken came to the University with 53 advanced placement credits and was a junior physics major at the time of his death.

Hocken was a member of an architectural advisory committee and helped in the planning for the placement of an elevator in Chapman Hall, where the Honors College is located. When installed, the elevator will be dedicated to Hocken.

A 1986 graduate of Churchill High School in Eugene, Hocken captained the chess team and earned a National Merit Scholarship, a Presidential Scholarship and a scholarship from the Foundation for Exceptional Children.

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didn't, they've gone outside to the press with frequent derogatory remarks about individuals," Willard said.

"What this raises to the community is that they aren't willing to trust the governmental process," she said.

Political beliefs and economic self-interests have played a role in the attempt by some members of the task force to limit the scope of the ordinance, said Rona Friend, a task force member.

According to Friend, the proposals initiated by the "pro-business" faction of the task force would prohibit activities which would likely never occur in Eugene, such as the manufacture or testing of a nuclear weapon, but would allow other activities, such as applied research and the manufacture of

components and software.

Although Willard is affiliated with the Eugene Software Council, and other members of the task force list business occupations (Robert Ellis, president of a high-technology company called CEO; Jim Piercey, president of the Eugene-Springfield Metrobusiness Partnership; and Rob Bennett, city councilman and developer), Willard said economic self-interest didn't play a part in the proposals put forth by some members.

"There's no conflict of interest," Willard said.

Accusations of such motives by other task force members are "part of the name calling, the intimidation factor," she said.

Johnson said he is unsure what the City Council will do with the new version.

"I hope the council will see

this does address the issues that they had originally been concerned about and that they will adopt it," Johnson said. "I have no reading of the council position on this."

"It's our hope that they would see this and understand that this is the legal solution and anything else is to go too far," he added.

The council was expected to take up the task force's recommendations at a Dec. 7 meeting after a public forum took place in late October and the task force met again "for the purpose of clearing up certain unresolved issues," said Glen Potter, a staff assistant in the City of Eugene's intergovernmental relations division.

And according to Willard, there is another version in the

works. Her own.

"I'm going to try to come up with something that meets the needs of everyone," she said, adding she wanted to meet the objectives of the five members

who presented the version Wednesday without involving them directly.

"I have a sneaking suspicion the City Council will get four (versions)," Willard added.

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The semester calendar for the academic year 1990-91, which was approved last spring by the State Board, shows classes beginning Aug. 29 and ending May 10 with Christmas break from Dec. 21 to Jan. 14.

Spring break will be a little earlier than usual; taking place March 9-17. Labor Day and Thanksgiving vacations also will be honored on Sept. 3 and Nov. 22 through 25 respectively.

Annual tuition will not be

raised as a result of the semester change, according to the the State System of Higher Education's conversion governing principles.

One of the most challenging problems in making the transition will be dealing with one-term only courses, such as some skiing courses offered only during the winter term. "If you have a one quarter course you have to decide whether to drop it, expand it or amalgamate it with another," said Mate.

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



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