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Photo by Mia Bertelsen

University President Myles Brand and State Rep. Carl Hosticka lead a discussion sponsored by the University Senate.

Forum discusses dissolving PSU Plan may hurt University

By Peter Cogswell
Emerald Reporter

University President Myles Brand discussed the proposed Portland State University closure and the potential problems it could cause for the University at an open forum Thursday.

The forum, entitled "A Vision for the University," was the first of a five-part open forum series sponsored by the University Senate.

Brand began the PSU discussion by saying it is important not to destroy the excellence already established at both the University and Oregon State University when helping to solve the PSU problem.

"This issue will be important for the University for the next 10 years," Brand said. "Portland needs a higher education system and there must be a way to enhance one in the Portland area."

The problem confronting PSU involves a lack of funding from the state for three research universities in Oregon and the

various recommendations that have been made about how to solve this problem.

Some of these recommendations call for the University and OSU to assume control of some, if not all, of the programs at PSU. This would maintain the current situation of only two research Universities in the state.

The major problem is no one is sure of the effect that absorbing programs and running PSU would have on both the University and Oregon State.

"Oregon cannot afford three major research Universities," said Carl Hosticka, a state representative and associate professor at the University. "But there are needs in the Portland area that need to be served by higher education."

Hosticka accompanied Brand to the forum and gave some background information on the PSU situation as well as some ideas on what could happen in the future.

"The conclusion people have drawn is that a third major research university in Portland is

not feasible," Hosticka said. "They want to break it up and use the research universities that already exist."

Another question that has to be faced when discussing the breakup of PSU involves the emotions and feelings of its faculty, Hosticka said.

"I have been accused of the overthrow of Portland State," Hosticka said. "The feeling of Portland State is that because it is looked at as a second class institution, it is getting pushed out of the way."

"I am doing everything I can to calm down this emotion," Hosticka said.

Before discussing the PSU issue, Brand spoke about his feelings on other University issues he wants to address.

Brand cited faculty recruiting and faculty salaries as two issues the University will face in the future.

"The way the governor is speaking shows that the message of a faculty salary problem is not getting through," Brand said. "The University is 56th out of 56 research universities in terms of salary. This is not a good position for recruiting faculty."

