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University drops American Studies

By Marina Swain
Emerald Contributor

The American Studies program is the latest casualty of an underfunded University.

Theodore Palmer, arts and sciences dean, said the interdisciplinary major will not be offered next fall, and there are no plans to continue the program in the future.

"There simply weren't funds, and my first priority is to fund adequately the basic programs of the college," Palmer said of his decision to eliminate the program.

Palmer said students already majoring in the subject would be allowed to continue next year to complete their degrees.

Details of next year's cutback will be discussed Wednesday by members of the American Studies Advisory Council, Palmer said. The 16-member council is represented by a variety of departments, such as journalism, English, history and political science.

"It had never developed the way people had hoped it would," Palmer said of the 4-year-old program.

Departing director of the program, Sam Girgus, disagrees.

"I think the ever-increasing enrollment in the course indicates we have been successful in developing teaching strategies that reach out to such a vast number of students," Girgus said.

The program has about 60 majors, and more than 500 students are enrolled in American Studies classes each term, Girgus said.

Turn to Girgus, Page 5



Reach

Craig Jacobsen makes a diving catch for a flying disc underneath Monday's sunny but cool skies.

Photo by Martin Thiel

Candidates discuss homeless problem

By Pat Malach
Emerald Reporter

Candidates for Eugene City Council and Lane County Commissioner positions met Monday at a candidate forum to debate and discuss the present homeless problem.

City Council candidate Paul Nicholson said the county needs to look to the people and businesses that are contributing to the homeless problem to help solve it.

Taxing people arbitrarily is not the answer, Nicholson said. He stressed that the county needed to tax people who contribute to the problem — employers who pay minimum wage and renters who take advantage of Eugene's housing shortage in order to charge high rents.

Many of the candidates said they believe some city and county legislation needs to be changed in order to fight the homeless problem. City Council candidate Ken Tollenaar said there are many people in the community that would benefit if the ordinance against camping in the city was rescinded.

City Council candidate Tim Laue asked if it was

wise to have the municipal court use its time and resources citing and trying people guilty of sleeping in their cars when they could be using those resources for more urgent matters.

Nicholson agreed that rescinding the ordinance would be one step in fighting the problem. When asked if he would favor using the Downtown Mall as a camping shelter for the homeless, Nicholson said he doubted if the idea would be accepted by the community.

He added that it would not be the best place to camp.

"If I were a homeless person I wouldn't be inclined to camp at the intersection of Broadway and Willamette," Nicholson said.

County Commission candidate Gary Kutcher said it was a disgrace to the community that Eugene spent \$15 million on law and order and only \$2.5 million on social service. He said the city is trying to deal with problems by putting people in jail.

"We can avoid crimes by giving people what they need," he said.

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Debate team wages war of words

Research, theory
essential to win

By Darla Jackson
Emerald Associate Editor

"Where are the cadavers kept?" is a question that pops up each year on the first day of the Introduction to Forensics class at the University.

However, the course doesn't teach that kind of forensic study — the type that conjures up images of Quincy slaving away in the hospital morgue. Instead, the forensic program is a co-curricular debating activity made up of a competing debate team and two instructional courses on the subject.

While many students have little knowledge of the program, the University's team currently ranks first in the Northwest and sixth in the nation.

Matt Taylor, director of the program, said interested students usually first take the Introduction to Forensics class, where they learn the skills necessary to compete with other universities. Those who join the team quickly discover how much dedication is involved in competition, he added.

"We're very prepared for the debates," Taylor said. "We start researching our topics about a month before school starts and are either in the of-



Peter Messer



Trond Jacobsen

fice practicing or in the library reading from about 10 a.m. to 10 p.m."

Team members compete in group events and in individual competition, he said. During a match, students must be able to argue both sides of an issue convincingly.

"Debate is not necessarily a personal conviction," Taylor said. "In fact, the major thing we rely on is support from experts to back up our theories."

Taylor believes the University's team will continue its strong tradition in competition, primarily because the group is only losing one person next year. "So all of our people will be more mature and better able to handle the pressure," he said. "But it's hard to do better than we're already doing now

as a squad."

At the national competition last month in Springfield, Mo., team members Peter Messer and Trond Jacobsen played a crucial role in pulling the squad to its ninth-place finish. At the individual competition in Tuscaloosa, Ala., also held last month, Scott Palmer took six events to the national meet, finishing sixth overall in the prose category.

However, these kinds of rewards don't come without tiring effort and never-ending practice, Taylor said.

"The people who travel nationally are the people who have proved themselves in regional competitions," he said. "We give up everything like spring break and Christmas break to be here."