

Colson/Grayson plan to trim budgets, cut fees

ASUO Executive candidates not surprised by criticism

By Catherine Hawley
Emerald Associate Editor

Of three sets of candidates running for ASUO Executive, Mike Colson and Barclay Grayson's ticket has been dogged by the most controversy and the most negative publicity.

Colson is challenging an ASUO investigation that found him responsible for altering notes from an Incidental Fee Committee meeting, and he has stepped down as IFC chairman until the ASUO Constitution Court makes a ruling.

Some students have complained in letters to the *Emerald* about a Colson/Grayson campaign ad criticizing an ASUO-sponsored lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. — an ad that specifically named campaign opponent Jennifer Bills.

However, Colson and Grayson said the ad was meant to be "informative."

And at least seven students who were in EMU Suite 1 two weeks ago when the Survival Center held candidate endorsement hearings say Colson told them he had once carried a firearm to campus.

Colson said he later regretted carrying the gun, Survival Center member Todd Hausman

said.

However, Colson told the *Emerald* he has never carried a firearm on campus. He does say he carried a starter's pistol once or twice "for personal reasons."

Colson and Grayson said the criticism directed against their campaign is unfounded, the rumors exaggerated if not downright false. They say the attention has detracted from their discussion of such issues as higher education funding, campus safety and child care.

But they also say they're not surprised by the criticism because their campaign platform — namely, their pledge to cut waste and save students money — endangers a mind-set that has prevailed in the ASUO for the past few years.

"We've asked some tough questions and, yeah, we've rocked the boat in some areas," Colson said. "And that hasn't been done for a long time. And it's made a lot of people nervous."

"We've got control of some things here," he said. "We need to focus in on what we ourselves can do to help ourselves."

Projected tuition increases in the wake of Ballot Measure 5

put a burden on next year's ASUO Executive to cut waste and keep student incidental fees low, the candidates said.

Colson and Grayson said they would work with their finance coordinator to examine student group budgets, scrutinizing every line item in search of places to "trim fat."

They would also computerize the ASUO's accounting system to ensure more accurate records.

Fiscal responsibility in the ASUO is the best way to earn state legislators' support in the University's lobby for stable higher education funding, Colson said.

Another component in the Colson/Grayson campaign is accessibility. They said they want to "tear down the walls"



ASUO Executive candidates Barclay Grayson (left) and Mike Colson aren't surprised by political criticisms against them.

— literally — that separate the ASUO from the rest of the student body.

Their first, symbolic step would be to take down the posters that now cover the windows of the Executive office in EMU Suite 4.

"You tear those down, and

you make people feel comfortable to come inside and ask questions," Grayson said.

Both would like to extend campus child care benefits to part-time students and work with community resources to expand the types of care available.

Correction

An article in Monday's *Emerald* implied that students who painted graffiti on a Knight Library sidewalk last week were sponsored by the Survival Center's Ancient Forest Group. Although many of the people who took part in the protest are members of that group, Survival Center Director Alexandra Foote said Monday that her organization did not sponsor the activity.

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