

LUCAS

Continued from Page 6

other students sometimes don't, but the time is still put in. I don't think it's any easier.

"I don't want to say it's any harder, either. It's pretty much an equal thing. You have to work to succeed."

Despite his academic success, Lucas said student-athletes — like other students — often face a difficult road in their pursuit of a degree. He compared the time-consuming responsibilities of an athlete to jobs that many students must hold down in order to pay for tuition.

"It's tough," he said. "As long as you allow athletics to run your life you'll get into trouble. You have to learn how to budget your time."

"The saddest thing for me is to see a student-athlete come here and not work hard and not graduate. But that happens to a lot of non-athletes too, for similar reasons."

Those are precisely the kinds of problems Gary Gray and his staff must deal with on a regular basis with the University's 450 student-athletes.

Gray, Oregon's assistant athletic director for student services, said the biggest difficulty often is to convince student-athletes that an education is important.

"If you're walking in here as an 18-year-old and seeing people signing \$4-million contracts ... well, people want to dream. You may be that one in a thousand, but in the meantime you need to have something to fall back on. Once kids understand that education is a priority, most do a pretty good job."

Gray said his staff has a heavy work load but that the addition of

a learning resource center at McArthur Court complete with computers and study areas has put Oregon closer to other, better-financed schools in terms of academic support facilities.

"We hope it's kind of like (the student-athletes') home away from home while they're on campus every day," Gray said. "Through national meetings I have gotten to know a lot of people at other schools, and I'd like to think we're as good as anyone else."

Gray said another dilemma is satisfying the public, which is often more concerned with graduation rates of student-athletes than of other students.

Gray worries that operating under that microscope, combined with increasingly strict NCAA academic regulations, is putting more and more pressure on his staff.

"Our people are really seeing more people than they probably should," he said. "They are doing a fantastic job, but I can't believe in my mind they can continue year after year at that kind of level."

With that in mind, Gray said any possible Measure 5-related cut-backs would likely have serious consequences on the success of the University's academic support for student-athletes.

"I'm not here crying that we're the only department that's understaffed," he said. "But for us to cut back on personnel right now would be a traumatic experience, to say the least."

Despite a foggy horizon, though, there are bright spots in the area of athletes, and how well they're performing in the classroom.

Richard Lucas is just one of many success stories, and if his successors follow his simple but effective strategy, the future of Oregon's student athletes may be bright, indeed.

"If you want to work you can graduate," he said.

GTF

Continued from Page 7

excites people for the most part ... they realize that all they have to do is think."

The fact that Clauss came to Oregon at all was unplanned.

"I'd been hitchhiking around the country one year and ended up out here," he said, and eventually settled down at the University to get his master's degree.

Bohmer had also traveled quite a bit before coming to the University, where she received her bachelor's and master's degrees. Her travels are what provoked her interest in sociology, she said.

The best part of teaching is being appreciated by the students, she said. "I like it when students understand something they thought they could never understand, and how happy they are when they really do."

The biggest reward of teaching for Clauss is how it allows him to influence the lives of his students.

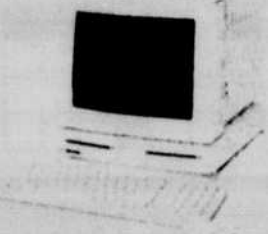
"I try to instill in students the ability and the excitement to think ... to reason their way through things to look for solutions to any problem," he said.

"I'm not out to change the world today," he said with a smile. "Just over the course of my lifetime."

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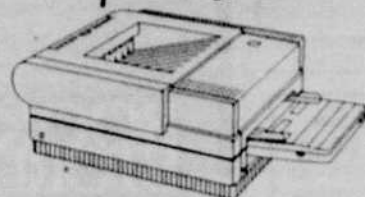
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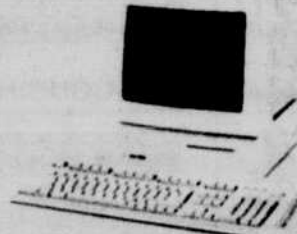
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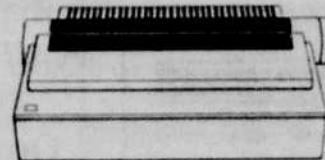
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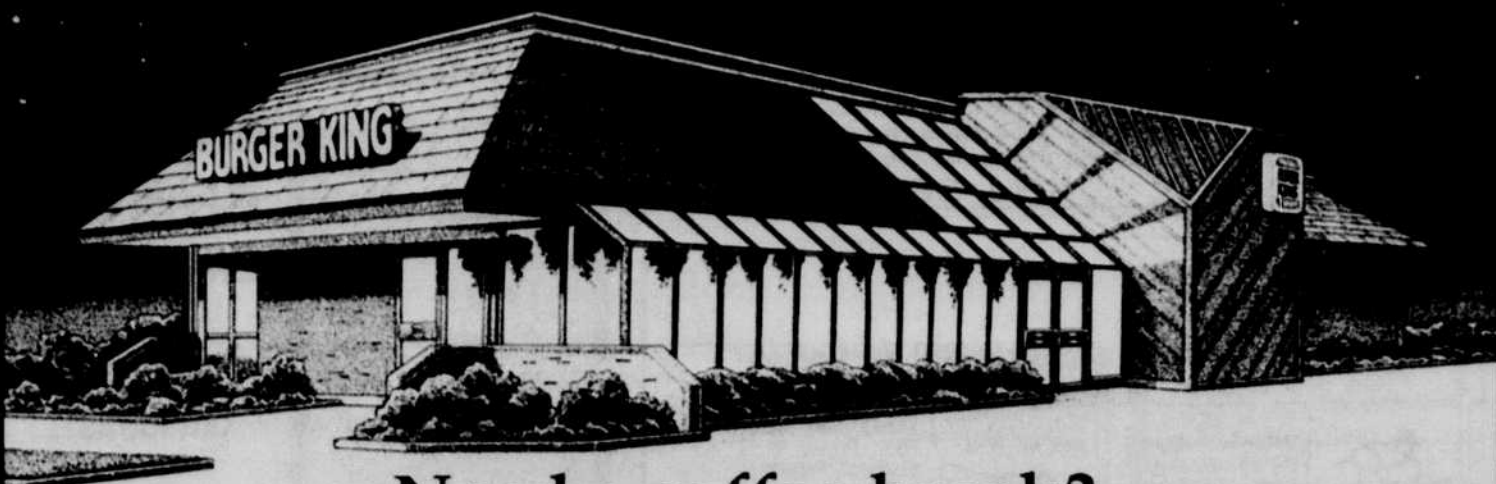


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