

# ASUO declares Measure 9 opposition at conference

By Tammy Batey  
Emerald Associate Editor

The passage of Ballot Measure 9 would strike a major blow to academic freedom at the University, said representatives of the ASUO, Oregon Student Lobby and ASUO Student Senate at a Friday press conference.

However, Darrell Fuller, a "Yes on 9" campaign regional director, said Sunday that "dire" predictions of the effects of Measure 9 on academic freedom are "just campaign scare tactics."

Measure 9 would change the Oregon Constitution to label homosexuality "abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse."

ASUO, OSL and Student Senate representatives announced their groups' opposition to Measure 9 at the press conference.

ASUO President Bobby Lee said ASUO and other branches of student government are funded by the state. The passage of the measure would mean student fees cannot be used for speakers,

groups, research and open forums that facilitate homosexuality, he said.

"The integrity of our educational system is in question because of the fear and insecurity of the conservative few," he said. "Students, whether you are straight, gay, lesbian or bisexual, we must all unite to put an end to this measure."

Fuller said he agreed the measure would prevent the University from supporting anything that facilitates homosexuality.

"The question is what facilitates homosexuality," he said. "A lot of universities have chapels, but does that mean the state is promoting religion?"

It would ultimately be up to the Oregon Legislature to determine what "facilitating homosexuality" means, Fuller said.

Karmen Fore, ASUO Vice President and an OSL member, read an OSL resolution of the group's opposition to the measure.

OSL believes the passage of the measure "would cause academic freedom in

human sexuality, sociology, psychology, law, medicine, literature, etc., to be lost by mandating that teachers speak of homosexuality in no way other than negative," according to the resolution.

The Student Senate voted unanimously to oppose the measure on Oct. 27, said John Thomas, Student Senate president.

"Students and faculty alike are scared at what could happen if Measure 9 passes," Thomas said. "It would seriously stifle academic freedom."

"Professors at public institutions would be forced to shun homosexuality as wrong and abnormal," he said, "even though there is no basis for such thought in the world of academia."

Measure 9 doesn't prevent teachers from discussing homosexuality or explaining the opposite views of the issue, Fuller said. But in schools where teachers talk about homosexuality as either right or wrong, "they have to teach it is wrong," he said.

"All that the measure requires is that those departments teach the truth," Fuller said. "Basic human anatomy tell us

that homosexuality is unnatural.

"The whole witchhunt, book-burning idea is really out in left field," he said.

The Incidental Fee Committee and EMU Board of Directors haven't held votes to learn what members think of the measure. But IFC Chairman Steve Masat said at the press conference that he opposed the measure.

"What happens when a gay or lesbian person calls the University Crisis Center and says they are thinking of suicide?" Masat asked. "The hot line staff are paid with state money. Can we ask that person to say, 'Your behavior is abnormal and perverse.' We might as well say, 'Go ahead.'"

Fuller said the logic of measure opponents "fails me sometimes." If gay or lesbian people call a suicide hot line, hot line operators would not be able to tell them their behavior is normal or natural. However, they wouldn't have to tell them their behavior is abnormal or unnatural, Fuller said.

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