

Assembly votes to remove cluster requirements

Decision effective immediately; no courses will be added or eliminated

By Julie Swensen
Oregon Daily Emerald

In a move that likely will clear up confusion, the University Assembly voted Wednesday to eliminate cluster requirements for undergraduates.

Instead, students now must take 16 credits in group-satisfying courses in each of the sciences, social sciences, and arts and letters categories. In each of the three areas, courses must be completed in at least two subjects, and at least two courses must be completed in one subject. No more than three courses in any one subject may be counted toward meeting the total 48-credit requirement.

No courses have been added or eliminated, and only

the cluster language has been removed. Full implementation will come in the fall of 1994, and the changes will be reflected in the General Bulletin, said John Nicols, a history professor who proposed the resolution.

The former cluster system required the completion of a cluster in each of the three categories. Students had to take either a sequence of three courses for nine credits, two courses for eight credits or three courses for 12 credits.

The former cluster system has caused many problems, Nicols said before the University Assembly.

"The cluster system, always difficult, has become impossibly complex," he said, saying that most students haven't understood what is expected of them.

Since some cluster courses aren't offered every term, some transfer students, or students who haven't been enrolled every term, have found that the classes they've needed to take to satisfy a cluster were offered when they

were gone. Other students have claimed they've been misadvised about what constituted a cluster, he said.

The Academic Requirements Committee reviewed an estimated 700 student petitions last year. The committee has had to meet every two to three weeks to review students' petitions of cluster requirements, he said.

"It's been an almost impossible system to monitor, given our resources," he said.

Dave Soper, president of the University Senate which unanimously passed the motion last month, said the senators were aware of some cons the new system imposes, such as the fact that students now can take a "scattered" group of courses instead of having in-depth study in one field.

But, since the new system eases confusion and helps students plan their curriculum, "the pros outweigh the cons," he said.

Native architecture class a unique study

University is one of only two in the Northwest to offer the American Indian course

By Jennifer Cosgrove
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The University is one of only two colleges in the Pacific Northwest offering a course surveying the history of American Indian architecture, says the University's art history departmental head.

The class, which was initially taught for the first time last spring by Professor Leland Roth, the department head, features not only the scope of building undertaken by American Indians in all regions of the North American continent, but also a unique study of many American Indian cultures and their lifestyles reflected through the period of time American Indian built structures. Course studies span from the earliest remains so far discovered up to the 1900s.

"The course objectives are designed for the students to learn about how American Indian cultures contain a rich ceremonial lifestyle and intimate relationship with the earth and its natural resources, and how this aspect is scarcely present today in any modern architecture, particularly western civilizations," Roth said.

"All American Indian buildings physically reveal individual and original expressions of religious, cosmological and philosophical feeling, differing from one another due to so many types of American Indian tribes and their heritages, natural materials and resources available, climate conditions, the period of time and area in which construction took place," he said.

Several students who took the course last spring observed how traditional American Indian lifestyles were and still are different and opposite to the values that govern Western/American culture.

Many students commented after taking the course that they began to notice that American culture has traditionally conveyed Native American cultural heritages in a dated, fragmented and prejudicial manner.

"There is a real lack of awareness that American Indian cultures still live very in tune with many of their traditions today, and that American Indians are still subjected to discrimination by western civilization biases," Roth said.

To date, about 25 colleges nationwide offer courses involved with surveying Native American architecture and individual variations of tribal housing, said

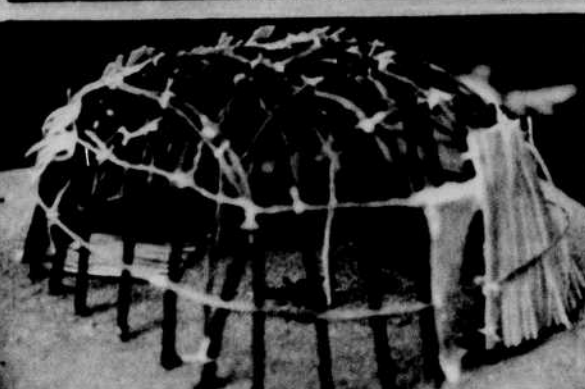


PHOTO BY DE SMAN for the Emerald
The Kickapoo Indian's (above), wiklup (winterhouse) was made from tules, reeds, hackberry, Montezuma bald cypress and sycamore. Professor Leland Roth (left) uses the King Island house model to recreate the architecture of the Ukluk Islanders.

Architects cut from Amazon housing plan by University

Contract's termination shouldn't affect scheduled demolition in spring 1994

By Rivers Janssen
Oregon Daily Emerald

University officials terminated their contract Wednesday with the architectural firm scheduled to plan the rebuilding of the Amazon family housing project, citing a lack of understanding between the University and the design team as reasons for the dismissal.

Dan Williams, vice president for administration, said the contract contained an option for the University to conclude its agreement with CES/T&E provided

that it settle all costs for work that's been completed. The University will exercise that option, he said.

The University will not, however, change its schedule on the Amazon project, Williams said. It still plans to begin demolition and site preparation in the spring, followed by construction and student occupancy of the first phase of the new Amazon units by fall 1995.

Williams said that in lieu of hiring a new architect and beginning the entire process anew, the University will instead use an approach known as design-build, which allows the University to accept a proposed design and then accept bids from contractors for the construction of that design.

The dismissal comes on the heels of months of difficulties between the head designer of the project, Christopher Alexander, and University officials. Alexander's Berkeley, Calif. - based Center for Environmental Structure joined with the Eugene architecture firm of Thallon and Edrington for the sole purpose of designing the Agate family housing complex and redesigning the Amazon housing facility. The University claims that Agate was going over budget and contained several unapproved changes by the architects.

That was the first major problem between the two sides that led to the termination of

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► Reaction to the firing from residents of Amazon