

Women's studies needs facilitators

By Catherine Hours
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The women's studies program is now recruiting "facilitators" for next term, as 30 to 40 people are needed every quarter to lead group discussions that are part of the course "Introduction to Women's Studies" (WST 101).

Regardless of their major and year in school (most of them are undergraduates), students can apply for this position and earn four credits, provided they have attended the 101 class before. Men are encouraged to participate as well.

Students interested in this new experience will have to go through a selection process. In addition to completion of the WST 101 class, they will have to provide a letter of recommendation from their instructor and will be interviewed by the teaching staff.

The groups are gender-based and gather six to 10 people who meet every week for one-and-a-half hours. These informal meetings aim at making students feel more comfortable with the issue.

In that respect, facilitators really suit their name. "Their role is to facilitate discussions. They are not teachers but peer educators," said Women's Studies Director Catherine Raissiguier. "They have to make sure that everybody understands. They help students to make sense out of the readings and to go more deeply into the subject."

Facilitators' motivations are various. "The issue debated here ties in with my studies," said Johnny Schwert, a philosophy major and one of six male facilitators.

Most facilitators major in fields as diverse as journalism, international studies and foreign languages. They often are deeply interested in the subject of women's studies, and this course provides a unique forum for discussion.

"People acquire a lot of education about women's role in society and a lot of self-esteem too," facilitator Bridget Wadst said. "These groups gather people with very different backgrounds, people who would never have a chance to talk to each other in another context."

Annette Bridges, a graduate teaching fellow in women's studies, noticed that after the 101 class, many students are overwhelmed by the amount of information they receive.

"Being a facilitator is an excellent opportunity for them to explore the issue in a more in-depth way," Raissiguier said.

Although the range of experiences varies from one group to another, discussions sometimes take a very personal tone. Especially within the female groups, students often talk about their own backgrounds.

"These meetings set a connection between personal, political and theoretical aspects of the question," Raissiguier said.

Facilitator Marisa Bedford, a major in Italian, also considered that the discussions constitute a "blend" relating experience to theory.

Issues like violence against women are hard to deal with. In such a context, facilitators must show specific qualities, Raissiguier noticed the importance of tolerance and flexibility.

"More generally, they must be good listeners," she said. "They should be able to listen without jumping in and pointing out contradictory arguments. They must give students the chance to speak without being corrected."

Facilitator Rene Badger, a psychology major, said motivating people and making them participate also are among the most difficult tasks of that function. Every student must get involved in the class and facilitators are responsible for the group's dynamics.

Eugene Peace Choir spreads message of hope and healing

By Ben Moebius
For the Oregon Daily Emerald

The Eugene Peace Choir, along with the vocal group Shumba Marimba, presented a benefit concert for Womenspace and Services for Battered Women and Their Children Saturday night.

The concert represented Eugene in its purest positive form, calling for hope and empowerment through the voices of the 50-member choir ensemble.

The song that detailed the struggles of Martin Luther King and called for an end to racism was especially powerful as performed by the talented group of white, middle-aged, middle-class Eugene residents.

The Eugene Peace Choir has been spreading similar messages through song in Lane County for more than 10 years.

Their goals are to raise social consciousness and inspire global healing, freedom and justice. Shumba Marimba called for similar inspiring and original goals with an overall musical theme

of "Love, harmony and unity among all people."

The intense energy of Shumba Marimba rode on the peaceful vibrations in the air and channeled into the audience to send it clapping and cheering for more.

The concert was a genuine success in raising money for Womenspace, which has provided assistance and support for women fleeing abusive relationships for the past 17 years. Its services includes, among other things, an emergency shelter, a 24-hour hotline, community support groups and counseling and advocacy.

The theme song, "Everything Possible," in many ways sums up the hope of the concert which strives for the day when everyone will be at peace, flowers will grow year-round, and lions will munch on grass beside baby sheep.

It might help to visualize world peace in reading the last lines of the song:

"And the only measure of your words and your deeds will be the love you leave behind when you're done."

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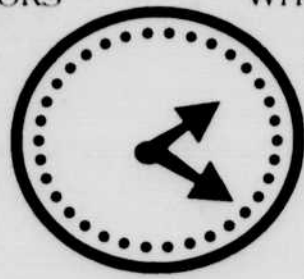
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The Oregon Daily Emerald, the independent student newspaper at the University of Oregon, is currently accepting applications for the position of Editor for the 1994-95 academic year.

Eligible candidates must be either an undergraduate student at the University enrolled for a minimum of six credit hours per term in three of the four academic quarters of his or her term as Editor, or a graduate student at the University enrolled for a minimum of three credit hours per term in three of the four academic quarters of his or her term as Editor. All applicants must be in good academic standing. Prior newsroom experience required.

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The Editor of the ODE, who reports to a 10-person volunteer Board of Directors, has responsibility for all editorial operations and all editorial content of the newspaper. Term of office is June 7, 1994 through the last issue of Spring term, 1995, and is preceded by an orientation period which begins no later than May 2 and extends through June 6. This is a paid position.

Interested parties should pick up an application packet, which includes a job description, at the ODE front desk in Suite 300 EMU or call 346-5511 for more information.

Completed applications must be returned to the ODE Board of Directors in the ODE office by 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 1, 1994. An individual will be selected by the Board on April 19, 1994.

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