

UNIVERSITY

Peer advisers form English literary society for students

By Marius Meland
Oregon Daily Emerald

Peer advisers at the English department have established a literary society to bring University students together for informal interaction and discussion of English literature.

"A literary society is really needed on this campus," said Don Stacy, one of the initiators of the society. "Because the English department is so large, classes often become very impersonal. Students want to get to know each other, so we'd like to give them that opportunity outside

of the classroom."

Stacy, an English peer adviser, said he came up with the idea after establishing a similar program at a university in Arkansas. He said the Arkansas program quickly flourished, and that the participants have hosted well-known writers and poets.

"We hope to provide participants with new insights through presentations, films, poetry and prose readings and guest speakers," Stacy said. "We also plan some special events such as a marathon reading of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. We expect that the reading of the

whole book will take about a day to complete."

The peer advisers will use the literary society as a source of career advice for English majors.

"Academic advising can't provide that kind of in-depth counseling, but many of the peer advisers are very knowledgeable and could help out students who are looking for a job after graduation," Stacy said.

Stacy also wants to use the society as a means to improve communication between students and faculty members.

There are about 900 English majors, and many of them never have a chance to get to know their instructors.

For now, the activities of the society are sponsored mostly through the English department, but Stacy said he hoped to receive funding from the ASUO in the future.

The first meeting of the society is tonight at 7 in Room 138 Gilbert. The inaugural meeting will feature a showing of the film *Tom Jones*, based on Henry Fielding's book. The meeting is free and open to all.

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Yet despite what the final scoreboard read, all five members managed to show the judges and their competitors what they believed competition is all about: Having fun and laughing at your own despair.

"Sure it got discouraging losing every game," Blackman said. "But after a while we were laughing and we knew the other teams were out of our league."

Jon Tucker, the team captain who has participated in the "varsity sport of the mind" for the past four years, almost sounded relieved to be out of their league.

"We went to have fun and represent the University of Oregon, yet at the same time we still have classes and social lives," Tucker said. "We ran up against some people who really didn't have any social lives."

Sue Pederson, College Bowl coordinator and manager of the EMU Recreation Center, coached the team in Florida. She agreed with Tucker.

"I love the game at the campus level, but it gets less enjoyable at regionals and even less enjoyable at nationals," said Pederson. "Some of the people there live and breath College Bowl and, at times, I felt like telling some of them to get a life. It was a true nerd-fest."

Apparently when competition got tough for Oregon's team, the tough got humorous.

"After a while we were hitting the buzzer after only two words of the question were read," Tucker said. "Some people there had on a suit and tie while we showed up wearing our shorts and T-

shirts. We were entertaining and had fun at the other team's expense."

The only award the team managed to win was for teammate Stephen Conser's Mel Blanc imitation.

"It was pretty funny," Blackman said. "He got the award for the most animated voice by doing the Looney Tunes martian."

The University of Chicago took home first place honors with the University of Virginia winning a close second place. Oregon's team managed to hold their own against Virginia, losing to them by only 50 points.



"Our team was actually ahead at halftime," Pederson said. "Virginia's team started to get real worried looks on their faces at the thought of actually losing against Oregon."

Almost everyone on the team admitted that they "winged" their performance in Florida and did very little preparation for finals. But their agenda wasn't to compete as if the College Bowl was their whole lives.

"We never really had that much time to get together and we did as well as we could," Farley said. "I enjoyed the trip and would like to do it again next year."

The team's travel expenses were paid for with \$1,000 allocated by the Incidental Fee Committee, a matching grant from the University Office of Academic Support and Student Services and a donation by the EMU Recreation Center.

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