

Student Senate provides student voice

■ **GOVERNMENT:** The PFC and Senate make decisions about how to allocate fees

By Tom Potter

Student Activities Reporter

Have you ever wondered what exactly it is that the ASUO Student Senate does? They decide which groups receive special funding as well as provide a voice for students on campus.

The Senate consists of nine academic Senators that represent the various departments, such as architecture, science and the law school.

There are also nine finance Senators that work on committees for the EMU, the athletic department as well as for developing a budget for ASUO programs.

Currently, there are 17 members in the Senate with one posi-

tion still to be filled. A representative position from the athletic department remains open.

Senators also serve on various committees during their time in office.

"They discuss campus issues and better represent students," Senate Vice President Kanealii Osorio said. "[Senators want] to be more available to students."

Students involved in programs are also affected by the Senate. Programs supported through the ASUO are given funding through a separate group made up of Senators and outside students called the ASUO Programs Finance Committee.

The PFC meets with each of the ASUO groups during winter term to hear individual budgets and decide on funding.

However, the Senate's main function is somewhat different

than that of PFC.

"[The Senate's] main function is to allocate funding for events and conferences," Osorio said.

The Senate also works to recognize new groups when they are formed.

If a new group wants to be recognized, representatives must write a goal statement explaining their aims. The Senate will then discuss and vote on whether to recognize the group.

After a group is recognized, it is eligible to receive money for one year of operation. These budget requests are taken to the Senate.

Currently, the Senate is brainstorming for ideas for the upcoming year, Osorio said.

"[I want] each and every Senator to have his or her voice heard," he said. "It's going to be an interesting year, and I'm really looking forward to it."

'Invisible minority' finds support on campus

■ **SERVICE:** Program offers education about heterosexism and homophobia to the University

By Kristin Bailey

Student Activities Editor

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered students aren't without allies at the University.

The Office of Student Life offers both support and educational services for this population of students.

"A lot of students don't know where to go for support," said Stephanie Carnahan, director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Educational and Support Services Program. "We are a resource referral network. We tell students how to get involved in programs, we take sug-

gestions and we give suggestions."

Carnahan said her office, located on the top floor of Oregon Hall, is also a place where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered students can feel safe.

"A lot of students have come to me and said, 'I didn't even know there was a third floor in Oregon Hall,'" she said. "People think Oregon Hall is only a place to pay bills or pick up transcripts. But my office has a lending library, it's a meeting place and it's a safe place to be."

Although discrimination is against the law, Carnahan said some students still experience occurrences of bigotry.

"This year there has been a report from a residence hall of someone putting graffiti on a letter of another student, calling him a 'fag,'" she said. "There are also in-

cidents of faculty and GTFs saying inappropriate things in classes. Like most superfluous comments, it's out of ignorance."

"Because we are such a invisible minority, it's easy for the person making comments to forget that people sitting there can be directly affected," Carnahan said.

Carnahan said she helps students if they choose to report such incidents. She also works on education for all members of the University about discrimination against homosexuals. She said she is already slated to speak to a journalism and a freshman athletic class about homophobia and heterosexism.

Carnahan's office sponsors forums, events and distribution of materials, such as bookmarks and posters, about heterosexism and homophobia.

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