

Test fails to arrive for examination

■ **PRAXIS:** The exam for prospective teachers was never sent by Educational Testing Services

By Amy Palanuk
Higher Education Reporter

Friday afternoon David Espinoza called New Jersey, wondering where the tests were. It was four o'clock, and the Praxis program tests, scheduled to be given the next day to nearly 200 prospective teachers from across the state, had not yet arrived.

Espinoza, University Test Center supervisor, wanted to know why.

The answer Espinoza got from the Educational Testing Services was the tests never left Princeton.

"There was nothing to be done at that point except prepare to face the people the next day," Espinoza said.

And face them he did. With a detailed letter explaining what happened, Espinoza faced infuriated test takers who had traveled from as far away as Portland and Eastern Oregon. Many wondered why they had not been informed earlier.

"He could've called us," said Lou Polcari, a prospective teacher who earned his masters in music at the University. "It's a bummer of a job but I would've done it."

Espinoza said all he had were

the names, testing numbers and type of exam for each test taker.

"There is no way humanly possible that I could have called everyone," Espinoza said. "I was not going to thumb through every phone book in the state of Oregon for their numbers."

For many of the people scheduled to take the exam, the test meant more than a few hours on a Saturday morning. It meant the chance to get a job.

"This is worse than taking the SAT because your whole career is on the line," Polcari said. "You can't get a gig without this test."

The Praxis program tests measure levels and areas of specialty ranging from music to science and are required for teaching certification in Oregon.

At this point, students will have the option to collect a refund or to take the test in July.

"But I understand that's probably not the most desirable choice," Espinoza said.

There is also the possibility of a scheduled retake for May 31.

But Espinoza calls the reschedule tentative because he still needs to confirm that a reschedule is possible with the Educational Testing Services in Princeton. By the time of publication, no one at the ETS was available for comment.

Getting the shipment will be the first step.

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David Espinoza
University Test Center Supervisor

"If we don't have the books, we can't give the tests," Espinoza said.

Upon delivery of the tests, notifying test takers of the reschedule will be the next step.

"I don't know if I can do it on the 31st, this was scheduled months in advance," Polcari said.

The tests ranged from a minimum of \$80 to \$170 for each test, with many people signed up for multiple tests.

"Folks have put out a fair amount of money," Espinoza said. "I don't believe the option of a make-up will be squashed because a lot of people still need to take the test."

But the final decision will be made today, when Espinoza calls for an explanation from the testing service in New Jersey.

"It's a big mess," Espinoza said.

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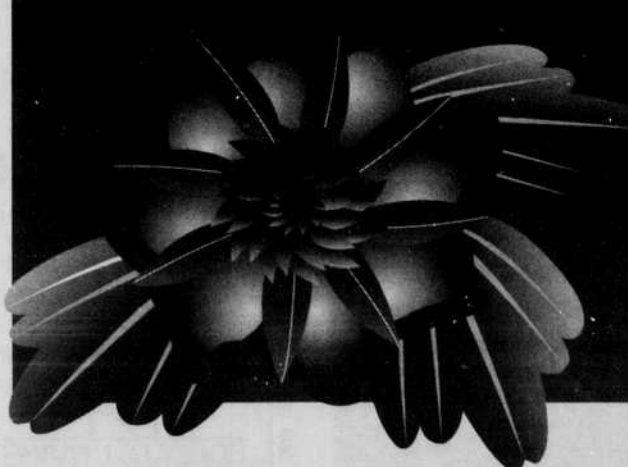
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