

Open house to help ease transfer students' transitions

The event will showcase programs and services that transfer students may not be aware of

By Kristina Rudinskas
Oregon Daily Emerald

Jessica Nelson, a counselor at academic advising and student services, wants to help transfer students make the transition to the University community a little easier.

"A lot of the time students who transfer here aren't aware of the educational opportunities," Nelson said. "It takes a couple of weeks for it to sink in how different things are here."

An open house will be held today in the EMU Walnut Room from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. to answer frequently asked questions and to introduce students to campus resources.

Several student services organizations will be present, including the Career Center, Academic Learning Services, Academic Advising, the Counseling Center and representatives from the Admissions, the Registrar and the Financial Aid offices.

Nelson says transfer students can find parking a nightmare, classes overwhelming and deadlines etched in stone.

Charity Duncan transferred to the University from St. Mary's

College in California's East Bay area. She wanted to attend a larger school with a more collegiate atmosphere.

Duncan is one of many transfer students who came to the University from private universities, community colleges and other higher education institutions.

As a general science major, Duncan didn't experience too many difficulties as a transfer student. Most of her credits transferred easily because she came from a private university, she said.

Duncan was lucky enough to have a support system in place, including an older sister who was already at the University and a sorority to help her adjust to her

new surroundings.

Not every transfer student is as lucky.

After an informal investigation, Nelson decided to help coordinate this drop-in open house before the winter term to help transfer students get the help they need and become acquainted with the different programs.

"A lot of students have questions and don't know where to go for answers," Nelson said.

Special transfer students, such as those with families, sometimes struggle with juggling several priorities, including family, work and school.

"Scholarships for transfer students are the most under-utilized

in the school," Nelson said. "There is so much to keep track of and so much going on, they may not be aware of these opportunities."

Most transfer students go through an orientation, meet with their adviser and talk about general education requirements, Nelson said.

"But it's not as salient because it's before they've actually started," Nelson said. "During orientation, anyone can meet their information overload."

For more information about the open house of transfer student resources, call Nelson at 346-3211 or e-mail her at: jbnelson@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Student co-operatives provide a low-cost, communal lifestyle

The student-run houses offer more control to residents but also require responsibility

By Darren Freeman
for the Emerald

Student co-operatives, an alternative student-housing option, offer the benefits and drawbacks of both on- and off-campus life. But residents say many students still have reservations about living in the co-ops.

"The co-op is a nice compromise," said senior Kristi Solseng, a past resident of the Lorax Manner co-op. "You have control over your life like you do in an apartment, and you also get to meet people."

Two former greek houses have been converted into student co-ops. The Lorax Manner, at 16th and Alder, and the Campbell Club, at 17th and Alder, are less than a block west of campus.

Founded in 1990, the Lorax Manner is named after a Dr. Seuss character, the Lorax, who "speaks for the trees." Residents say the use of "Manner" in place of "Manor" was intentional because they wanted to run it in a "manner" that would minimize wasted

resources through reusing and recycling. The Lorax Manner houses up to 26 members and serves only vegan and vegetarian meals. Pets are not allowed.

Like the Lorax, the Campbell Club makes an effort to reuse and recycle. But the house, which holds up to 35 members, offers meat as well as vegan meals. Most pets, with the exception of dogs, are allowed in the Campbell Club.

Both co-ops are owned and operated by the Student Co-operative Association, which is composed of co-op tenants. The SCA owns the buildings and operates independently of the University. SCA members provide their own social organization, cook for themselves and clean and maintain the co-ops.

Co-op residents say this system has advantages and disadvantages.

The most obvious advantage is economic. Co-ops are one of the cheapest housing options for students. Residence in either co-op costs \$833 per term for a double room and \$1,110 for a single. This cost covers food, utilities, telephone service and cleaning supplies.

Another advantage is the control that residents have over their living situation. Unlike dormitories, where rules and punishments are prescribed, co-op policies are

made by resident consensus at house meetings.

Most residents say the greatest advantage to living in the co-ops is the open-minded, close-knit community. Residents eat meals together, socialize in the lounges and even hold weekly talent shows.

"You get to meet a lot of interesting people," Solseng said. "Unlike in dorms, where everyone is in their own rooms and they come out occasionally, you're almost forced to interact with anyone in the house."

But the close-knit community can be a distraction from studies. Residents say there is the constant temptation to socialize.

"If you're the type of person who is distracted easily, [studying in the co-ops] could be hard," said senior Jessica Roach, who has lived in the Campbell Club for three years.

Another common complaint is that some members neglect chores. Residents are required by the SCA to work 10 hours per week preparing meals, cleaning house or manning organizational posts such as treasurer or social coordinator.

This requirement is not always met.



Residents of the Lorax Manner co-op sit down to a candlelight dinner.

"You can't expect things to be clean all of the time," said Matt Thorne, a past resident of the Lorax Manner who recently graduated.

During midterms and finals, residents admit, housework becomes a low priority. "We're students over all else," said senior Ben Cutler, who lives in the Lorax.

All co-op residents are required to take at least three credits at the University or at Lane Community College. Only one credit is required for summer residents. Tenants who drop out of school are asked to move out.

When that happens, the co-ops

have difficulty filling the vacancy, Solseng said, because students rarely change their living situations during the school year.

Cutler said the SCA also grapples with the widespread opinion that the co-ops are hippie party houses.

"I think the image that people in the general campus community have of the co-ops isn't reflective of what's going on here at all," Cutler said.

"I've learned more here in the co-op than I have in school about living, about myself, about being, about people."

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