

Education takes on nontraditional forms at University

Different options allow students different avenues to learning

By James Scripps
Oregon Daily Emerald

Imagine the future of higher education — never having to go to class, simply hooking up to the Internet to chat with other students and turning in assignments via e-mail.

This isn't the future, it's the present. The Distance Education Program is one of many nontraditional forms of education that are offered at the University through the Continuing Education Department.

Distance Education lets students who can't get to a classroom go to class — with their computers.

This technological phenomenon is part of a growing field that is expanding the definition of higher education. Many classes offered are geared toward students who want to circumvent traditional campus life but still get the most out of the University.

Continuing Education is actually a compilation of several specific University programs: Distance Education, Learning in Retirement, Education 2000, Community Education and the Applied Information Management Program.

"The classes that we offer are for credit and often cover traditional subjects, but are at a distance from the classroom," said Sandra Gladney, coordinator of the Distance Education and Community Education Programs. "Basically it al-

lows students who are away from school to continue to work toward their degree."

Any student enrolled at the University can take Distance Education classes. Postings of available classes can be found in the class schedule or on Duck Web.

Learning in Retirement, another branch of Continuing Education, was conceived in 1993 and serves as an educational outlet for retired Eugonians.

Most classes in LIR are taught at the Baker Downtown Center (the old Register-Guard building) at the corner of 10th Avenue and High Street.

Corine Hunt, director of the program, has been with LIR since its beginning and has watched it exceed everybody's expectations.

"At the end of our first year we had about 125 members," she said. "Since then the membership has been up every year, and now we have about 387."

Retirees interested in the program pay a membership fee of \$100 a year. Once they are a member, they are entitled to participate in any of the classes offered.

Classes cover a wide array of subjects, some with a local angle and others with an international angle. Past courses include the History of Eugene, Old Testament Prophets, American Women Composers and Basic Astronomy. LIR students even have the opportunity to take a bus ride down to Ashland for the Shakespeare festival March 10 and 11.

Most LIR classes are taught by professors emeriti from the University, with some current faculty

teaching a class now and then.

Education 2000, another Continuing Education program, provides training for Oregon teachers.

The program consists of several workshops where teachers come to the University to learn about things such as modern techniques in discipline, developing a reading assessment and helping students meet requirements for advancement to the next grade.

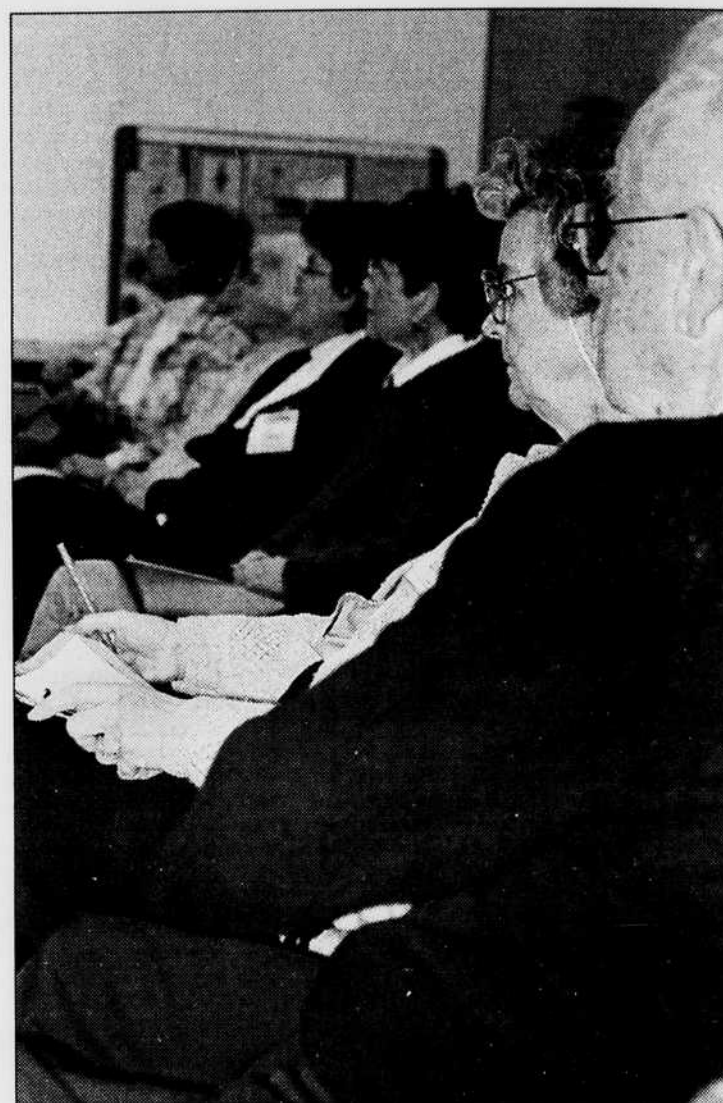
"We try to find topics that teachers are interested in or concerned about," program director Brooke Belcher said. "Teachers who work with K through 12 students come to Eugene from all over the state to participate in workshops that usually last from one to three days."

Classes are also available in Portland through the Applied Information Management Program. It gives students the opportunity to receive a master's degree from the University while taking classes in Portland.

Classes emphasizing management in today's electronic and international context are taught by faculty from several Oregon educational institutions. A master's degree can be completed through this program in as little as two years.

The Community Education Program also provides the opportunity to participate in classes without being admitted to a degree-completion program. Community members and anyone interested can take these college-level courses.

The classes and requirements are the same for community members, but they receive no college credit.



Carbarine Kendall/Emerald

Members of a Learning in Retirement class listen as anthropology department head William Ayres gives a lecture titled 'The Lost City of Nan Madol, Micronesia.'

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