

Two student protesters clarify their demands

The name in the following excerpt has been changed.

"Your remark to Larry was not appropriate, therefore you will get an inappropriate response I was going to say this to you many classes ago, before this class, I think you know who I am. I think you are an 'anal,' 'prude,' 'bitch, you suggested a kick in the ass for Larry, well what you need honey is someone to spread your legs (real wide, considering how tight it is) and fuck you up the ass, a kick would not be enough!! and then maybe you will begin to understand what it is like to be taken advantage of. HAVE A NICE DAY.....I don't like when people get picked on, so don't mess with me...."

"If you do not shut-up, you will see what racism truly is."

Most of you have heard about the campus demonstration and the protests that took place two weeks ago, including the arrests of 31 students on May 18. The students protesting are urging the administration to assume a more active role in establishing a safe environment for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or religion.

The nonviolent sit-in was instigated by a series of e-mails that were racist and sexist and attacked certain individuals. Contrary to what the local media may portray us as, the students working on these issues are leaders from all facets of the University, striving to make positive (and necessary) change on campus.

More than 100 students, faculty and staff coming from diverse backgrounds and various student/community organizations attended the nine-hour sit-in at Johnson Hall.

The dialogue began in a planning, public policy and management class over a racial remark that Latinos — because of their culture — did not have a strong work ethic. Many comments continued through e-mail. The first e-mail above was what one white woman received from a male classmate. The second e-mail was received by an Asian woman in the class.

These are uncensored and taken directly from the e-mail, unlike what you may have been reading from the censored version in the media.

Background checks stop illegal gun sales

The Associated Press

SALEM — The state's 3-year-old background check law appears to be stopping convicted felons from buying guns, although police rarely arrest them for trying, the Statesman Journal reports.

The newspaper reviewed Oregon State Police records and found that only 52 of the 1,389 felons denied handguns at gun shops under the instant-check system were arrested.

State police say that's exactly the way the system is supposed to work.

"The whole purpose of this system is not to arrest people," said Tom Dixon, who supervises the instant-check system. "The purpose is to keep guns out of the hands of disqualified buyers."

But gun user groups say police should crack down on felons before enacting more gun control legislation.

The National Rifle Association also wonders why police allow

As you can see, these comments are *not* being exaggerated into a threat, and they are *not* comments that some highly sensitive students are using to whine about racism or sexism. Rather, they are grossly disturbing and directly offensive remarks that placed these women in fear and reveal the ugly issues that are behind them.

We students feel that such remarks are indicative of a larger problem at the University.

The atmosphere on campus is unsafe and perpetuates racism, sexism and homophobia. Unfortunately, instances such as the one in the PPPM class occur more often than most are willing to believe.

Although University statistics do not accurately reflect the frequency of such occurrences, the fact is that many women, people of color and LGBT students have to deal with various "-isms" regularly.

At the sit-in at Johnson Hall, students expressed their frustrations concerning the prevalence of such acts, as well as the insufficient response from the administration. Since then, numerous students, faculty and staff have approached us personally to not only thank us for our efforts but to also share their own experiences with ignorance at the University.

To address this larger problem, we have been continually meeting with the administration to discuss a list of short- and long-term goals to create a safer and more inclusive campus environment.

We would also like to take this chance to respond to some concerns about our demands expressed in some recent letters to the editor and some points in the Emerald.

First of all, a Pledge of Respect statement signed by incoming students is on our list of demands, but the nature of this statement has been misinterpreted by some. As opposed to "an oath of racial and gender orthodoxy upon entering the University" (Letters to the Editor, ODE, May 20), this statement instead informs students of the University's policy of zero tolerance of hate crimes, threats, and offenses. This policy is in the making.

Students will be asked to sign this pledge to be made aware of the University's commitment to

convicted criminals to walk away from illegal gun sales, while Oregon and other states keep detailed records of law-abiding gun buyers.

The NRA draws support from many law enforcement officials who believe that a criminal denied a weapon at the gun shop will keep looking if there is no arrest for the attempted purchase.

"If they walk out of the gun store, they are going to try to find a weapon somewhere else," Mollalla police Chief Rob Wilkens said. "You can only guess what they want it for."

Nearly one-third of Oregon's felons are convicted again within three years of their release, according to the Oregon Department of Corrections.

Still, praise the background checks, and surveys show that maintaining records of gun transactions has assisted police in solving 117 cases, including murder, drug and weapons cases.

Commentary

Aneelah Afzali & Jessica Billingslea

creating a positive and nurturing learning environment. Again, this statement is not made to control people's thoughts or ideologies, but rather to inform them of the University's commitment to respect and diversity.

Furthermore, the University cannot and will not "refuse students admission on any ideological grounds" (Letter to the Editor, ODE, May 20).

Second, the May 19 Emerald pointed out that student protesters demanded "at least \$1 million to University diversity

and safety causes."

Yes, we are asking for greater monetary funds to be allotted toward diversity and safety. However, the dollar amount is not yet determined. We are in the process of researching and preparing a budget proposal to present to the administration.

For example, we would like to see the re-instatement of a specific position — vice president for student affairs — so students have a voice and a representative in the administration. Another budget item will provide diversity training for students, faculty and staff to engage them in open dialogue, raise awareness and create a safer and more inclusive learning environment.

It is our demand that the ad-

ministration assume a proactive, rather than reactive, approach in dealing with such bigotry and hatred. Because of student-initiated efforts, the administration is working with students on some of these significant issues. We ask you, as students, faculty, staff and community members to participate in this much-needed process for change.

We strongly ask for your support of these issues and encourage your involvement in bringing about a positive campus climate.

Aneelah Afzali is a senior majoring in psychology. Jessica Billingslea is a senior majoring in political science. For the complete e-mail discussion, please visit this Web site: gladstone.uoregon.edu/~asuomca/news.

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