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# Affirmative action unveiled

■ A campus discussion clears up misconceptions regarding the University's policy

By Hank Hager  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Hoping to debunk myths surrounding affirmative action on this campus and beyond, human rights investigator Sidney Moore facilitated a discussion Wednesday in which both students and faculty participated.

Moore said he wanted to dispel beliefs students may have based on rumors they have heard, which oftentimes are wrong.

Students' beliefs "illustrate the myth that affirmative action gives preference to women and minorities, not based on qualifications," he said. "A myth is that affirmative action is based on quotas. If we had quotas, we would have found someone."

He added that quotas are not legal, and in no way does the campus practice them.

Randy Hernandez, senior assistant director for the Office of Admissions, said the University does not have a large pool of applicants. Because of this, affirmative action is not an issue in the admissions process on this campus.

"There is the assumption that we have more applicants than we know

what to do with," he said. "Affirmative action has a greater impact if there is a finite amount of seats in classes."

Moore said 84 percent of students on campus are white but said the major reason for this is that there isn't a large number of minority students applying for admission.

Another common myth that students have, Moore said, is that affirmative action only pertains to students of color. Women and people who are disabled are also included in this category, he said. The University is making strides in admitting and employing women, but there are few in higher-level positions on campus.

"There may still be a glass ceiling here based on getting women into higher positions," he said.

Hernandez said 55 percent of applicants to the University are women, and he expects this number to grow larger in the next few years.

"Women are out-pacing men in attaining a college education," he said.

Students with disabilities are oftentimes discriminated against because they are different than other students, said Stephanie Owen, a counselor for Students with Disabilities. Students with psychological and learning disabilities are often not looked at as being disabled, she

said. "These students are still something we worry about," she said. "We want to give these students a chance to get here and succeed. We want to make sure they have a fair chance."

Students with disabilities are given extra time on tests, said Owen. But these students are still expected to fill the minimum requirements and have the same responsibilities in individual classes.

Financial aid is also an issue that has been believed to be linked to affirmative action, Moore said. Suzanne Hanson, financial aid counselor for the University, said this is absolutely untrue.

"It is equal across the board, based on income," she said.

Hanson said that University scholarships are based only on the academic process and do not take a candidate's race or sex into account. But she said private scholarships can and do use those factors for awarding scholarships.

Despite the lack of diversity on campus, the University still does as much as it can to recruit outside of Eugene, Moore said.

"We want to take affirmative steps to get qualified women and minorities to apply here," he said. "We value diversity on our campus."

## Senate

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ASUO President Jay Breslow vetoed it. When the senate voted on overriding the veto to give the SBA its money, it could not garner the two-thirds majority it needed.

As a result, the SBA returned Wednesday asking for considerably less: \$5,267. The amount decreased because the SBA sought and garnered additional revenue for the

project from the alumni association, law students and the Knight Law Center.

Sen. Eric Bailey, who voted against the SBA's first request this year, said the senate should give the group funds because it had made such an effort to raise money.

"I think that they've done a tremendous job going and finding outside resources," Bailey said.

The United States Student Asso-

ciation also had been before the senate earlier this year, but its request and subsequent appeal both failed. The third time was a charm for the USSA, however, for it received \$3,107 from surplus to help send 12 students to a legislative conference in Washington, D.C.

Also on Wednesday, the ASUO Programs Finance Committee completed the last of its hearings by granting the Black Student Union \$19,171 for its budget next year — a 14.8 percent increase.

## Vigil

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to those remembering Dieringer. Lacey Ogan, a friend of Dieringer's and a member of Kappa Delta, said that something as insignificant as the color pink, Dieringer's favorite color, is now meaningful.

Friends and family who attended Dieringer's funeral service wore pink ribbons with a small photo of Dieringer pinned to their jackets.

"I will never look at pink the same way," Ogan said to the crowd. "As long as I have pink with me, I have Jill with me."

Barbara Penney and Emily Clark, representatives of Cloran Hall, followed Ogan's reflection of Dieringer.

Although Dieringer's passion for pink was remembered, her love for singing will be missed even more.

Penney said that Dieringer loved Madonna and even had her own renditions of the pop star's songs.

"Needless to say, we would've rather heard Madonna," she said.

Penney ended her speech with a

brief passage from a poem.

"Jill was the light, and we will enjoy this time of darkness without her," she said.

After laughs and sniffles that echoed in the bleachers subsided, Leah Gadsen sang a gospel rendition of "Amazing Grace."

Next, Dieringer's boyfriend, Kyle Knepper, stood at the podium and said there were no "see-ya laters" or "goodbyes"; it just ended. We go through our whole lives working our way to heaven, he said, and Dieringer simply went early.

"Jill definitely earned it," he said.

He still waits for her phone calls at the end of the day, he said, though he knows he won't be getting one.

"I know she is watching and listening to me," he said.

Mitchell then rose from her seat and introduced the Kappa Delta members in attendance. With their candles glowing they rose and sang "I Believe," the chapter's song.

Following this tribute, a moment of silence hushed Hayward Field. Some stared at the candles in their hands while others cried.

Mitchell broke the silence and in-

structed those who held lit candles to blow the lights out.

"She will live in our hearts forever," she said.

It has been nearly two weeks since Dieringer died of meningococcal disease, and many of the student's fears of catching the disease themselves are beginning to end.

"Some of the girls are really paranoid, but they're slowly moving on," Culligan said.

Culligan took the pill given to those close to Dieringer to prevent infection but said that her mother encouraged her to get the meningococcal vaccine shot as well.

Jessie Cooper, who lived across the hall from Dieringer, agreed.

"The immediate fear is gone," she said.

Although fear of contraction is coming to a halt, many of Dieringer's friends and housemates are dealing with the concept of death for the first time.

"This gave me a sense of my own mortality," Cooper said. "For a lot of us, this is our first experience with death. It's hard to grasp and cope with."