

# New course focuses on men

■ This spring, Men's Health issues will cover physical and mental health for men

By Brooke Ross  
Oregon Daily Emerald

When it comes to serious health risks such as alcohol and substance abuse, college-aged men are at a higher risk than college-aged women, according to a recent University Health Center survey. These results, in addition to a group discussion among 50 University males regarding their health concerns, prompted the University Health Center and Counseling Center to create a new University course to study men's health.

Men's Health Issues is a one-credit class offered through the Substance Abuse Prevention Program. The year-old course is offered only spring terms; this year's class will meet Thursday nights beginning April 5.

Annie Dochnahl, health educator for the University Health Education Program, is teaching the class along with Dr. Jonathan Davies, senior staff psychologist at the counseling center. The class topics will include physical health issues, mental health issues and male violence.

Dochnahl said the males that participated in the discussion came from seven campus focus groups including members from the residence halls and fraternities. She said several of the students

suggested the University create a class to further address men's health.

She said alcohol was one of the biggest concerns among the students in the focus groups, so drinking will be one focus of the class.

"In almost every group it was considered to be the biggest deal," she said. "They often chalk it up to college life thinking this is what they're supposed to do."

Davies said socialization is another contributor to male health problems. He said men are often taught to act out physically instead of verbally when something is bothering them. He said this is unhealthy for men because they hold in their emotions and don't seek more positive outlets.

"It's a pride issue," he said. "Men are often taught not to ask for help."

This may be true among University men because the health center survey shows only 8 percent of men sought counseling for stress compared to the 22 percent of women who went to counseling.

"It's largely the women coming in [for stress counseling]," Dochnahl said. "We're forever trying stuff, but if only women show up it's not working."

One reason men do not seek as much health care as women may be because at one time the health center offered health exams for males only for job-related situations or when joining the military. Dr. Gerald Fleischli, director of the health center, said the idea

## Results from the 2000 University Health Center Survey:

**Sought counseling for stress:**  
8 percent of men  
22 percent of women

**Binge drink in the last 2 weeks:**  
56 percent of men  
36 percent of women

**Drove drunk:**  
17 percent of men  
3 percent of women

**Ever tried narcotics:**  
10 percent of men  
3 percent of women

SOURCE: University Health Center

of routine physicals became so popular in the 1960s that they seemed to be a waste of time.

He said the health center changed this policy about a year and a half ago because officials realized men should not be denied health care.

"If men want to be checked, this is an opportunity we're passing up," Fleischli said. "If they want an exam we should offer it to them."

Davies agrees and said men have a lot of health concerns that he plans to address in the men's health class.

"Not to exclude the women, but we'd like to see as many men there as possible," he said.

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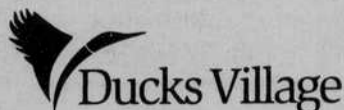
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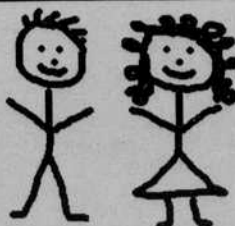


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