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Student Life Events

Tuesday, Oct. 16
Meeting: College Democrats host a weekly meeting, 5:30 p.m. Century Room E, EMU. Free.
 For more information, e-mail colleged@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

Friday, Oct. 19
Conference: A coalition of campus and community groups sponsors a conference Oct. 19-21 titled "Peace, Justice and Globalization: Community Responses to 9/11."
 The event will include many workshops, films, music, theater and art, including the lecture, "Human Rights and Arms Control: The Missing Elements in U.S. Mideast Policy" at 7:30 p.m. Friday and the panel discussion, "How to Build the U.S. Peace Movement" at 1 p.m. Sunday. Free.
 For more information, call 484-9167 or e-mail chouse@efn.org.

Equipment swap: The Outdoor Program hosts its Fall 2001 Equipment Swap. Bring used equipment to trade.
 7:30 p.m. EMU Ballroom. Free. For more information, call 346-4365.

An expanded listing is available online at www.dailyemerald.com. Send event information to calendar@dailyemerald.com.

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Special fall vote takes shape

ASUO leaders will hold a special fall election this year to discuss possible changes to the Clark Document

By Kara Cogswell
 Oregon Daily Emerald

Members of the ASUO are putting the final touches on three ballot measures that will go before students in a special election to be held Nov. 12-14.

Ordinarily, the ASUO holds elections only in the spring, when students vote for student senators and executive officers.

But ASUO leaders have organized a fall election this year to propose changes to the Clark Document, the part of the ASUO Constitution which governs the use of student fees.

In an informational session about the special elections Oct. 1, ASUO President Nilda Brooklyn said student government leaders have been told by University General Counsel Melinda Grier and University President Dave Frohnmayer that the Clark Document must be changed to avoid legal implications for the University.

During the meeting, attended by both administrators and University program coordinators, Brooklyn said she understood their concerns about the changes proposed on the special election ballot, but it was an administrative decision to put them on the ballot.

"I understand the frustration and the questions," she said. "I don't see this as a solution. This is something I'm being charged to do."

In past years, students have voted on whether to use incidental fees to fund campus organizations such as OSPiRG.

But a Supreme Court case brought by former law student

Scott Southworth against the University of Wisconsin has put the legality of this process into question.

Southworth and several other students argued that the mandatory fee system at the University of Wisconsin violated their First Amendment rights because it forced them to support groups whose ideologies they disagreed with.

The Supreme Court ruled in March of 2000 that schools could use student fees to fund programs only if funding was approved through a "viewpoint neutral" process — a process which doesn't accept or deny a program based on its ideological views. The ruling suggested that ballot measure funding was not viewpoint neutral because it allowed funding to be decided by majority opinion.

Two other ballot measures to be voted on in the special election also propose changes to the Clark Document.

One would allow programs to shift their budgets between the Program Finance Committee, the EMU and the Athletic Department. Senator Mary Elizabeth Madden, who is a member of the work group writing the ballot measure, said the measure would establish a process for groups to obtain approval for that realignment.

Program realignment was a topic of debate last year, she said, because there is nothing in the Clark Document which addresses that issue. Some programs clearly belong in only one budget, she said.

For example, she said, the EMU building maintenance program should be in the EMU budget. But other programs, such as the Cultural Forum and the Student Activities Resource Office, fall into a gray area, she said. Some people have argued those programs should be

moved to the PFC budget, which includes student unions such as the International Student Association.

The third ballot measure relates to the EMU building reserves fund, which is used to pay for EMU emergency expenses or other expenses that come up during the year.

State law mandates that the fund be kept at a certain level. But because of funding shortages, the fund has been below that level in the past.

The ballot measure proposes making up the shortfall with ASUO overrealized funds, she said. Overrealized funds include extra student fee money that accumulates when enrollment is higher than expected. If the measure passes, the ASUO Senate would approve EMU Board expenses after the board spends a certain percentage of the reserve money.

If any student has a ballot measure for the special election, it must be submitted to the Constitution Court by 5 p.m. today. The Constitution Court will decide within five days of submission whether to approve the wording of the ballot measure. Once the Constitution Court gives its approval, sponsors can begin petitioning for the measure.

Any individual or group can put a measure on the ballot by petition. ASUO elections coordinator Courtney Hight said.

Only ballot measures which would change the ASUO Constitution can be voted on in the special election. Ballot measure sponsors must collect the signatures of 10 percent of the student body to place a ballot in the special election.

Kara Cogswell is a student activities reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. She can be reached at karacogswell@dailyemerald.com.

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New club promotes peace, chanting

Buddhists for Peace is open to everyone on campus, not just Buddhists, and its aim is to make people happy

By Anna Seeley
 Oregon Daily Emerald

For students interested in learning about Buddhism and promoting world peace, there is now a club on campus to explore these ideas.

Buddhists for Peace members held their first official meeting on Sunday to introduce themselves to campus. The group is a University club for Soka Gakkai International, a Buddhist association that promotes peace, culture and education and also enhances the understanding of Nichiren Daishonin's Buddhism.

SGI, an international group, is headed by president Daisaku Ikeda in Japan. The group's membership has grown from only 3,000 households to include 177 countries with 12 million people who practice this form of Buddhism today, according to Buddhists for

Peace creator and president Mari Kugoh.

One goal of Buddhists for Peace is to "help start a dialog of peace activity and philosophy," SGI member Kate Bennett said.

Another mission of Buddhists for Peace is to introduce the teachings of Nichiren Daishonin, a Japanese priest from more than 700 years ago who advocated chanting Nam-myoho-enge-kyo in 1253, Kugoh said. Daishonin originated the claim that Lotus Sutra is the highest teaching of Shakamuni — also known as Buddha.

"Under Lotus Sutra, anyone can be enlightened, regardless of ethnicity, sex or educational background, and that is why Lotus Sutra is the highest teaching of Shakamuni," Kugoh said.

The chant is a significant part of practicing Lotus Sutra. The purpose of chanting is to reach a state of enlightenment or "Buddhahood," Buddhists for Peace member Tomomi Kato said. It is something anyone can do at anytime they want, she added.

"By chanting, you raise your life conditions to the highest level and become stronger and are not affected by your environment," Kato said.

Kugoh defined "Buddhahood" as "when you are happy no matter what happens." By chanting 'Nam-myoho-enge-kyo,' you can reach a state where you are happy all the time, she said.

Freshman Samantha Bates said she has been interested in Buddhism for a while and thought attending the club's meeting would be a good way to learn more about the religion.

"I saw their fliers, and I saw the Dalai Lama in Portland last year," she said. "I became interested, and I wanted to find out more."

The group plans to meet once a month, and everyone is welcome to their meetings, Kugoh said. Their next meeting will be held Nov. 11 from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the Alsea Room of the EMU.

Anna Seeley is a student activities reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald. She can be reached at annaseeley@dailyemerald.com.