

## News brief

### CAER sponsors annual environmental conference

The eighth annual Environmental and Economic Justice Conference begins today with a keynote speech by Jeri Sundvall, director of the Environmental Justice Action Group in Portland.

She will speak in 110 Knight Law Center following an opening presentation by University School of Law Professor Robin Morris Collin.

The conference is sponsored by the Coalition Against Environmental Racism and will continue through the weekend with panel presentations and workshops.

Saturday's panel and workshop topics include institutional racism, environmental justice litigation, legal ethics and health mapping.

Rev. Damu Smith of Greenpeace will speak at 7 p.m. Saturday in 175 Knight Law Center. Community Coalition for Environmental Justice director Yalonda

Sinde is tentatively scheduled to speak as well, but she may not be able to attend because of travel considerations, CAER co-director Matt Murphy said.

On Sunday, conference events include a lead poisoning and pesticides discussion in Spanish and a Northwest People of Color information session.

Admission is free. For more information about the conference, contact CAER at 346-4168.

— Kara Cogswell

## PFC

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budget increase, known as the benchmark, tops 90 percent, more than allowed after the fall ASUO Special Election that decided the total budget can't increase by more than 80 percent.

Usually, PFC can't increase its budget by more than 7 percent per year. The ballot measure granted the committee a one-year exception.

"We thought we had a nice cushion" between 68 and 90 percent, PFC Chairwoman Mary Elizabeth Madden said. "Sometimes something little gets overlooked. Sometimes something little costs several thousand dollars."

She said PFC caught the error earlier this week when members noticed they were already pushing the 68 percent benchmark.

Although the recall process starts Tuesday, Madden said no decisions have been made about what budgets will be recalled and where they will find the 10 percent to get back under the 80 percent benchmark. She said a budget may receive a total decrease, or PFC may cut from specific line items in a budget.

"People are just thinking of ideas," she said.

### Timeline:

■ **Wednesday, November 14:** The ASUO Special Election ended, allowing PFC a one-time 80 percent budget increase to fund groups that previously went to the ballot.

■ **Thursday, November 15:** ASUO Accounting Coordinator Jennifer Creighton received the 2002-03 projected enrollment from EMU Director of Student Activities Gregg Lobisser. Using the figures, she calculated how much it would cost to fund the ballot groups, but she only figured for one term instead of three.

■ **Friday, November 16:** PFC met at 8 a.m. and, using the 80 percent ceiling and Creighton's figure, set a 68 percent benchmark.

■ **Monday, November 19:** The ASUO Student Senate met and approved the PFC benchmark. Usually the senate meets Wednesday nights, but it held the Monday meeting because it needed to approve the benchmark before Thanksgiving break.

Creighton took full responsibility for the error, but added that it didn't help having the deadlines for the special election, enrollment figures, fee totals and PFC benchmark to the ASUO Student Senate all hit during the same week.

"There were just too many deadlines pushed together," she said.

Creighton and Madden said the ASUO wants to move forward the deadline for enrollment figures, which is set in the ASUO's Clark Document, and Lobisser agreed.

Lobisser sits on a committee of administrators that projects the coming year's enrollment, but he is responsible for delivering to the ASUO numbers that affect student fees.

"It really is a bit of a crystal ball effort," he said.

Lobisser added that after the fourth week of fall term, around Nov. 1, enrollment figures stabilize and the group can make a solid prediction, so the deadline could be moved forward by a week.

He said he delivered the figures right before the deadline this year in part because the group didn't realize that timing would be an issue.

"I think the special election complicated things this year," Lobisser said. "Certainly we can back it up a week."

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## Online

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However, University Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Jack Rice said the school has no plans to replace live bodies with 14-inch monitors and HTML.

"If you're asking if the University will increase distance education at the expense of faculty who teach courses here, the answer is emphatically, 'No,'" he said. "I don't see how it could cut costs by reducing faculty on a campus like the UO where the bulk of the student body is on our campus."

But Flower said some campuses are examining the possibility of designing Net-based courses that function independently. As technology advances and provides the means for that independence, a debate about intellectual property rights arises, she said.

The AAUP debated in the pages of the November-December issue of *Academe*, the bimonthly magazine of the nationwide organization, who has intellectual property rights to course materials published by professors — the professors or the universities that employ them to teach and conduct research.

"Our sense is that written material is owned by the author, and if the professor is the author, it's the property of the professor," Flower said.

But Rice said Oregon Administrative Rule Division 43 mandates that materials developed by a University faculty member in association with course work is the property of the State Board of Higher Education, not of the professor.

"That's my understanding," he said.

Mark F. Smith, AAUP government relations director, said different interpretations of copyright law have led to different intellectual property right policies created for universities. He said an institution's interpretation of the "Work for Hire" doctrine, which determines ownership of material developed by an employee of a company, is critical. Smith said newspapers, for example, own the work produced by their reporters because they are paying those reporters to produce it.

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Ronald Trebon  
director, summer session

"We show how the 'Work for Hire' doctrine doesn't apply to academic work," Smith said. "A number of institutions have recognized that the faculty member who creates the work owns it."

As the debate presses on across the nation, enrollment in Web-taught courses at the University is swelling. Some attribute the trend to a more active student lifestyle.

"I don't think students are as willing or able to come to a campus," director for summer session Ronald Trebon said. "They want an education that can be delivered to them."

Some students, like junior Heather Kaplinger, just want to avoid the masses of humanity found in most lower-division classrooms. She enrolled in Linguistics 150 and Economics 201

last year, the first distance education courses she's taken at the University.

"It's better than being crammed in a room with 200 people," she said. "And I can take a test at 2 a.m."

The class schedule enabled Kaplinger to hold her job and earn undergraduate credit, but she missed the interaction with her fellow students, she said.

Distance education has provided greater flexibility and access to classes for students who work, like Kaplinger, or for students who are raising children, Rice said. But some classes aren't compatible with an online format.

"One example of a course that is not geared for learning from a distance ed course is more of an explanation-type process, rather than a discussion and debate-type process," Rice said. A class such as Argumentative Writing relies heavily on in-class debate. "How could you do a course like that through distance ed?"

But Rice said he expects distance education courses to grow exponentially as Internet technology becomes more sophisticated. The advent of video conferencing, which presents class discussion via video cassette, provides only a glimpse into the possibilities. With interactive Net technology, more courses could be offered in an online curriculum, he said.

"The use of technology in distance education is going to grow," Flower said. "It's not growing just in the sense that it's replacing current teaching methods, it's reaching different audiences that are not on campus. That's exciting. I'm thinking of taking an anthropology course myself."

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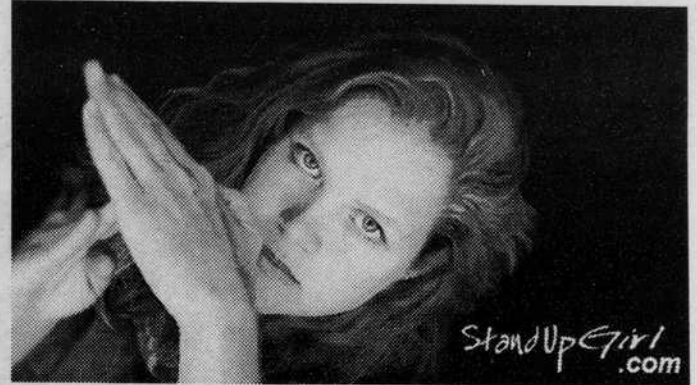
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