

NEWS

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Florida students end 3-month protest

Students at Florida State University halt their 114-day protest for membership with the Worker Rights Consortium

By Jan Montry
 Oregon Daily Emerald

University history repeats itself — in Tallahassee.

After a three-month protest at Florida State University over its refusal to join the Worker Rights Consortium — a sweatshop watchdog group — students and FSU officials reached a compromise Tuesday. The decision officially ended the 114-day camp-out.

FSU's United Students Against Sweatshops chapter led the campaign, braving 110-degree temperatures to camp in protest at a designated "free-speech zone" on the FSU campus. The protest was an attempt to convince FSU President Talbot "Sandy" D'Alemberte, a renowned free-speech lawyer, to join the WRC.

The compromise came after the FSU Committee on Campus Development and Space adopted a new policy Friday banning all tents from campus except those used in university-sponsored events or when purchasing sports tickets. The ruling put the protesters in direct violation of the new rule and threatened to end their protest.

"It rais(ed) questions about what is meant by a 'free speech zone,' acting USAS advisor and English Professor Ralph Berry said.

When USAS found out a no-tents policy had been adopted, protesters came together and agreed to end their camp-out peacefully if D'Alemberte agreed to meet with WRC Executive Director Scott Nova. USAS also requested that FSU not suspend or expel students who were arrested in a March protest at Westcott, FSU's administration building. Because the lawn in front of Westcott is not a designated "free speech zone," the students were arrested at a March 25 demonstration.

Ducks camped in 2000

Two years ago, University students also gathered to protest sweatshops and demand that University President Dave Frohnmayer affiliate the University with the WRC. What resulted was a 10-day demonstration in which 55 students camped in front of Johnson Hall from April 4 to April 14, 2000. A total of 14 students were arrested for tres-



Photographer Emerald

Students at Florida State University had similar experiences as students at the University of Oregon when trying to get their school to sign on with the Worker Rights Consortium

passing inside Johnson Hall.

The protesters wanted Frohnmayer to commit to a 5-year contract with the WRC and demanded he refrain from joining the Fair Labor Association, which they said had too much corporate influence. They also asked that he grant more power to University committees to make important decisions, such as joining the WRC.

After both the University Senate and Frohnmayer's Licensing Code of Conduct Committee issued recommendations for the University to join the WRC, Frohnmayer agreed and signed a one-year contract on April 13, 2000. He also promised not to join the FLA but refused to issue more power to committees.

That's when the conflict really began.

Florida finds common ground

In a meeting Tuesday between USAS representatives, FSU's Dean of Students

Barbara Varchol and FSU Police Chief Carey Drayton, USAS explained their demands and decision to disperse if those demands were met. D'Alemberte accepted the terms Tuesday evening in a call from Russia, where he is visiting on business.

"I was really proud of students for stepping up and putting solutions on the table," FSU Provost Dr. Larry Abele said.

Although USAS didn't reach its primary goal of convincing D'Alemberte to join the WRC, USAS leader Gabe Pendas hopes the meeting between D'Alemberte and Nova will achieve that goal. Pendas also said USAS will continue their cause if D'Alemberte refuses to join after the meeting.

"We will continue doing education," Pendas said. "In fall, we'll take a step back and reorganize."

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Forest officials close off area near tree-sitter

Authorities are planning to use starvation tactics on 'Basil,' a young woman who is protesting the logging of the Berry Patch timber area in Oregon

By Jillian Daley
 Oregon Daily Emerald

U.S. Forest Service officials from the Willamette National Forest are using what protesters call starvation tactics to bring down a young woman who climbed 80 feet into an old-growth tree to protest the logging of the Berry Patch timber area.

On Sunday, officials closed the area to the public to make sure the tree-sitter receives no new supplies of food or water. Basil, the tree-sitter, who would not reveal her real name, has some food supplies, including a 10-liter gallon of water, and is sleeping on a platform in the tree, officials said.

Basil will be subject to arrest when she comes down from the tree for interfering with an agricultural operation, which is a Class A misdemeanor under state law, Forest Service spokeswoman Patti Rodgers said.

"The only other way (besides starvation tactics) to get her out would be to send eviction climbers up there," Cascadia Forest Defenders spokesman Kelly Townsend said.

The D.R. Johnston logging company bought the Berry Patch timber rights in 1996 when the Salvage Rider Act gave logging companies the right to cut down old growth. The act was overturned a few years later. The area is located in the Willamette National Forest at the Winberry Creek Drainage, southeast of Lowell and 20 miles south-east of Eugene.

The company logged the area until 1998, when the market for old growth sunk too low to be profitable. The logging started up again in the past three weeks, when the market picked up. The company still has the legal right to log as long as it owns the timber rights. When logging began again, Basil took her perch in the Douglas Fir, Townsend said.

"She saw the beautiful forest out there being cut, and she saw that that was her only way of stopping it," Townsend said. "Even if she couldn't stop it, she was very eager to call attention to old growth being cut."

However, Townsend and others are concerned for her safety because of other incidents when officials used similar tactics. A man protesting the Acey Line timber sale in the Tillamook State Forest fell 60 feet to the ground and broke many bones after his food and water were cut off, Townsend said.

There is concern for Basil's health for other reasons as well. Townsend believes loggers are endangering Basil by cutting down trees within 30 feet of her, which he said is a violation of Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards.

However, officials say that Basil is not endangered and that OSHA regulations don't apply.

"The first thing — for either federal or state OSHA to have any jurisdiction — (is) there must be an employer/employee relationship," federal OSHA spokeswoman Ria Russell said. "We don't have any authority to protect her."

Forest Service officials also said there is no need for concern about Basil because she is breaking the law and has forfeited her rights to any protection.

"It is her responsibility," Forest Service spokeswoman Sue Olson said. "She is breaking the law, so the Forest Service does not have a liability if she gets hurt; however, the Forest Service is concerned about her safety."

Contact the reporter at jilliantdaley@dailyemerald.com.

Fraternities, sororities face new standards

The University's greek system is required to go dry by winter term, and will have tougher GPA rules and live-in housing directors

By Leon Tovey
 for the Emerald

While the University's nine "wet" fraternities are required to be alcohol-free by December, most aren't waiting that long to go dry.

According to Student Activities Director Gregg Lobisser, six fraternities had submitted letters of compliance with the change in Affiliation Standards as of July 11, and others are getting close. Lobisser said the University was "quite pleased" with the response of fraternities and sororities to the new standards, which were approved by University President Dave Frohnmayer in May.

According to Lobisser, the new standards were designed in response to de-

clining membership and a lack of compliance with existing standards, and are aimed at helping the greek system "attract the best and the brightest."

Lobisser insisted that, despite the media attention given to the substance-free housing provision, University officials are putting just as much emphasis on other aspects of the standards, like the provision requiring greek members to maintain a GPA equivalent to the University average.

"It tends to be lower than all other undergraduate peer groups," Lobisser said of the GPA average of the greek system. But he was quick to add that in recent years there has been a general trend — with some "ebbs and flows" — toward higher grades at the University's fraternities and sororities.

In order to facilitate a further increase in GPA, the new standards also require chapters to have a three-term GPA equal to the campus men's or

women's average, or to be moving toward it.

"I do believe collectively (the new standards) will begin to lift and strengthen the system," Lobisser said.

But Shane Meisel, president of Beta Theta Pi, had the opposite view.

"I think these policies are going to prevent some people from looking at the system," he said. "Some people will say: 'I just moved out of my parents' house, I don't need to move into a place that's even more strict.'"

Meisel argued that many of the new requirements, such as the installation of fire sprinkler systems by 2004 and the appointment of live-in housing directors by 2005, place an unfair economic burden on greek chapters. Meisel said that while he agrees many greek members need to improve academic performance, the University's policy doesn't take into account that few undergraduates "have all the

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Watch the progress of the Lillis Business Complex

The Emerald is now posting updated pictures weekly of five different views of the ongoing construction. Click on the "Construction" link on the green navigation bar across the top of the page at www.dailyemerald.com. New pictures will be posted every Thursday morning.