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RACETTE

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The latest jump takes place today with the opening of the Lillis Business Complex.

But Racette doesn't really dwell on those things. He's not much of "an edifice man," he said. What he really cares about are the students he has taught, some of whom he still keeps in contact with nearly 30 years later. Racette retired in spring 2002 and now teaches only two classes per year.

"There's a great deal of pleasure looking back at the various people, knowing what they've gone on to do," he said. "If you think about all of the things that change, students have been a constant."

Finance Professor Larry Dann, a close colleague and friend of Racette's for the past 26 years, said students have changed right along with the school.

"Students were much more willing to let the professor come in and lecture and write on the blackboard," he said. "It was much more passive in the classroom. I think the change is a real improvement in education."

Also, he pointed out that the size of the school has grown tremendously. When he first started teaching at the University in 1977, the Chiles Center wasn't there, he said.

After the Chiles Center was built in 1986 the capacity of the school was estimated at 942 students, according to the business school Web site. In the 2001-2002 school year enrollment topped 2,500 students.

Racette said he is happy to see the addition of Lillis to the business school.

"I think it provides a wonderful facility in which to learn, and with the technology there, there are simply a lot of things they're able to do," Racette said. "I think they've done a pretty good job of trying to make this building one in which students will feel welcome. I don't think you can ask for much more than that. I think from that standpoint, it's great."

He acknowledged that the technology in the building, including wireless Internet access and laptop computer plug-ins, will help professors and students communicate better.

"Certainly we have a lot more technology," he said. "The ability to get information to students wasn't as easy before. We used to have a group that would go into a classroom and take notes and sell the notes to students, for the ones who couldn't take notes. If you had a change in office hours or you'd like to get an assignment or reading out to people, you couldn't do that."

Racette also said students today are fortunate because they have access to resources that didn't exist when he started teaching. Specifically, he mentioned tutoring centers, peer advising and programs that help students find jobs during and after school.

One thing that will not change with the opening of Lillis is Racette's office. Retired teachers will not be allowed to move in, but Racette said he accepts the decision because retired teachers don't use their offices as much as full-time faculty.

He added that he doesn't want a new office. He's satisfied in the aging basement office, which has been his professional home for the last 29 years. For him, the main thing is "remaining enthusiastic and looking forward to the next class," something that hasn't changed, he said.

"He really cares about the students," Dann said. "He and I used to sit for hours and talk about better ways to present materials, better ways to get concepts across. George gets really animated when you start talking about that stuff. He's really a lover of learning."

Twenty-nine years is a long time to spend teaching, but Racette said he plans to continue doing it as long as he is able.

"George is one of the two best teachers I've seen here," Dann said. "For better or for worse, George Racette is one of the reasons I chose to come to Oregon."

A picture of the old Commonwealth classroom bridge hangs on the wall in Racette's office, but even though it was razed and Lillis was erected in its place, he has yet to set foot inside. He said he realized the construction crews had a job to do, and the last thing they needed was for him to be wandering around gawking.

Besides, he'll get to see the complex when it's completed, he explained.

Today will definitely be that day, he said.

Contact the people/culture/faith reporter at jaredpaben@dailyemerald.com.

MANDRAKE

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said in a Nov. 5, 2002 interview with the Emerald that the new mascot was designed to appeal to a younger generation and create a buzz around games.

Assistant Athletic Director for Media Services Dave Williford said he doesn't know if Mandrake will be out on the field at homecoming.

"Any time he appears will be on moment's notice," he said, adding that the department doesn't usually make announcements on when the mascot will be used. He said a group of people in the department usually decide which mascot will be used.

While there was some speculation last year as to whether the new super-duck would snuff out the original, University officials stressed that Mandrake was just a secondary mascot.

"It was always intended for occasional appearance," Williford said.

While the University has to split royalties for Donald Duck with Disney, it owns the Mandrake mascot and therefore benefits fully from all royalties.

Some students feel Mandrake probably won't spend his first birthday at Autzen on Saturday.

"I thought he was received quite negatively and I think the athletic department knows that, so I'd be surprised if they brought him out," junior Carson Fields said. "I think everyone identifies with the tradition-

al Oregon Duck."

Junior Ashley Brodie said she wouldn't "shed tears" if Mandrake isn't out rallying the homecoming crowd.

"I think he's incredibly scary looking, as does half of this campus," she said. She said people preferred the cute little duck.

"Just because he's scary doesn't mean we'll win," she said jokingly.

Sophomore Carla Donofrio said she hasn't seen Mandrake in person, but she has seen pictures and she does agree that he doesn't seem as approachable as Oregon.

Williford said people can't always agree on whether something is good or bad.

"Every time you get something new, it's unlikely that you're going to get a consensus," he said.

So will Mandrake be at homecoming? Find out Saturday when the Ducks take on Stanford at 12:30 p.m. at Autzen Stadium.

Contact the news editor at ayishayahya@dailyemerald.com.

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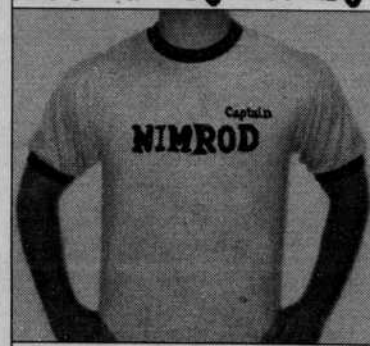


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