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Thursday, April 15, 2004

SINCE 1900 UNIVERSITY OF OREGON EUGENE, OREGON

Volume 105, Issue 134

University Senate prioritizes students' privacy

The Senate decides privacy rights override PATRIOT Act requests for information about students

By Jennifer Marie Bear
News Editor

The University Senate Wednesday affirmed the need to protect the privacy of student records and to scale back the provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act.

The Senate voted to adopt a policy statement on the subpoena of student records that

instructed faculty and staff members not to comply unquestioningly with law enforcement requests for information.

"While privacy issues are governed by both state and federal law, the University's interest in privacy goes far beyond its commitment to comply with law," the statement declared. "Privacy is an integral part of the academic freedom that is at the heart of the function of the modern university. Students, faculty and staff should be aware that the University supports their freedom to inquire, discuss and experiment with ideas without fear of improper government intrusion

or public exposure."

The policy statement states that all outside requests for information and student records should be examined by the University General Counsel's office before the information is disclosed, and in no case should any disclosure proceed without the authorization of the University.

The University Senate also voted to petition the Oregon congressional delegation to seek revisions of the USA PATRIOT Act to eliminate what senators labeled liberty-restricting provisions.

Gordon Lafer, a professor with the University's Labor Education and Research Center,

submitted the petition, which states, "The University of Oregon University Senate calls upon the Oregon Congressional Delegation to promote the First Amendment rights, privacy rights and traditional civil, intellectual, academic and political liberties of the University Community by seeking appropriate revision of those sections of the PATRIOT Act and other related Orders of provisions of law that impose unjustifiable burdens on these rights and liberties."

The Senate approved the petition by a nearly unanimous vote.

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Poll shows Bush leads Sen. Kerry in Oregon

Bush is ahead 2 percentage points in the state according to a University-conducted poll

By Chelsea Duncan
Senior News Reporter

A recently released University survey shows President George W. Bush has a narrow edge over Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry in Oregon.

The survey of 444 registered Oregon voters, conducted between March 19 and April 7, shows Bush leading Kerry 47 percent to 45 percent, according to a University press release. The results are within the poll's margin of error of 4.7 percent.

Political science Assistant Adjunct Professor Joel Bloom, who directed the survey, said the results show that either party could succeed in taking Oregon in the November election.

Bloom said Oregon is a close state this year, much like it was in the 2000 election. He added that Oregon has typically been considered a Democratic Party-supporting state, but over the years the Republican Party has been making headway.

"Oregon is really less of a safe Democratic state than it was," he said. "This is a state that Democrats are going to have to work hard for."

He said even though Democrats have taken Oregon in the last four elections, former Vice President Al Gore took Oregon by fewer than 7,000 votes in the 2000 election.

"Despite a Democratic edge in party registration, the state does seem to be trending Republican, making it a critical state for Democrats to hold onto, and providing Republicans with a golden opportunity for a pick-up," he said in the release.

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2004 ASUO PRIMARY ELECTIONS



Tim Bobosky Photographer

Rona Yang (bottom center), a freshman running for Student Senate Seat 13, and a crowd of about 20 students read the ASUO primary election results moments after they were posted on ASUO's office door Wednesday evening.

And then there were two

Several ASUO races are still up for grabs after the primaries

By Jared Paben
Senior News Reporter

The ASUO primary election has paired Adam Petkun and Mena Ravassipour against Ben Strawn and Diana Aguilar in a battle for ASUO Executive in the upcoming general election.

The primary election results, which came in at around 7 p.m. Wednesday, showed students cast 773 votes for the Petkun/Ravassipour ticket and 654 votes for the Strawn/Aguilar ticket. Adrian Gilmore came in third with 371 votes.

A total of 2,465 students, or 14.05 percent of the student body, voted in the primary election. That number falls short of the ASUO Election Board's goal of 25 percent turnout. Last year, 15.22 percent of students voted in the primary. Candidates winning more than 50 percent of the votes win the contested seat.

Petkun said even before seeing the results he was hopeful about his ticket's chances, citing positive reactions from students on campus.

"I can't even speak right now," Petkun said. "In all seriousness, I was definitely hopeful. We were

getting good reactions from everyone. We were feeling pretty good about things."

Strawn said the results showed that his ticket has room for improvement.

"I was pretty optimistic about getting into the generals," Strawn said. "I feel like if you look at the platforms, I feel like we have the most relevant set of issues, and I think we have the best chance of getting our goals accomplished."

Gilmore said he wasn't surprised that he didn't make it into the general election.

"When you don't have any money and you can't have your friends dance around in front of the EMU and do other stuff for you, you're not going to win," Gilmore said. "I'm disappointed that I won't be able to continue working for students. I think the problem is the elections are going to be OK and the status quo will begin again."

This year's primary election was marred by a DuckWeb error that kept some students from voting for ASUO Student Senate academic seat candidates.

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Committee proposes EMU space renovations

The partial plan would affect the Craft Center, Erb Essentials and the Women's Center

By Steven Neuman
News Reporter

The EMU Interim Planning Committee submitted its final recommendation for an estimated \$223,016 in building renovations to the EMU Board of Directors, which passed the plan 11-1 Wednesday.

The board originally allocated \$180,000 for the remodel and will cover the discrepancy between the two costs with money from a \$1.3 million funding grant the University gave the EMU to improve climate control.

The recommendation, which is separate from a larger EMU remodeling Master Plan unveiled in May 2003, includes specific proposals for Erb Essentials, along with changes to the Craft Center, Women's Center and the north entrance. The renovations are scheduled for this summer, and the proposed construction will be finished by fall.

Board member Brandon Rhodes presented a possible layout for the space previously used by the EMU Child Care and Development Centers. The recommendation advocated moving the Craft Center into the free space and expanding the existing Women's Center.

"We had to best use the space vacated by the CCDC. The Craft Center and the Women's Center, they're both really cramped to the point of possibly breaking health and safety laws," Rhodes said.

EMU Director of Student Activities Gregg Lobisser said the plan could easily be completed in the allotted time without causing existing offices or organizations to move.

"I suspect that there won't be much

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