

GTFF

continued from page 1

student and GTF turnout. More than half of the University's 1,300 GTFs held class off campus, and an unknown number of researchers stayed away from campus, Lindgren said, adding that student turnout was also promising.

"I would have expected fewer people to show up for a rescheduled class," Lindgren said. "Turnout has been good."

Student response to Empty Campus Day and to the possible strike has been largely positive.

"I think (the strike) is a good idea," said junior journalism major Amber Merritt. "The University is getting out of paying a lot of money for real teachers."

Vice President of Research and Graduate Studies Richard Linton, who is also a member of the University bargaining team, said the University had not been contacted by the GTFF regarding Empty Campus Day, but accommodations would be made for students who could not make it to off-campus classes. Students can contact the Office of Student Affairs, the Registrar and the Graduate School with their concerns. Linton said so far there have been no complaints.

Linton issued a statement Wednesday that called into question the legality of this tactic in the face of the University's good-faith attempts at collective bargaining. Linton also admonished the union for being insensitive to the interests of its fellow students.

"We don't appreciate actions like this," Linton said.

Negotiations begin today and will continue for two weeks. If no agreement is reached in those meetings, there will be a 30-day "cooling off" period, after which the GTFF may strike at any time.

"We are hopeful that the remaining

issues can be resolved without the union having to resort to a strike," GTFF lead negotiator Jey Strangfeld said.

The main issues on the table for negotiation are appointments and re-appointments, salaries and fees.

Lindgren said he has heard that in some cases GTFs have been teaching classes for \$8 to \$10 an hour, as opposed to a contracted salary. Also, the University wants to insert language into the contract that would make hiring GTFs for hourly wages, not salary, more common in the future. This allows the University to waive benefits it has to provide to contracted GTFs. Lindgren said this violates the current contract.

But, in many cases the University can't hire a contracted GTF to do hourly-wage work because the contract stipulates that GTFs must work at least nine hours a week, Linton said, adding that when a department doesn't have that much work, it will often hire employees on an hourly wage.

Lindgren said in some cases undergraduate students have been hired to do what many in the union consider to be GTF-level work, like teaching classes and grading papers. Lindgren said the mathematics and biology departments hire undergraduate graders as a rule, adding that this also violates the GTFF contract because the University has to offer that work to the GTFs first.

"I would like to see the University argue that undergraduates are more qualified for that kind of work," Lindgren said.

Linton said hiring undergraduates for this sort of work is standard practice for all research universities.

"The institution has the right to determine hiring practices," Linton said.

Linton said salary has been a problem this year because of a statewide wage freeze on all state employees. However, the state has authorized a "fighting fund" that would allow universities to raise the salaries of top-level faculty who might be lured

to other universities.

Lindgren said that if the University can afford to raise professor salaries, then there isn't really a wage freeze in place.

Linton said the University's share of the fighting fund would only be about \$125,000 and would not be implemented unless it passes the State Emergency Board in September. He added that despite the wage freeze, the University did give GTFs their contractually obligated 4 percent raise last fall.

The GTFF has also been negotiating for a larger fee reduction. GTFs currently have to pay 10 percent of their paycheck back to the University in fees every term.

"It's our position that fees should be zero," Lindgren said.

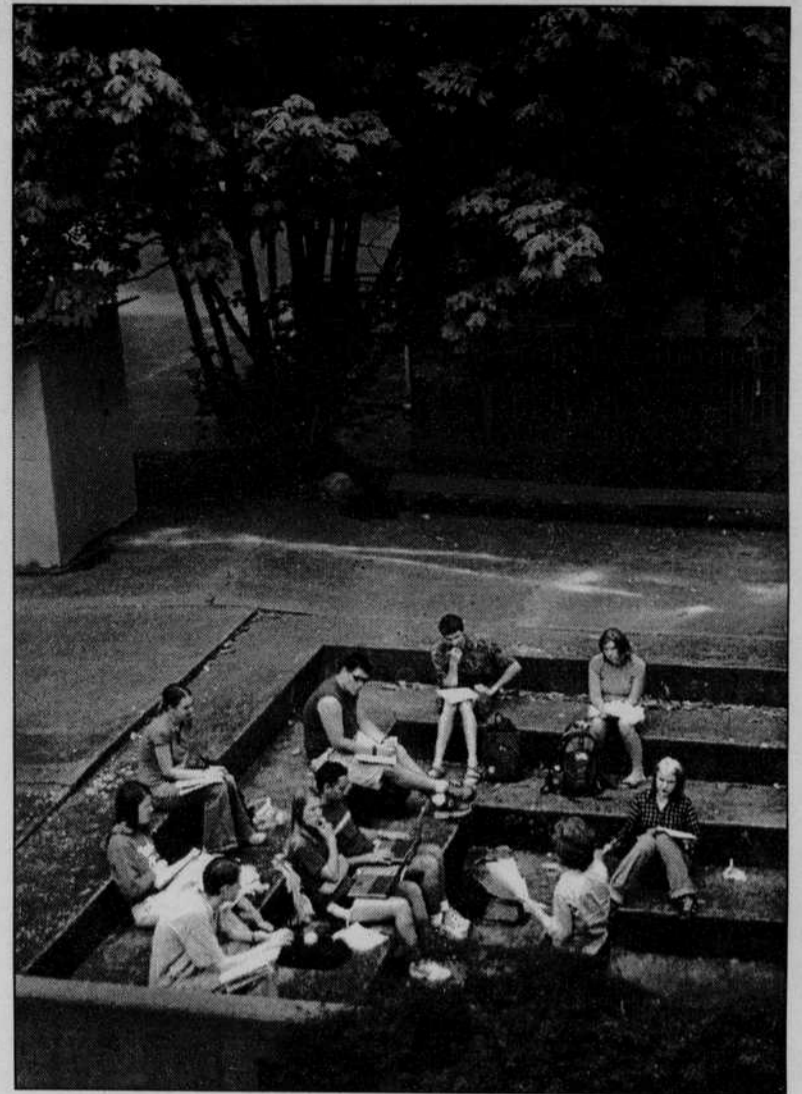
Linton said the University has offered a 16 percent reduction in fees for GTFs and offered to increase the University's fee burden by 25 percent. This increases the burden on the University to more than \$350,000 a year. The offer also includes a pledge by the University to cover any new fees that might come up before the next round of contract negotiations. Linton said the University will focus on fees this year and will negotiate salary in 2006 when the wage freeze ends.

Linton also said the University will continue to give a full tuition waiver to GTFs in the face of rising tuition costs and almost across-the-board budget cuts. No comparable schools provide a full tuition waiver, he added.

"What we have on the table is reflective of a strong University commitment," Linton said. "From a University perspective, we've worked very hard."

Linton said the total University offering, including fees, tuition and health insurance, amounts to a 3.5 percent to 7 percent increase in take-home pay.

Lindgren said the GTFF does not want to strike, but if negotiations fail, he is confident a strike vote would pass. He said the union will not take the decision lightly, because a strike



Erik R. Bishoff Online & Photo Editor

A graduate teaching fellow who wishes to remain anonymous teaches class in the amphitheater behind the Koinonia Center during Empty Campus Day Wednesday afternoon.

would suspend salaries, health insurance and tuition waiver.

A strike could take a number of forms, Lindgren said. The first would be a grade strike in which GTFs would refuse to submit their students' grades. After that, there might be a

one-day or half-day strike. If those tactics fail, the GTFF would move on to a full walkout strike.

If a strike goes through, it would be the first GTFF strike in the University's history.

benbrown@dailyemerald.com

It's nearly Fall!

Here's what's happening in the Oregon Daily Emerald as we approach Fall:

ONLY 2 REGULAR ISSUES REMAINING!

Tuesday, August 10: Includes Sports

Thursday, August 12: Includes Pulse

Regular Monday-Friday publication resumes Monday, September 27

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTS

Classifieds included in all special supplements

August 18: Law School Edition

September 10: Game Day - Ducks vs. Indiana

September 17: Game Day - Ducks at Oklahoma

September 20: Back to the Books

September 24: Game Day - Ducks vs. Idaho

www.dailyemerald.com

News content updated on publishing days

Classifieds updated daily on non-publishing days



Oregon Daily Emerald

The campus newspaper for the University of Oregon community

University Groups:

Don't miss out on the opportunity to be part of the Oregon Daily Emerald's Back to the Books issue.

Let students know who you are, what you have to offer and how they can participate.

The **Back to the Books** issue features six sections, has a print circulation of **12,000 copies** and is sure to reach the entire student population.

Deadline to advertise is **Wednesday, August 18**. Reserve space now. Contact a sales representative at 346-3712 or stop by our offices on the 3rd floor of the EMU, Suite 300.

Oregon Daily Emerald

The campus newspaper for the University of Oregon community