

# OREGON DAILY EMERALD

An independent newspaper

www.dailyemerald.com

SINCE 1900 | Volume 106, Issue 152 | Tuesday, May 10, 2005

## Shuttle's driver screening impeded

*An unknown policy has prevented the Assault Prevention Shuttle from spending its allotted \$1,500 for employee background checks*

BY PARKER HOWELL  
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

The group that shuttles students and staff as a safer alternative to walking at night was unable to conduct criminal background checks on its volunteers this year, although it remains unclear what University policy prohibited the organization from doing so.

The Assault Prevention Shuttle received \$1,500 in incidental fees this year to screen its members for the first time since the service was formed in October 2003. But APS Education Coordinator Sarah Wells said a contract issued to volunteers at the beginning of the year was invalid until the organization eliminated a section concerning criminal background checks. It is unclear what administrative office

enforced the changes.

Wells said volunteers sign a contract at the beginning of the year that defines their duties and verifies they understand the organization's mission. The contract, which requested contact information to perform a background check, was sent to what Wells said was Risk Management for approval in October.

"That's kind of where it ended," she said.

The ASUO Student Senate authorized APS to spend the \$1,500 to help fund two programs that Wells said fulfilled the group's mission.

Business Affairs Risk Manager Sheree Johnson said she was not familiar with the contract and said the General Counsel's Office might know about policies relating to background checks.

University General Counsel Melinda Grier said she didn't know what policies would have specifically prevented the screening, but said "there are a lot of concerns about doing background checks."

She said a "whole variety" can be done, and federal statutes set limitations on checks. Even if checks are performed, they're not always useful, she said.

Several sources suggested former ASUO Accounting Coordinator Jennifer Creighton-Neiwert, who previously worked with many groups, might know why the contract was rejected. She could not be reached for comment.

EMU Director of Student Activities Gregg Lobisser said the University does background checks in certain circumstances, but checks are not normally conducted when services are delivered for other students unless there are special circumstances.

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## Students at Portland satellite file grievances

*PSAC members say the ASUO has neglected their concerns about compensation for incidental fees*

BY PARKER HOWELL  
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Fifty-eight architecture students from the University's Portland Center have filed grievances with the ASUO to protest paying incidental fees without receiving services in return and to ask for their money back.

About 80 students at the Portland satellite campus pay \$184.61 per term in incidental fees but do not receive bus transportation, access to recreational facilities and tickets to athletic events that students in Eugene can access for free.

The written grievances include requests for the University to refund more than \$37,810 in fees. Many also recommend the ASUO work with the Portland Student Action Council to provide services to Portland students, saying "students will be encouraged to file grievances each term" if the problem isn't addressed.

ASUO Student Senate Ombudsman Stephanie Erickson said the grievances fall outside the Senate and Executive's purviews because student leaders can allocate money but cannot determine how much students pay in fees.

Although Executive officials initially said they would consider the issue, ASUO Vice President Mena Ravassipour previously told the Emerald the matter was beyond the Executive's hands.

University administrators have formed a committee to analyze fees at the request of Vice President for Academic Affairs Lorraine Davis and may make a recommendation before the end of the year, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Terri Warpinski previously told the Emerald.

Members of the committee could not be reached for comment on Monday.

PSAC Interim President Gary Blackwell said his group organized the grievances after earlier attempts to work with ASUO and University officials failed to produce results.

"I felt it was getting to the tipping point and time to look into the grievance thing a little closer," he said.

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## A tournament of Kings and Queens

*Three University students joined 54 other competitors of all ages for a chess tournament on campus*

BY EVA SYLWESTER  
NEWS REPORTER

Some of the highest-ranked chess players in Oregon competed in a tournament this weekend at the EMU. The Oregon Chess Federation sponsored the 2005 Oregon Class Championships in partnership with the UO Chess Club.

"This is a pretty big thing for U of O Chess because we're trying to break into the bigger chess scene," UO Chess Club President and tournament coordinator Sara Hamilton said. Hamilton said it has been at least a decade since the University hosted such a chess tournament.

The 57 players at the tournament ranged in age from sixth graders to "really old," Oregon Chess Federation President Jerry Ramey said. The tournament was divided into six classes based on ability.

Eight players in the tournament had ratings above 2,000, according to the U.S. Chess Federation Rating System, designating them as master-



ZANE RITT | PHOTOGRAPHER

Elden Burns of the UO Chess Club contemplates his next move during the 2005 Oregon Class Championships. The competition lasted from Saturday to Sunday and attracted players from the Pacific Northwest and California.

expert. The ratings are based on the number of games won and opponents competed against.

"A lot of these players do play at some of the bigger venues, like the U.S. Open," Ramey said.

Three University students competed in the tournament: Morgan Griffiths, Elden Burns and Scott Levin. Griffiths placed fourth in the master-expert class; Oleg Zaikov, a South Eugene High School junior who gives chess lessons for the UO Chess Club every other week, tied for second.

Levin, a law student, competed in the tournament's A-B class.

"I had a great experience at the tournament," he said. "It was good to play against high-caliber competition."

According to some chess enthusiasts, the game combines intellectual endeavor with the thrill of an athletic contest.

"Chess is a sport," Hamilton said, adding that the game is a spectator sport as well. "We have a lot of people who just want to watch these great players."

"I think chess is an icon," Ramey said.

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LAUREN WIMER | SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Graduation tassels are available for students at the University of Oregon Bookstore. Each color denotes a different department or school at the University.

## Plans and purchases for spring's University graduates underway

*Those who missed the degree-application deadline this term can still apply to walk in the University's general ceremony*

BY ADAM CHERRY  
NEWS REPORTER

The University will bid farewell to much of its senior class this spring.

Thirty-nine individual colleges, schools and departments will host graduation ceremonies, the bulk of which will take place on June 11. Those events are scheduled around the University's general

commencement ceremony at McArthur Court the same day. Candidates for degrees are invited to participate in both department and general University ceremonies.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Lorraine Davis will give the keynote address at the two-hour general ceremony, which kicks off at 12:30 p.m., according to the Office of Student

Life. Tickets are not required and gates at the arena will open for spectators at 10:30 a.m.; seating is first come, first served. Degree candidates should assemble at noon at the south end of the covered tennis courts and doctoral degree recipients will be individually recognized at the event.

Candidates for bachelor's and master's degrees will be individually recognized at college, school and department ceremonies. Students should check with individual departments or the Office of Student Life for times

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