

OMAS: Administration confident in policy

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registration process and believed that the program discriminated against white students who are not of Hispanic origin," the letter states. "The student did not file a complaint, but spoke to a reporter for the student newspaper. When the University administration learned of her allegation that students were excluded from sections or disadvantaged in enrollment based on race, we reviewed the practices that applied to these sections."

The Emerald first wrote about the policy after former University student Stephanie Ramey told the Emerald she was denied access to an OMAS class.

After the first article, former student Melissa Hanks, who graduated from the University and is now studying at Oregon State University, filed a complaint with the University's Bias

Response Team, and then with the Office for Civil Rights, prompting the federal government investigation.

Grier, when asked whether the administration had concerns that the previous policy was illegal, wrote in an e-mail that "the change in the requirements was prompted by a concern that the requirements were not, on balance, as broad as the University wanted them to be."

She wrote that the University tries to find a balance between the needs of students who may benefit from a priority pre-authorization policy and those who may want to access a class but may not qualify for priority pre-authorization.

"We believe the new policy provides a better balance between those competing interests," Grier wrote.

Grier, when asked why the University didn't conduct a public comment

session or attempt to gather students' opinions, wrote that "this is a program based on academic and pedagogical needs."

"Although we appreciate that individual students may have personal perspectives they would have liked to express about the program, this is the type of administrative decision that is made based on other factors," Grier wrote. "Further, the decision needed to be made as quickly as possible so that the changes would be in place for the upcoming academic year."

The administration is confident the new policy is "fully consistent with the law," Grier wrote. "We cannot know if the Office for Civil Rights will agree until we receive their response."

Contact the news editor at jpaben@dailyemerald.com

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Trial: UO electrician says she was harassed

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time Boynton-Burns worked for the University, she was the only female electrician and the only apprentice employed at the University's Physical Plant, Force said.

According to the appeals court judge's opinion, Boynton-Burns told the court the following occurred:

Boynton-Burns began having problems with her supervisor shortly after beginning work at the University. Her supervisor consistently refused to sign progress reports that were critical to Boynton-Burns' completion of the program.

In addition, he yelled and berated her on numerous occasions. He also wouldn't accommodate her

work schedule for childcare needs; however, he granted similar accommodations to a male employee.

Boynton-Burns complained about her supervisor several times while working for the University. She complained to her supervisor's boss, who told her that he couldn't help and that she would lose her job if she continued to complain about her immediate supervisor.

In 1999, Boynton-Burns met with the manager of the department and asked him to investigate her supervisor's repeated discrimination. He refused and insisted that Boynton-Burns did not have "the right to fight discrimination" because she was considered a temporary employee.

Force said in an interview that Boynton-Burns also met with the University Affirmative Action office, but after complaining to the office, "the situation got a whole lot worse."

Boynton-Burns was verbally harassed, denied work and threatened with discharge, he said.

In February 1999, Boynton-Burns completed her apprenticeship and became a journeyman electrician.

Three months later, the University laid off Boynton-Burns "due to lack of work due to the end of her internship," the court opinion stated.

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