

Department of Romance Languages (RL) recently had to eliminate five full-time instructor positions in Spanish and two part-time positions in French. Of the three languages taught in RL – Spanish, French and Italian – Spanish saw the most changes because it is the biggest program.



Jesús Sepúlveda

Spanish instructor and celebrated Chilean poet Jesús Sepúlveda is one of the instructors to lose his teaching contract for the 2007-08 academic year. Sepúlveda earned his Ph.D from the UO in 2003 and has taught upper-division courses in Spanish ever since. He has multiple publications that have appeared in a dozen countries.

To protest his termination, Spanish majors Priscilla Ann Mendoza and Laura Stull began the “Save Sepúlveda” campaign. Their mission was to facilitate discussion among the community, students and faculty when it comes to budget cuts. “We started to rally support for Jesús, but it’s expanded to something greater, especially since we know there are other great professors out there,” they said. Both said they regret that students in the future will not have the opportunity to learn from Sepúlveda’s unique cross-cultural perspectives.

Alexander Vrtiska, economics and

Spanish double major, finds the UO’s prioritization of money inexcusable. “How can the university hide behind budget problems in cutting lose a valuable asset? It is simply not logical or acceptable,” Vrtiska wrote in a recent letter to UO President David Frohnmayer to highlight Sepúlveda’s teaching abilities.

The department currently employs approximately 40 faculty members from six continents, making it one of the most diverse programs on campus. “Romance Languages, as well as a few other departments, are at the heart of the diversity and internationalization of this campus,” said Barbara Altmann, RL department head. “We’d love some extra funds to support and expand our good work instead of having to retrench.”

Inadequate funding has forced the department to make other changes as well. Language class sizes will increase, and smaller, upper-level literature survey courses in Spanish will be collapsed into bigger lecture classes. “Ideally, to conform to best practices, we’d be reducing class sizes rather than increasing them,” said Altmann.

According to Sepúlveda, “The university wants to be diverse, but it does not have a clear strategy to foster and maintain diversity.” — Erin Rokita

OSPREY BACK FOR W. EUGENE

The West Eugene Parkway has been shelved, but traffic congestion continues in west Eugene and is expected to get worse as west Eugene develops and growth in Veneta and Elmira increase traffic on West 11th and Hwy. 126. To deal with the complex issues of transportation and land use planning, a new group of interested and sometimes conflicting parties called the West Eugene Collaborative (or WE Group) has formed and has hired the Osprey



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Group to facilitate a collaborative process. The first two public meetings will be May 18 and 21.

Friday’s meeting runs from 3 to 5 pm in the Singer Room on the second floor of the Eugene Public Library. Monday’s meeting is from 7:30 to 9:30 am in the Sunstone Room on the third floor of the library.

Osprey is the Colorado consulting group that facilitated discussion and provided an assessment on the WEP in 2006. Osprey was chosen from among several consulting groups, and Osprey’s fees will be paid by a pooling of about \$20,000 in funds from the city of Eugene, LTD and environmental and business groups. Helping coordinate the effort is the Oregon Consensus Program.

The WE Group is an outgrowth of the Eugene Roundtable, an informal gathering that began four years ago to bring together individuals representing sometimes conflicting environmental and business interests.

Eugene city staff are involved in the new group as part of their council-mandated study of the West 11th transportation corridor. Staff members are looking at signal timing, road striping, access on and off 11th (particularly left-turn access), safety issues and the potential for extending bus rapid transit out West 11th, according to the group’s meeting minutes.

Other issues involve interagency planning, project funding in the corridor, the impact on businesses along West 11th and the potential of using other streets, such as 18th Ave., to take pressure off West 11th.

Emily Proudfoot, senior transportation planner for the city, says the WE Group is seeking a “high level of transparency and public involvement” in finding workable and efficient traffic solutions for all of west Eugene.

In addition to Proudfoot, other members of the WE Group include Kitty Piercy, Jack Roberts, Kevin Matthews, Jerry Gados, John Allcott, Mark Schoening, Jan Wostmann, Paul Thompson, Ollie Snowden, Ed Moore, Gary Wildish, Mary O’Brien, Debra Noble, Anita Johnson, Tom Schwetz, Rob Zako, Chris Pryor, Don Kahle, Charles Snyder, Larry Reed, Susan Ban and Pat Johnston.

Information about the WE Group and minutes of previous meetings of the group are available online at www.or-consensus.pdx.edu/WestEugeneForum.php

— Ted Taylor

ECO-SABOTEURS AID ZAPATISTAS

As the Oregon eco-sabotage cases begin the long series of sentencings, intriguing details are coming out about the lives and activities of the defendants.

According to the government’s sentencing memorandum, Canadian-born Daniel Thurston and South Eugene High graduate Chelsea Gerlach had connections to the Zapatista movement.

The Zapatistas, known as the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, EZLN), is a revolutionary group based in Chiapas, one of Mexico’s poorest regions. It is often referred to as an armed rebellion, but they have not used weapons since their 1994 uprising.

The Zapatistas’ base is mainly indigenous people, and the Zapatista struggle centers on control over their natural resources and self-governance. They oppose corporate globalization.

The Zapatista struggle must have appealed to Thurston and Gerlach. The government’s memo said, “Thurston was approached by persons interested in translating into Spanish the publication *Setting Fires with Electrical Timers* so it could be sent to the Zapatista guerrillas in Mexico.”

The publication was an Earth Liberation Front (ELF) guide. Thurston had made the guide available on the Internet as a PDF file along with texts such as *Arson-Around with Auntie ALF: Your Guide for Putting the Heat on Animal Abusers Everywhere*.

“In the spring of 2003,” the memo said, “Thurston met a representative of the Zapatistas.” The representative asked Thurston to teach a class on “producing explosives that could take down a building or bridge.”

According to the memo, Thurston taught the workshop on explosives in a tent near Redway, Calif.

Along with Gerlach and others, Thurston produced hexamethylene triperoxide diamine (HMTD), a highly explosive organic chemical. They used the chemical to blow up a stump.

The memo said the Zapatista representative was “very satisfied.” And Thurston instructed him on how to use the HMTD and store it and recorded the information in a text file for the representative to take

Happening people BY PAUL NEEVEL

RON DETWEILER

After high school in San Diego, Ron Detweiler began a career in manufacturing at a local maker of window shades. He moved on to better jobs at bigger companies around the U.S. from Seattle to the East Coast and back

to California. In 1988, after four years in Memphis, he and his wife, Stephanie, a loan officer, quit their jobs to find a new life in Eugene. They bought and ran the Mirabel Café for three years, and then sold it in 1991 when he answered an ad for warehouse manager at FOOD for Lane County. “When I joined, I was the seventh or eighth employee,” he says. “Now we have 32 employees, and I am the old-timer.” In his current position as operations manager, Detweiler is responsible for the collection and distribution of six to seven million tons of food this year. “More than 50 per cent of our food is perishable today,” he says. “We’ve developed a system to gather that food and redistribute it quickly.” In recognition of the food rescue program he created, the Oregon Food Bank Network honored Detweiler last month with its Ron Cease Award for regional food bank staff excellence.

