

News & Views



Faculty and Staff Newsletter of the University of Oregon

February 10, 1997

Survey shows campus climate improves

The climate for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) faculty, staff and students on campus is improving even as concerns about personal safety and other issues remain.

Those are among the conclusions reached in a just-released report of a spring 1996 survey conducted by the university's Oregon Survey Research Laboratory for the Office of Student Life. The self-administered questionnaire assessed the attitudes, behaviors and views of more than 700 faculty, staff and students with respect to GLBT concerns.

The survey, a follow-up to a similar one conducted in 1990, examined the experiences of GLBT's and heterosexuals in their daily campus activities. Included were interactions with various service providers and instructional staff at the university.

"The last and only time these issues were formally surveyed was in 1990. A lot has changed since the 1990 survey, and we wanted to get a sense of what has changed as well as what is happening right now," says Stephanie Carnahan, Student Life's director of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender education and support services.

While actual experiences of verbal, physical and sexual harassment are down, fears about personal safety for GLBT people remain the same.

"In comparison to the 1990 survey, there has been a strong improvement in the attitudes on campus toward GLBT people. But, there are still concerns as to how safe GLBT people

actually are in the campus environment," Carnahan says.

The survey revealed that in the classroom, faculty and GTFs are still reluctant to address alternatives to heterosexuality. In addition, respondents reported hearing professors and GTFs make anti-lesbian, gay and bisexual remarks in class, a behavior respondents interpret as signaling a continuing climate of homophobia.

"The importance of this survey is that it is an educational tool, and it helps guide our educational efforts by revealing the specific areas that need greater attention," Carnahan says. "It keeps us abreast of the issues that remain most important to GLBT faculty, staff and students, as well as telling us whom we need to better educate on GLBT concerns."

In addition, GLBT faculty and staff respondents expressed concern about the lack of domestic partner benefits. They also pointed to the existence of "de facto" homophobia, wherein GLBT faculty and staff are denied tenure or promotion because they are "out" in the workplace.

"`De facto' homophobia is not direct behavior, such as saying `I'm not going to grant you tenure or promote you because you are gay or lesbian.' Rather, it is that a GLBT person, who has strong evaluations and solid work performance, is denied advancement for no viable reason except that he or she is `out' in the workplace," Carnahan says.

In an effort to continue to improve the climate for GLBT people, Project Safe-Zone asks members of the campus community to take a visible stance as an ally of GLBT people via display of a "tag" identified by a pink triangle inside a green circle.

"Safe-Zone tags are very important because whoever displays them has made a conscious decision to be supportive to GLBT people and issues. And GLBT faculty, staff and students can have a place where they feel safe and comfortable," Carnahan says.

Safe-Zone buttons, stickers and magnets are available at Student Life, 364 Oregon Hall; the Counseling Center, 210 Student Health Center; and the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Alliance, 319 EMU.

Results of the survey, including an executive summary and extensive graphs and tables, are posted on the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory Web site at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~osrl>.

--COURTNEY HEDBERG, COMMUNICATIONS STUDENT

REMINDER

--Feb. 17 is NOT a holiday for UO faculty, staff and students, even though the Mortar Board Academic Planner erroneously says classes won't meet then. Higher Education employees and students observe Presidents' Day on the day after Thanksgiving in November.

Exton recalls freshman support needs

Chemistry instructor Deborah Exton remembers her first year at the University of Oregon. Like many freshmen, she battled with issues such as choosing a major, handling her new-found freedom and deciding what to do with her life.

Just as these issues troubled earlier generations, worrying about making friends, forming study groups and getting lost in the crowd are among the concerns that plague today's freshmen.

To address these concerns, the university in 1982 started Freshman Interest Groups, 25 students who share enrollment in several classes around a common interest area. Included in most FIGs is a weekly special-studies course, "The College Experience," which addresses issues such as study skills, academic planning, campus resources and social adjustments in the freshman year.

Currently, about 950 students are enrolled in 40 FIGs taught by 120 faculty. Being around these fresh, new students gives FIG instructors a chance to reflect on their own college experience.

Exton wishes FIGs had been around when she was a freshman.

"I found that the UO in 1970 was a very exciting place to be. However, I felt very alone most of the time and felt like somewhat of an `outsider.' "

Exton stayed at the UO for a year, then transferred to Colorado State University to study forestry. The unresolved issues from her freshman year followed her to CSU, however, and Exton quit school, not returning until 1983 at the age of 31.

The time off allowed her to decide what subjects and courses interested her. She had been fascinated by chemistry since high school, but had never had much support or guidance to pursue it as a major.

Exton earned her B.S. in chemistry from Denver's Metropolitan State College in 1987 and her Ph.D. in physical chemistry from the University of Denver in 1992.

Since returning to Oregon as an instructor, she remembers her freshman experience and uses it to relate to the students in her FIG. She sees her students dealing with many of the same

issues she did. However, she says, "The social issues have changed--they don't have Vietnam, but we didn't have AIDS."

By introducing the students to campus resources, providing academic planning support, teaching time management skills and creating a network of peer support, Exton and the rest of the FIG faculty give students the tools to deal with their problems and concerns.

"I was one of the students who dropped out," says Exton. "I wonder if that would have been different if I had had a more positive freshman experience like the FIGs offer today's students."

--JULIE DENNEY, COMMUNICATIONS STUDENT

More efficient purchasing in place

If you've noticed a shortage of red tape when purchasing new computer software, a desk chair or work station, it's most likely because of the university's streamlined purchasing procedures.

"The new policy has helped expand authority down to the department/user level. The quality of services and products has increased as people no longer have to go through the Department of Administrative Services to get approval for larger purchases," says Harriet Merrick, Purchasing Support Services manager.

The Higher Education Administrative Efficiency Act (SB271) granted the university a rare opportunity to review and rewrite its own purchasing guidelines. Besides increased departmental/user control and authority, and higher direct negotiation limits, Merrick says the "best value" concept replaced the "sticker price" mentality, which the old guidelines emphasized, while retaining "common sense and judgment."

"Departments now can look at a product or situation and use common sense to get the best value, not simply the lowest sticker price," she says. "The lowest price is not always the best value. Other objective and measurable co-factors contribute to `total costs,' such as installation, training, life cycle, warranty and freight. We now can look at the total costs and select the `best value' for the taxpayer and the university."

Merrick points out that the new "best value" concept encourages business competition as departments/users can shop around for a product or service that best fits their needs.

Purchases will not get stuck in the small details or layers of review the old guidelines required.

"You get the best deal and make it easy for the business community to do business with you. The new policy does both," Merrick says.

Despite more delegated direct authority, budget and fund restrictions and auditing requirements still apply.

"We still have checks and balances," Merrick says, "but we've gone to a post-audit rather than pre-audit format for many purchases. This speeds up ordering, delivery and distribution."

Merrick says the new policy has created flexibility and reduced administrative costs. Procurement dollar limits have been raised, allowing more streamlined purchasing methods for larger purchases, and, with a few exceptions, approvals can be done on campus.

"The expanded authority has brought the purchasing power down to the department/user level, kept most approvals on campus, allowed users to look at more than the 'sticker price' and, in general, sped up the whole process of doing business. That is definitely a 'best value,'" Merrick says.

PAD VP search takes new course

The search for a new vice president for public affairs and development took an unexpected turn Jan. 31 when both Connie Kravas of Washington State University and John Goodwin of the University of Washington withdrew their candidacies, each citing a desire to remain in their current positions.

"It is always regrettable when candidates, especially good ones, withdraw," says Vice Provost and Dean Steadman Upham, search committee chair. "However, we remain pleased with the depth and quality of the candidate pool, and the committee plans to invite two more candidates to campus soon for a round of interviews."

Upham said Rick Ventura of the University of California, Riverside, continues to be a finalist for the post vacated in mid-October by Brodie Remington who is now at Trinity College in Connecticut.

Comments sought on self-study draft

Steering Committee members ask UO faculty and staff to send them comments and suggestions after reviewing the draft of the university's accreditation self-study report to be released Feb. 13.

"We encourage everyone to look over this draft carefully, noting changes needed for the final version to be published before the on-site visit April 21-23 by a team from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges," says committee co-chair Susan Plass, International Affairs.

The draft report will be posted on the Web at <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~committees/ateam/>. For access, log in with the username <accredit> and the password <excellence>.

Hard copies of the draft also will be available in the President's Office, 110 Johnson; in the deans' offices for each school and college; at the ASUO office, EMU Suite 4; and on reserve in the Knight Library.

Faculty and staff may send comments to Plass by e-mail, splass@oregon.uoregon.edu.

The campus community also is invited to a forum on the draft report from 2:00-4:00 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19, in the EMU Walnut Room.

For information, call Plass, 6-2166; co-chair Bob Mazo, 6-5224; or members Anne Leavitt, 6-1229; Dave Hubin, 6-3036; and Jim McChesney, 6-3007.

Records Manual distributed

Some 350 copies of the September 1996 edition of the UO Records Manual, whose printing was delayed for various reasons, were distributed recently to records clerks, fiscal managers and others, says Keith Richard, Archives emeritus.

"Undoubtedly, not everyone who wants or needs a copy of this latest edition received one, so I urge those who missed getting one to call 6-3077 for a copy," he says. "Not only those who work with records, but those who handle minutes from meetings and those who design and use electronic and digital imaging of records should be aware of the laws governing public records."

The new manual completely replaces the 1993 edition, so Richard advises most recipients to recycle the old pages.

"Only those involved with fiscal records might wish to retain the 1993 pages for a short time," he says, noting that Archives will keep a permanent copy of the old manual on file.

Campus giving propels UO to first place

UO employees have good reason to feel that "warm glow" that comes from giving, because they have contributed \$137,537 to the 1996 State of Oregon Employees' Charitable Fund Drive, \$10,000 more than in 1995.

With that level of generosity, UO faculty and staff now top the list of employee givers in Lane

County. Gifts added through early February have boosted the UO total past PeaceHealth employees who had held the No. 1 spot earlier.

"This generosity is a fine testimonial to our university's reputation as a place for caring people," says Assistant Vice Provost Nancie Fadeley, charitable campaign campus coordinator. "It identifies the UO as a good citizen of the community, and it enables us to brighten Oregon's future and to make positive impacts upon the lives of people--individuals we may never know, but who need our help."

The university also has more leadership givers than any other Lane County business or institution, Fadeley reports. Leadership givers are individuals who gave \$1,000 or more.

Child-sitters listed for parents

The Winter 1997 Child-Sitting Directory is available for all UO faculty and staff. The directory lists students available to provide occasional and part-time child care, complete with open times and references. For your copy, call 6-3159.

Faculty Fireside funds are still available

Faculty wanting to extend academic discussions beyond the classroom or to chat with students over snacks, coffee or dinner don't have to spend a lot to host the informal event. Reimbursement is \$1.75 per person with a \$60 cap per event. For information about hosting a Faculty Fireside, call Gail Currin in Student Academic Progress, 6-1152.

Couples relationship counseling offered

The Oregon Marital Studies Program offers couples relationship counseling for no fee to UO faculty, staff and students.

"We will customize a program ranging from self-help to marital therapy," says clinic coordinator David Markley, Psychology GTF.

For an appointment or for information, visit the Psychology Clinic in Straub Hall or call 6-4954.

Our People

In the spotlight

The UO Home Page, redesigned by the **New Media Center, University Computing** and the

Office of Communications, has been honored twice. LookSmart, a directory of more than 110,000 websites, has bestowed its Editor's Choice Award for providing a useful and high-quality website. NetGuide granted the UO page its Gold Site Award which goes to only 15,000 of the Web's best sites. The UO Home Page can be found at <http://www.uoregon.edu/>.

Therese Peffer, Architecture graduate research assistant, and **Sandra Leibowitz**, a fall 1996 M.Arch. graduate, tied for first place in the 1996 Millennia House Design Competition sponsored by the American Institute of Architecture Students and the U.S. Department of Energy. They shared the \$3,000 prize, books on photovoltaics and travel scholarships to the award ceremony in Washington, D.C., with a team from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. The UO design featured solar-electric standing-seam metal roofing on an energy-efficient duplex set in a Corvallis community.

Thomas Connolly and **Mark Tveskov**, Museum of Anthropology; **James Meacham**, Geography InfoGraphics Lab; and **David Cutting**, formerly of the InfoGraphics Lab, were part of an Oregon Department of Transportation research team recognized by the Federal Highway Administration in one of two 1997 Environmental Excellence awards. The award recognized ODOT's restoration of the Historic Columbia River Highway. The museum and the InfoGraphics Lab helped to document and assess the significance of cultural resources along the highway corridor.

On the move

Joan Acker, Sociology, has been given the rank and title of professor emerita. A faculty member since 1964, she played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Center for the Study of Women in Society.

Stephen M. Johnson is acting associate director of the Oregon Survey Research Laboratory, overseeing daily activities while founding Director **Patricia Gwartney**, Sociology, takes a part-time sabbatical leave during 1997 to complete a book manuscript and write articles based on ORSL studies and methodological innovations. Johnson, a research associate at Decision Research, is the recipient of a National Science Foundation grant to study how people value the environment.

In Print

Theodore Stern, Anthropology emeritus, is the author of *Chiefs and Change in the Oregon Country: Indian Relations at Fort Nez Percés, 1818-1855* (OSU Press, January 1997). It is the second and final volume in Stern's study of Indian-white relations at Fort Nez Percés (also known as Fort Walla Walla). Stern's first volume was *Chiefs and Chief Traders*.

On the podium/stage

Marian Smith, Music, presented a paper, "An `Unsuitable' `Giselle,' " on Nov. 9 at the National Meeting of the American Musicological Society in Baltimore. Her commissioned essays on the ballet "Cinderella" and the opera "Don Giovanni" appear in this season's program books at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London.

Leslie Hall, National Career Information System, presented a poster with OSU colleagues on "Single Parent`s and Children`s Housework: A Gender Perspective" in November at the National Council on Family Relations meeting in Kansas City, Mo.

Twenty-three faculty gave Fall Term presentations to members of the UO Learning in Retirement program which is administered by Continuing Education. They are **Ray Birn** and **George Sheridan**, History; **Susan Boynton**, **Robert Hurwitz**, **Anne Dhu McLucas**, **Jeffrey Stolet**, **Stephen Stone** (emeritus) and **Marc Vanscheeuwijck**, Music; **Françoise Calin** and **Evelyn Gould**, Romance Languages; **Katherine Eaton**, Library emerita; **David Frank**, Honors College; **Thelma Greenfield**, English emerita; **N. Ray Hawk**, Administration emeritus; **James Klonoski**, Political Science emeritus; **Charles Lachman**, **A. Dean McKenzie** (emeritus) and **Richard Sundt**, Art History; **James Lemert**, Journalism; **William Orr**, Geological Sciences; **David Schuman**, Law; **Carol Silverman**, Anthropology; and **Ronald Wixman**, Geography.

Martin Acker, Counseling Psychology emeritus, is a volunteer instructor winter term for the Lane County OASIS program.

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