

THE OAKLAND POST

OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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Golden Grizzlies win Summit League Tournament,
earn second-consecutive March Madness bid

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM
COMES UP SHORT IN CONFERENCE FINAL

PAGES 14-15

this week

March 9 — March 15, 2011



Photo
... of the ...
Week

So OUSC thinks it can dance // Monday, March 7 NICHOLE SEGUIN/The Oakland Post

Oakland University Student Congress elections officially kicked off Monday with a candidate meet-and-greet and dance-off in Fireside Lounge. Presidential candidate Benjamin Eveslage and his running mate Elisa Malile show off their dance moves, though they lost to Tom Cruz and Brett McIsaac, who brought in two students who did front flips.



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CAMPUS // Multiple student organizations unite to assemble a night of European celebration that featured international cuisine and customs.



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LOCAL // The city of Pontiac, which was settled in 1818, begins a yearlong celebration of its 150th anniversary on March 15.



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FEATURES // A new organization working to help student organizations learn important leadership skills is explored in a series on university jobs.



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THE SCENE // Oakland University Art Gallery's exhibition "Borders and Frontiers" focuses on collage, appropriation and image-making.

op

Look for comprehensive coverage of the upcoming Oakland University Student Congress elections on our website.

THE OAKLAND POST
OAKLAND UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER

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STAFF EDITORIAL

Taking time out for students

Oakland University is asking professors to use their own time and resources to accommodate students who need more time to take tests.

Professors assert that the Office of Disabilities Support Services used to hold this responsibility and should continue to do so because of federal mandates.

Students, meanwhile, seem to be getting lost in the shuffle.

DSS continues to offer test-taking accommodations for students who need more support than additional time. That includes students who may need a reader, interpreter or alternative test format.

The Oakland Chapter of the American Association of University Professors has filed a grievance with the school because the organization believes that this breaches the collective bargaining agreement it reached with OU.

We understand the inconveniences this may cause professors but are confident they can overcome this roadblock.

Recently, College of Arts and Sciences dean Ron Sudol sent an e-mail to the college's department chairs instructing them to require faculty to arrange for the extended exams, which require 50 percent more time.

Scott Barnes, executive director of AAUP, addressed the matter in a letter sent to all faculty members on Feb. 11. In the letter, Barnes expressed his disapproval in finding out about the new requirements unofficially before receiving Sudol's correspondence.

The end goal should remain providing excellent service to all students.

AAUP is challenging the mandate. Barnes said this request is too much and that "Oakland cannot substantially change working conditions without bargaining the terms and conditions of the change."

Sudol said instructors are required to carry out their job of administering classes to Oakland students.

The DSS office could not be reached for comment on these changes.

Professors like AAUP vice president and history professor Karen Miller are worried about the privacy of students who need additional time. If the DSS office proctored every test for students in need, wouldn't classes already notice an absent classmate during an exam?

A valid concern for professors is the difficulty in arranging a time and place to make up the remainder of the test time. A central location for students who need additional time to complete examinations is the most practical answer. Eastern Michigan University, for instance, has one learning center that is always available for use. That could alleviate concerns Oakland professors have while allowing the DSS office to retain what little space they do have.

The DSS office should be offering the entire scope of services to students with disabilities. There is no doubt about that.

At the same time professors, who in most cases have earned doctoral degrees, should be creative enough to develop innovative solutions.

We understand there are limited resources because the office only has two staffers. But Vice President for Student Affairs Mary Beth Snyder said there are a growing number of students being admitted who require special accommodations. The DSS staff should grow in turn.

It's time to reevaluate the needs of OU's growing student body and adjust the amount of student services accordingly.

Readers can turn to page 5 to read the accompanying story.

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Letter Policy:

Writers must provide full name, class rank, phone number and field of study. Please limit letters to 250 words or less. Letters may be edited for content, length and grammar.



MEET THE POST

Watch The Oakland Post's bi-weekly TV talk show for Student Video Productions.

Airing now on OUTV! Video podcasts can be found at www.oakland.edu/outv

Good decision defends bad rhetoric

The Supreme Court's recent decision to protect protesting Westboro Baptist Church members and their right to free speech meant good things for the sanctity of the First Amendment.

But it doesn't say that those members are good people.

The 8-1 decision that ruled in favor of Westboro members and its pastor and leader, Fred Phelps, was monumental because of the uniquely emotional nature of the situation at hand.

In 2006, Marine Matthew Snyder died while serving in Iraq. Members of the church, which is based in Topeka, Kan., came to protest at Snyder's funeral in Westminster, Md.

While the particular situation — protesters were holding signs emblazoned with phrases like "God Hates Fags" and other irreverent, hateful things — was definitely a case in which protestors were in the wrong morally, they were not legally wrong.

It saddens me to think that Snyder died while fighting to uphold the very rights that protect the controversial Westboro



Kay Nguyen
Editor-in-Chief

protesters and their speech.

I believe freedom of speech is a very important right because I am a journalist. There's always the old adage about the First Amendment being the first on the Bill of Rights for a reason.

It's unfortunate that it took a scenario like this to bring a landmark First Amendment case before the Supreme Court, but the landslide decision the justices made affirmed what I believe in.

Time, place and manner restrictions are rarely enacted because the manner of restriction is very subjective.

It is hard to defend what the protesters

display on their signs.

If the justices had drawn a line when it came to speech during funerals, where would the line have stopped with regard to free speech?

What Phelps and his cohorts do is completely legal. Justice Samuel Alito wrote in his dissenting opinion that "most if not all jurisdictions permit recovery in tort for the intentional infliction of emotional distress," but also admitted it was "a very narrow tort with requirements that are rigorous, and difficult to satisfy."

The Westboro case is a win for the First Amendment and the rights it provides, but not for humanity.

The court decided those requirements were not met. The group stands in public areas that happen to be outside military funerals and has a right to assemble.

They have done so at over 600 funerals. While the speech they utter is defamatory in nature, they are not directly slandering.

They are following the law and eight justices agreed with that. When he delivered the court's opinion, Chief Justice John Roberts said, "such speech cannot be restricted simply because it is upsetting or arouses contempt."

He also said the language "may fall short of refined social or political commentary, the issues they highlight ... are matters of public import."

I echo those sentiments and the seven other concurring opinions from the judges of the high court do too.

Events like this — the story of the 1979 American Nazi Party march in Skokie, Ill., also comes to mind — show the most negative side of human nature.

However, it comes with the luxury of having a public forum of ideas available. Positive things, like the camaraderie of the Patriot Guard that goes to protect military funerals from the Westboro protesters, can come out of witnessing evils.

csa@oakland.edu
248-370-2400

Center for Student Activities

CSA

www.oakland.edu/csa

Women's History Month 2011 Women and Sexuality: Express Yourself

Wednesday, March 9

"Sex, Desire and Responsibility"
Dr. Sylvie Lombardo and Melissa Pope
Noon - 1:00pm Fireside Lounge, OC

Saturday, March 12

Women and Gender Studies Film Festival
"From Hysteria to Disorder:
Manufacturing Disorders of Female Desire"
Noon - 5:30pm 156 North Foundation Hall

Tuesday, March 15

"Declaration of Desire" Open Mic
5:00pm - 7:00pm Pioneer Food Court

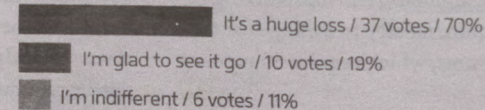
See the Calender on the Gender & Sexuality Website at
" www.oakland.edu/gsc " for the full list of events.

Poll
- of the -
Week

3.9.11

Last Week's Poll

How do you feel about the proposed elimination of the Michigan Film Incentive?

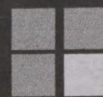


This Week's Poll

Who should have the responsibility of accommodating test takers with special needs?

- Classroom Instructors
- Disability Support Services
- Other

Vote at www.oaklandpostonline.com



CORRECTIONS CORNER

The Oakland Post corrects all errors of fact.

If you know of an error, please e-mail managing@oaklandpostonline.com or call 248.370.2537. You can also write us at 61 Oakland Center Rochester, MI 48309.

If you are interested in writing a guest column for the Perspectives section, e-mail editor@oaklandpostonline.com or call 248.370.4268.

AAUP disputes policy

Professors must facilitate extended exams themselves

By RHIANNON ZIELINSKI

Campus Editor

The American Association of University Professors at OU has filed a grievance against the university regarding a letter sent to faculty in the fall by Disability Student Support services, addressing a recent change in their policy.

Until the policy was changed, students with disabilities requiring an additional 50 percent of time to complete their exams were allowed to take their exams in the DSS office in North Foundation Hall.

"This is a service that is provided at most universities because it allows the university to comply with federal law in a way that was convenient to the student and his or her professors," said Karen Miller, an associate professor and chapter vice president of the AAUP.

The letter explained that professors are now responsible for finding a location for these longer exams and administering the exams themselves. The AAUP disagrees with these changes and has begun the process of filing a grievance with the university.

The reason for the changes

Mary Beth Snyder, the vice president of student affairs, said that these changes regarding the administering of tests were made, in part, due to an increase in the number of disabled students admitted to OU.

"With that has come an increase in alternative testing accommodations," Snyder said. "DSS, with only two employees, has begun to focus on those accommodations that require more than just extra time on tests."

The additional accommodations include students who require readers, interpreters and scribes to assist them with exams. According to Snyder, DSS will continue to administer exams for those students. Under this new policy, professors will only be responsible for students requiring additional time for the exams, and nothing else.

The AAUP said they have been given conflicting information.

"The position of the DSS office is that they have to cut their service because they no longer have the resources to provide them," Miller said. "However, this has been disputed by representatives of the university who have told us that, because of the federal mandate to provide these services, the DSS office is given any resources that it needs."

The referenced federal law is Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which applies to federally funded programs like the university and states that students who have voluntarily disclosed that they have a disability and provide proper documentation are entitled to receive appropriate academic adjustments that enable them to participate in all educational programs.

DSS declined to comment regarding these changes.

The causes for concern

The AAUP has expressed concern over the new policy for many reasons. The first concern is maintaining the privacy of the student requiring extra time for their exam. The Rehabilitation Act stipulates that students be accommodated in ways that protect their privacy.

"They cannot simply take an examination with the rest of the class and continue to work 50 percent longer, since it will be possible for anyone to identify them as receiving special accommodations," AAUP Executive Director Scott Barns said in an e-mail to OU faculty.

The AAUP also noted that the location of these extended exams can pose a problem, because many departments do not have common rooms that can serve as test facilities.

"Most of our part-time faculty either do not have offices or must share them, limiting their ability to use faculty office space for testing," Miller said. "Moreover, faculty offices are not necessarily quiet test facilities. In many cases, test takers would be interrupted by telephone calls and people knocking on the door."

She said that student needs are better met in a quiet, monitored, independent test-

ing facility, like the type of facility that was previously offered by DSS.

Despite these concerns, Snyder said that many professors have not had any difficulties administering these exams. Ron Sudol, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said that he has not yet had any feedback from professors and does not expect any.

"When you're a faculty member, you take the students you are given," Sudol said. "It's a little bit of extra work ... but I can't imagine that there would ever be any faculty member who wouldn't be willing to do that."

Filing a grievance

In addition to concerns for the students, the AAUP has stated that these changes have affected the faculty's working conditions, which is a mandatory issue for collective bargaining.

"Simply put, Oakland cannot substantially change your working conditions without bargaining the terms of conditions of the change," Barns said. "If the AAUP Executive Committee waives this off, the change will set an unwanted precedent and there would be little that can be done about the next unilateral change in working conditions that Oakland attempts."

It was these numerous concerns that led the AAUP to initiate the first step of the formal grievance process with the university administration.

"The AAUP would like to return to the previous policy," Miller said. "Special-needs students who require time and a half to complete examinations should have the opportunity to take their exams in facilities managed by the DSS office in North Foundation Hall."

Although the outcome of the grievance will not be known for some time, Snyder emphasized that the university is addressing the issue.

"I am committed to seeing that our students with disabilities have a positive experience at Oakland," Snyder said.

— Mike Sandula contributed to this report

campus briefs

ALS Exercise-A-Thon

A group exercise event is being held at the Recreation and Athletics Center on Wednesday, March 9 from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. to benefit ALS of Michigan. A \$5 donation will get you into all activities. For more information, contact Rebecca Lewis at 248-370-4910.

Education career fair

The Career Guidance Center is holding an education career fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, March 9 in the Oakland Center Banquet Rooms. For more information, e-mail careers@oakland.edu.

Health career exploration

On Friday, March 11, the Career Guidance Center will be holding an event from noon to 3 p.m. in the Banquet Rooms of the Oakland Center for those interested in a career in the health care field.

Clarinet meets dance

Clarinetist George Stoffan will join members of the OU Dance Company on Saturday, March 12 in Varner Recital Hall from 8-10 p.m. for a concert with dance accompaniment. For more information, contact Gillian Ellis at 248-370-3321.

Government career mixer

The Career Guidance Center is holding an event in the Gold rooms of the Oakland Center on Tuesday, March 15 from noon to 1 p.m. for those interested in a career in government. For more information, e-mail careers@oakland.edu.

— Compiled by Kevin Graham,
Staff Intern

Students get taste of Europe at event

By **ANDREW CRAIG**

Staff Reporter

Students gathered Friday night for a literal taste of foreign culture as European Night commenced in the Oakland Center. The evening was sponsored by more than a dozen student organizations.

Free and open to all OU students, faculty and staff, European Night was met by a crowd of visitors. The bustling activity lasted from 4-7 p.m., while guests met and then exceeded the seating capacity of the OC Gold Rooms.

With an extra credit incentive for his German 215 class, junior Mark Seefried sampled the international flavor.

"I was surprised to see every chair filled," Seefried said. "People were actually standing. The room really filled up quickly."

However, freshman Benjamin Eveslage, president of International Allies, wasn't surprised with the turnout.

"We (International Allies) expected this number of people," he said. "This is one of the biggest events that we sponsor."

Eveslage contributed the event's popularity largely to the diverse collection of people that helped make it happen.

"Numerous organizations put this event together," he said. "Cooperative events like this are the most effective. European Night combined different aspects of cultural festivals together, and it's worked really well."

Dikka Berven, special instructor of French, is the faculty advisor to OU's French Club. According to Berven, French Club always looks forward to European Night. This year, club members served as masters of ceremony for the multicultural entertainment.

"International events offer the opportunity to get to know students from other cultures, to have fun together, and to get a glimpse of how people do things in other countries," Berven said.

The cultural stage was set for precisely that, as European traditions were showcased through live performances and a buffet of international cuisine. Many elaborate presentations illustrated cultural variety through dance, featuring performers dressed in traditional attire and intricate routines.

Appetites were satisfied with native dishes from many of the host cultures. From Greek baklava to Polish stuffed cabbage, from Spanish paella to Scottish stovies, guests sampled plates for all palates.

The event's appetizers, prepared by Chartwells, offered a distinctive taste with each delicacy.

Like the assortment of food, the variety of sponsors helped make the celebration successful.

"People aren't just getting food and leaving, they're staying around," Eveslage said. "There's great food to eat and the performers have done a really good job."

Junior Stephanie Simone agreed with Eveslage's thoughts on the turnout.

"A lot of people came to see what's going on and to ask questions," she said. "It's a fun event. The whole evening celebrates all the different multicultural organizations on



SINEAD CRONIN/The Oakland Post

More than a dozen student organizations sponsored European Night on Friday, March 4. Attendees were treated to presentations, cultural dancers and performers, intricate dance routines and a variety of cultural foods.

campus. The turnout has been great."

Outside of the Gold Rooms, Simone answered questions from curious students about International Village, one of the event sponsors.

International Village offers local and international students the opportunity to live in a multicultural community on campus. In the 7000 block of the Ann V. Nicholson Student Apartment complex, students from around the world are immersed in a multicultural environment. Like European Night, International Village promotes awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

Involvement in international events on campus provides students opportunities to learn outside of the norm. European Night delivered that type of opportunity to students on Friday.

Berven suggests a significant benefit to broadening cultural exposure.

"When you see the dancing and listen to the music, you can get a whole new experience and understanding of a foreign culture," she said. "I think if people knew more about other cultures, they would have more respect for what makes people tick."

European Night was a small example of how diverse peoples can work cooperatively. Differences, when appreciated, can promote understanding.

According to Berven, the evening can serve as a model for welcoming diversity. The contributions of individual cultures in Europe, for example, work in complementary fashion and have enhanced intercultural relations.

"The European Union is a huge geographic entity in which people are learning to live and work successfully



SINEAD CRONIN/The Oakland Post

Some of the food at European night included crepes (above) and strawberries served with gelato (below).

together in spite of different histories, economic situations, languages and cultures," Berven said. "That's an amazing accomplishment. The process has not been smooth or easy, but it is working."

For more information about the organizations involved in European Night, visit oakland.edu/csa