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Faculty, staff add to terrorist attack forums

By **Jennifer Charney**, OU Staff Writer

If the United States had not started military action in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, what would that inaction have told other countries? That's the question posed by Sharon Heskitt, School of Nursing instructor, at an OU forum about the attacks.

Heskitt was among many concerned OU faculty and staff members who joined students and the public in five forums by the **Center for Student Activities**. The events drew audience members who voiced concerns that are common among many in the wake of the attacks.

At the Oct. 18 forum, "**Religion and Terrorism: Are They Compatible,**" Heskitt posed her question to the audience and panelists Achmat Salie, religious leader of the Islamic Association of Greater Detroit in Rochester Hills, and Charles Mabee, an OU campus minister and instructor in comparative religion in the **Department of Sociology and Anthropology**.

Heskitt said that not responding to the attacks would tell other nations, "You can come over and bomb us and we won't respond — we won't try to protect our interests."

"The problem is that the groups that initiated this (attack) are dead on inside," Heskitt said. "It doesn't matter to them who dies. It's all for their cause. How do you combat that?"

Charles Clark, director of the **Academic Skills Center**, had the same question at the forum.

"I know it's not right to stereotype or to treat people badly because of their religion, but I struggle with this notion," Clark said. "I read the article in a Detroit newspaper about (terrorists) living basically normal lives here in the states. How do we balance the need to root these people out with keeping religious faith and practices intact?"

Salie and Mabee suggested that people try to dispel their fears by getting to know Muslims.

Miron Stano, acting chair of the Department of Economics, School of Business Administration, thought the Oct. 30 forum was valuable. The hour-long forum, "**The Economic Impact of Terrorism — Locally and Globally,**" was too short to address all the issues, he said, referring to the impact of extra security on economy.

"Increased security has international ramifications," Stano said. "One of the engines of worldwide growth has been trade in the flow of information, goods and services. Now this is going to hamper at least the flow of labor, materials and so on. So there could be significant ramifications (to the economy) unless we can adjust very readily to that kind of security."

Stano's advice for U.S. consumers? "Clearly, life has to go on," he said. "But avoid spending that you could defer."

Should Americans buy American-made products to boost the economy? No, Stano said. If you do that, then you really are defeating one of the major advantages of a competitive (marketplace)."

Bob Thomas, director of the **Department of Placement and Career Services**, came to the forum to hear the panelists' opinions on the job market.

"I agreed with most of what the panel said. The job market is not good in general," Thomas said. "There are some areas that still are average to strong, however, such as nursing, teaching and accounting. It would seem that it might get worse before it gets better. I agree that we won't see the job market go up until the end of next year."

SUMMARY

If the United States had not started military action in response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, what would that inaction have told other countries? That was a question posed at an OU forum about the attacks.

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