

# Forum discusses advising

Speakers, panel advocate changes to model for University faculty advisers

Elizabeth Sandhu  
for the Index

Students, faculty and staff filled the SUB Spanish Room on Tuesday night to discuss how Truman's academic advising can improve.

Student Senate and the Center for Teaching and Learning hosted a forum to talk about problems and potential solutions to the academic advising process.

Junior senator Angela Crawford organized the event and said the night's goal was to promote dialogue and get feedback about problems and suggestions surrounding academic advising.

After hearing complaints about academic advising from both students and faculty, Student Senate passed a resolution last spring to form a subcommittee that would focus on the issue.

Crawford said Senate plans on using the notes from the discussion and evaluation sheets attendees filled out to examine the views of students, staff and faculty on advising.

"This semester is a research semester, and next semester [Senate] will implement change," Crawford said.

Jon Gering, assistant professor of biology, was the evening's guest speaker and suggested some changes to the advising process.

Gering said students are not allowed sufficient autonomy under the current advising situation.

He said he thinks students should be able to complete more processes online.

"Electronic resources should make it possible for students to register without having to come to a faculty member's office and get a slip of paper called the [Registration Access Code] and have a false discussion about how things are going, when all they want is the RAC code so they can go register, and they can get on with things," Gering said.

Senior Brian Woll, who was not at Tuesday's meeting, said he figures out his schedule without his adviser's help.

"I feel it's more of my responsibility to make sure I take the right courses," Woll said.

Woll said he does not mind going to his adviser to get his registration code be-



Kelsey Vaughn/Index

Jon Gering, assistant professor of biology and student adviser, speaks during the Advising Dessert event in the SUB Spanish Room on Tuesday.

cause his adviser is always interested in what he is taking.

But he said if the codes were provided online, he would have no problems with doing it himself.

Gering said it is important for students to use faculty advisers for what they are equipped to help with and be aware of where their expertise ends.

In his first semester as an academic adviser, Gering said he often found himself unsure of how to answer advisees' questions that focused on various technical issues such as dual credit.

"I didn't know what I was doing," Gering said. "I felt ill-equipped to tell students,

"This is what you ought to be taking," in part because I'm not sure I knew."

Gering said he did not know all the rules and technicalities of LSP courses or modes of inquiry.

But if a student asked about advice on graduate school or internships, Gering said he was more than happy to aid the student.

"If the Senate says that the academic advising model should remain, great," Gering said. "But please, tell us how to do it better."

After Gering's speech, seniors Phil Campbell, Laura Keck and senator Michael Pierson led the room in a panel

discussion that stemmed from Gering's speech.

Douglas Davenport, interim dean of social science, said he had doubts about online resources replacing the role of human advisers in the registration process.

But he said that when he was a new faculty member, he too felt unprepared to assist advisees in the technical aspects of registration.

"I probably put the registrar's office on speed dial," Davenport said.

Pierson said that in his discussions with professors, many of them also expressed frustration in situations such as dealing

with RAC or advising on dual credits.

Pierson said he thinks some of the faculty adviser's role in working with the more technical aspects of advising should be relinquished to something like the Residential College Program.

But Pierson said he did not want the advisers to give up their roles in assisting students with the LSP courses.

"We are a liberal arts school, and [faculty advisers] need to understand what goes on outside of their division," Pierson said. "Faculty at some level have control over the LSP, and they must know the LSP in order to reinvent it to the next generation and make it better."

## Pending brief could restrict military recruitment

Amy Hoelting  
Staff Reporter

Military recruitment on college campuses could be threatened this December if a brief submitted to the Supreme Court by the American Association of University Professors passes.

The AAUP wants to limit the presence of military recruiters on college campuses because it thinks military discrimination against openly gay recruits does not comply with school regulations that require employer recruiters to comply with non-discriminatory policies, according to a press release. The brief will be argued Dec. 6, according to the press release.

Military recruitment on campuses is governed by the Solomon Amendment, which requires universities and colleges to give military recruiters equal access to career services at schools, or they will lose federal funding.

Major Steve Konecny, division head of military science, said this act will not affect the ROTC program although it will affect outside military recruitment on campus.

Sgt. 1st Class Bode, of the military recruitment office in Kirksville, said although colleges and universities are governed by the Solomon Amendment, they also must follow guidelines set by the No Child Left Behind Act. Bode said the act is one of the most recent laws governing military recruitment on campuses. He said

the act requires schools to release student information to recruiters. Previously, some schools limited military recruitment on campuses, Bode said.

He said about 10 percent of the military's recruiting efforts during the year in Kirksville are obtained from Truman recruiting. He said that without counting recruitment from the ROTC, they usually recruit an additional seven to 10 people from campus each year.

Bode said military recruitment is done mostly through referrals, and recruiters follow all University policies regarding recruitment. The military provides an alternative to college, he said.

"Some people get into college, and it's not for them," Bode said. "Some need help, and that's what [the military] furnishes."

Bode said that if the brief passes, it probably will not significantly affect the number of new recruits each year but possibly could affect recruitment in larger cities such as Kansas City and St. Louis. Bode said the military also probably would rely more heavily on referrals from the University.

"I think if you're an honest recruiter, I don't think that you're going to have to hunt for people," Bode said. "[The people] would come to you."

Junior Twink Pham, who is involved in ROTC, signed her contracting papers Dec. 17 of last year. Pham said that when a member of ROTC signs contracting pa-



Chris Waller/Index

Air Force Staff Sgt. Neil Mashburn works in the Air Force Recruiting Office on Wednesday afternoon at Truman.

pers, they basically say that they agree to have a career in the military after college. She said members usually sign these papers before entering a 300-level class

because the upper level classes are preparing the students to be an officer in the military.

"In a way, [all ROTC members] are en-

couraged to recruit, like how Greek organizations [recruit]," Pham said. How is that any different? It may not be a career-changing experience, but it's basically the same."

Free Checking...  
it's a sweet deal!



A Free Checking account from Bank Midwest includes:

- > Free VISA® Debit Card
- > Free Internet Banking
- > Free Online Bill Payment
- > Free Bank Midwest ATMs
- > No Minimum Balance
- > Unlimited Check Writing
- > No Maintenance Fees
- > No Monthly Service Charges
- > 24 Hour Account Information

Toll-free - 1.800.867.2265

To open a Bank Midwest Free Checking account, visit the banking center nearest you, or visit us online at bankmw.com.



Kirksville  
201 N. Elson • 1904 N. Baltimore  
665.8385

Member FDIC

## PONDEROSA STEAKHOUSE

**Sunday Night College Buffet**  
\$6.99 includes beverage  
4 p.m. to close

**Monday Night Wing Night**  
50 chicken wings to go.  
Choice of hot, original or BBQ. \$9.99

"Where the extras don't cost extra!"

Open

Sunday to Thursday  
11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Friday and Saturday  
11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Checks, Visa, Mastercard, Discover and American Express accepted.