



Jackson Groves/Index
Junior Matt Szcwzyk, Student Senate president, said very few student athletes have argued for early class registration.

Students argue against early athlete course registration

BY JOHN FLEMING
Staff Reporter

A proposed plan that would allow Truman athletes to register for classes before students who do not participate in intercollegiate athletics was the focal point of a Student Senate debate Oct. 14.

Student Senate hosted an open forum concerning the controversial plan to gauge student opinion of the policy, which was first discussed by senate two weeks prior to the discussion. Junior Matt Szcwzyk, Student Senate president, said that so far, very little of the arguing has been done by athletes themselves.

"No athletes have contacted senate or gone to a meeting to speak for or against changing the policy," Szcwzyk said.

Szcwzyk said the issue of changing the class registration policy for athletes was first brought to his attention by Garry Gordon, the vice president for academic affairs. Gordon informed Szcwzyk that he wanted student input before the University makes an official decision.

Although there was little contribution from Truman athletes at the meeting, some students who are not intercollegiate athletes spoke against the policy.

"I have the right to register," said senior Jessica Ponder, who advocated maintaining the current policy of class registration. "I am a senior, and a freshman athlete has no right to register before me."

In addition to Ponder, several other students attended the meeting to voice their discontent with the proposal.

"No one is denying the fact that athletes here have busy schedules, but so does everyone else," senior Jennifer Lee said at the meeting.

According to a survey conducted by senate, 119 of 121 students surveyed were opposed to allowing early registration, one supported the proposed change and one other student was un-

decided about the issue.

Some surveyed students voiced concerns that giving athletes special treatment over the general student body would harm Truman's overall academic reputation.

"I have the right to register. I am a senior, and a freshman athlete has no right to register before me."

Jessica Ponder
Senior

Although some senators remained silent about the registration policy, others openly voiced concerns.

"People are very angry that this [policy] is even being considered," senator senior Greg Wisa said.

Wisa was not the only senator to vocally oppose the plan.

"I think [the plan] is completely silly," senator junior Walter Stokely said.

In addition to students who have no direct affiliation with the athletic department, others have come out against the proposal.

One senator stated that a source from the athletic office said professors already make

special concessions to student athletes to accommodate schedules for athletic practices, games and matches.

One source of confusion for some who attended the meeting was how the proposal defines an athlete.

One student asked if the registration policy would affect all sports, including club and intramural teams.

In response, Senate clarified that the proposal covers only intercollegiate varsity athletics.

Although Szcwzyk stayed impartial throughout the Senate session, he noted that because a majority of the feedback that senate received up until that point had been opposed to the proposed policy, it is likely that the resolution written by the senate will agree with the current registration policy.

Szcwzyk said the resolution will oppose the registration proposal but still will leave open the possibility for reforms to be made in the future to accommodate athletes, without agreeing to the current proposal.

Refugees to recount stories at Truman

BY BONNIE BIRDELL
Staff Reporter

Truman students will be given the opportunity to make an impact on the world.

A national speaking tour called Voices from Darfur will come to campus at 8 p.m. Oct. 23. The event will last about an hour and a half and will be in the Student Union Building.

Darfuri refugees Daoud Harri and Abu Asal will visit the University to share their first-hand accounts of the genocide ravaging the region since 2003, according to the tour's press release. The release states that as many as 400,000 people have been killed, and 2.5 million have fled.

Campus Christian Fellowship is hosting the event. Event coordinator Mark Swanson said the Save Darfur Coalition is sponsoring the tour.

Swanson also said three Truman alumnae currently work for the coalition and worked diligently to make sure the event would make a stop at the University.

"They really wanted the program to come to Truman's campus," he said.

Swanson said the coalition waived the standard fee and in exchange asked CCF to find a space for the event and to take care of publicity.

The point of the tour is to raise awareness and encourage activism in students, Swanson said. He said activism was particularly important to him.

"We look back at the Holocaust or the situation in Rwanda and think, 'How did that happen? What were people thinking? Were we asleep?'" he said. "I'm still surprised both at how other people and how I still live my life most of the time, not thinking about it."

Swanson said he thinks the tour can help students find specific ways to help those involved in the conflict.

"I find myself not knowing what to do a lot of the time," he said. "I'll call the White House, or I'll sign a petition, but [the conflict] still seems pretty far removed. I think having personal stories from refugees who have been affected by the conflict over there will put flesh

to this kind of abstract concept."

Truman alumna Allison Schmidt, the development coordinator for the Voices from Darfur campaign, said giving students a way to act is one of the reasons she is excited to bring the event to her alma mater.

"Kirksville is kind of isolated, and it's easy to forget the world outside of us," she said.

Schmidt, who graduated from the University in 2005, has been an activist for Darfur for two years. She said she interned for CCF from 2005 to 2006, during which time she ran an awareness campaign on campus and joined the Save Darfur Coalition in September 2006.

Two other University alumnae, Laura Miller and Ashley Morris, work for the coalition, Schmidt said.

Ashley Roberts, a communication associate for the coalition, went to school at Northwestern but said that even in a big city like Chicago, it's hard for students to realize they can make a difference.

"That's the nature of college," Roberts said. "Most people feel they're in a bubble."

She said a lot of the same type of campaigning takes place on large campuses as on small ones, including chalking.

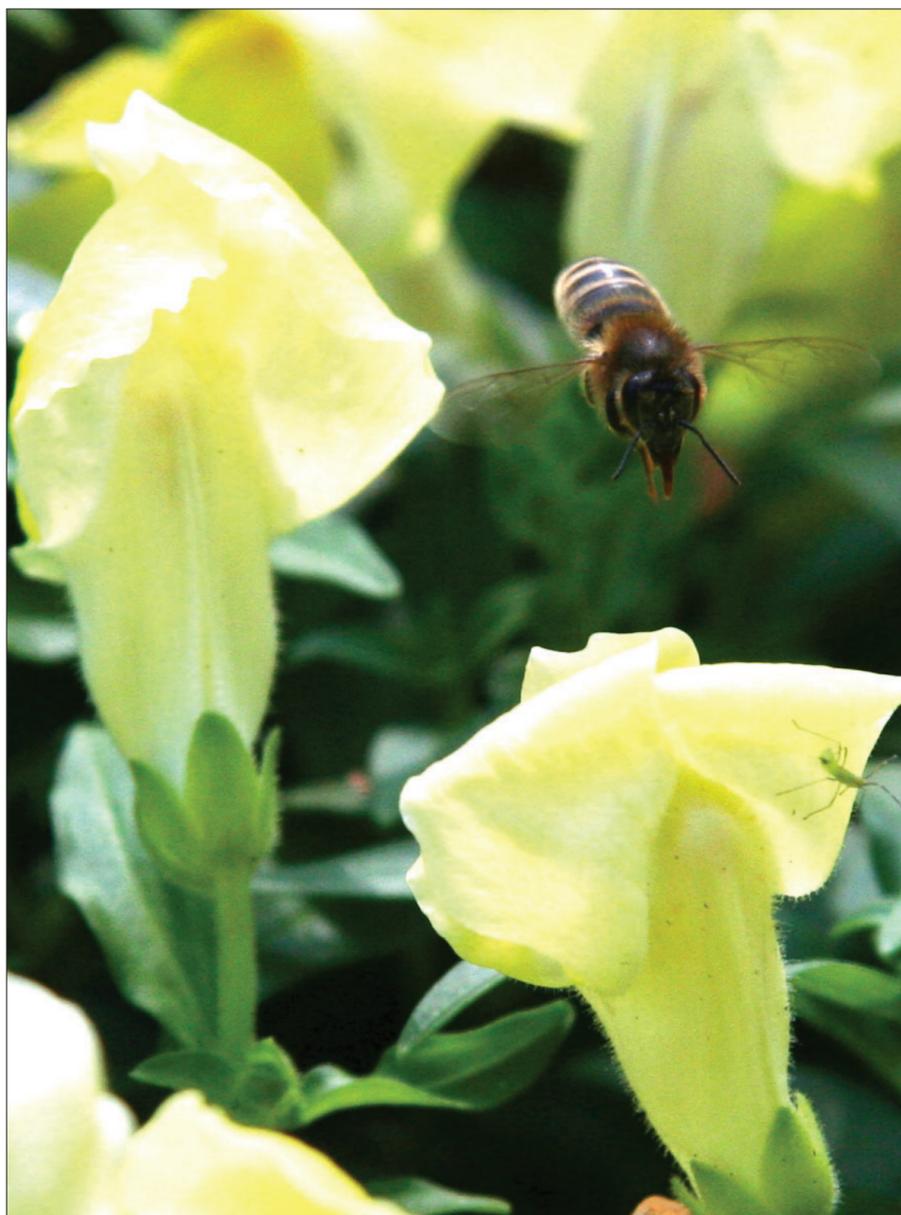
Schmidt said the Voices from Darfur Web site had many ways students could get involved. She also said a handout titled "What Can I Do?" would be distributed after the event. She said she hoped this would give students a more direct way to participate.

Swanson said he wanted to be able to make a direct impact in Darfur.

"I don't want, in 10 years, a movie or some piece of media to be made and think, 'What was I doing? Was I just sitting around doing nothing?'" he said.

Schmidt said to do nothing would be irresponsible.

"We all have a moral obligation to be involved in bettering our world," she said.



Flower Power
Photo by Jason Williams

A bee hovers over a snapdragon in the Sunken Garden last week, three weeks after the first day of fall. Unseasonably high temperatures prior to this week allowed flora and fauna to continue to flourish all over campus.

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