

# Esfeld storms Senate, Capitol

BY KRISHA SHRESTHA  
Staff Reporter

From nationally debating to making policy changes, senior Lizz Esfeld is on the high road to success. A biology major with a communications minor, Esfeld is the president of Truman's Student Senate.

Joining Senate was not her plan when she arrived at Truman from Bishop Miege High School in Lenexa, Kan. In high school, she was ranked ninth and 16th in the national forensics team for her junior and senior years in public policy debate and congress debate, respectively.

Esfeld now has three years on Senate under her belt, and still can pinpoint the moment she decided to join the organization.

"In my freshman year I came to the [Student Union Building] and got caught up in a tour, which ended up in the Senate's office," Esfeld said.

She said she talked to the current president for more than an hour and that was when she knew she wanted to join Senate. She said she thought about joining the debate team but did not want to commit as much time to it as she did in high school and decided to dedicate herself to a different focus instead. Esfeld said she still does not have her Saturdays off but doesn't mind because she actually is making policy changes rather than just talking about them, which is exciting.

She said it is hard to keep up with all the information, to be in charge of so many people and to be well-versed in all five committees (academic affairs, student affairs, external affairs, environmental and diversity group) and their projects, but that she loves every minute of it. She said that to be familiar and focused in all the committees was a challenge.

"I knew academic in and out," Esfeld said. "I had to learn about all the other affairs and work with all of them and not [being] biased on academic affairs was a hard transition."

Along with the responsibilities of the students' initiated projects and overseeing the Senate committees comes the responsibility of making crucial and tough decisions, she said.

"When a new president comes in the office, she or he will have about a week to fill out the big positions, which is [an] unbelievable time crunch considering that I have to advertise for it and make sure I get the right people for the position," Esfeld said. "Even when I have shortlisted to two to four people, it is hard to fill out the position and tell someone that they did not get the position they applied for."

Aside from that, Esfeld said she also thinks that it is difficult to be her friends' boss, especially when she has to confront them and talk to them as an employee. She said it was especially difficult as president when she was told about the budget crisis in confidence at the end of last semester.

**"By the end of my term, I hope that Truman is well set for the fixed level of funding for at least two years, or we know enough so we can at least advocate for a fee."**

Lizz Esfeld  
Senior

"I was sick for [a] day thinking about it, and I could not talk to anybody about it," Esfeld said. "Even then I felt confident that I was the best person to handle this, and that I will have to be the one to get the information to every student."

Starting this semester her focus has been on the budget and where Truman is going with it, she said. She has been in Jefferson City several times talking with legislators and advocating for Truman's policies.

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In addition to dealing with the budget crisis, Esfeld was integral in the creation of a technology committee and a textbook committee this year. She said that if the proposal from the technology committee is implemented fully, technology could be one of Truman's defining attributes along with its strong academics, clubs, organizations and social life.

The textbook committee was formed to revolutionize the way students use textbooks at Truman. Esfeld said a rental process or Internet-based books have been suggested, along with having departments write their own books through this committee. This could offset any possible student fees in the future because students already spend about

All eyes on

# Lizz Esfeld

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Mayank Dhungana/Index  
Esfeld stands in front of the Capitol during Storm the Capitol. Esfeld and other Truman students went to the Capitol to lobby for level funding for next year.

\$500 per semester on textbooks.

Esfeld's involvement at Truman extends far beyond Senate. She is the vice president of Omicron Delta Kappa, National Leadership Honor Society, and is a member of Beta Beta Beta, National Biological Honor Society.

Esfeld said she has many ongoing projects right now but that she knows she might not be able to complete them all during her

presidency. If anything, she said she hopes to leave Senate with a friendly and cooperative environment.

"I love how we all get along this year," Esfeld said. "Since I have been in Senate, I don't remember us all getting along [this] well, and I would like for that to keep going. I like to talk straight and people who play around the issue upset me."



Julie Williams/Index

Judy Scheurer gives each horse she carves a name, which usually corresponds to one of the live horses she cares for on her farm.

## HORSES | Local woman carves intricate rocking horses from wood without any formal training

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who finds the note to "restore the horse with love."

"There's a little secret inside of each horse and we never forget to put those little notes in," she said.

The existing rocking horses range in material from hardwood ash, walnut, maple, white pine and basswood.

"Walnut is like carving butter — it's just so easy to work with," Scheurer said. "Cherry is the same way, but it's a little more brittle. It's funny how woods are just so

alive under your hands when you're working with them."

Scheurer and her son continue to carve rocking horses, allowing four to six months to finish each one. Scheurer said she also has other projects in mind she would like to try.

"I'd like to do some relief-type carving on flat pieces of wood..." she said. "I love working with the tools — it's just like working with a pencil except you're just chipping little bits and pieces away until you find what you want to inside of the work."

# Disability minor seeks approval

BY EMMA MUELLER  
Staff Reporter

A new opportunity is available for students interested in invoking change in society or breaking down cultural stereotypes.

The wheels are in motion for a disability services minor. The minor will be included in the area of interdisciplinary studies and is expected to be part of the curriculum by Spring 2010.

Peter Kelly, professor of education, said he is eager to get the minor up and running.

"The minor proposal is sitting with Michael Kelrick, the director of interdisciplinary studies," Kelly said. "We'll get some feedback from him, and then we hope to move forward. The plan right now is that we kick off in the spring of next year with an introduction course. We might have to do that with an existing course. It may be too late to get a new course approved for the minor."

In addition to Kelrick's clearance, all the disciplines involved need to approve the minor.

"It's a particular challenge for us because disability studies is inherently interdisciplinary," Kelly said. "You don't really focus on it from one discipline. My work in that area comes from the field of special education, so I understand disability related to education."

The minor will give students a chance

to explore an area of society that is generally forgotten.

"Very few people's lives go untouched by disability," Kelly said. "We say about one in 10 people have a disability, from an education perspective. Some assert that if we live long enough we'll all be struggling with the elements [of a] disability. As we get older, we tend to have new challenges. As our parents get older, a lot of times they struggle with disabilities. I think it's a pervasive issue, but it's not one we talk about very much in structured ways. I think a disabilities studies minor will create opportunities to do that."

Junior Beth Duff attended the interdisciplinary workshop in January titled "What is Disability Studies?"

"Faculty, students and community members from all different disciplines attended," Duff said. "It was an overview of creating a disability studies program. The big focus was interdisciplinary work and how different disciplines could work together to create a coherent program."

Disciplines discussed within the minor include history, communication disorders, psychology, language and literature and public health, among others.

"I'm really interested in how disability has been constructed and framed throughout history in different societies," Duff said. "I'm really interested in the idea of disability as a social construction. The idea of what is considered normal chang-

es over time and in any given society."

The minor will create new opportunities to overcome the stigma of disability by looking at it from a societal perspective, Duff said.

"I think we need to move beyond looking at people with disabilities as objects of pity or people that need help or charity and really start to see disability as something worthy of accommodation, but not charity," Duff said. "I think having classes and a program on campus that would approach disability from a non-medical model would be a paradigm shift among people."

Sophomore Kevin Regan knows sign language and said he is excited about the possibility of having a disability services minor at Truman.

"You'd have a much broader perspective on life," Regan said. "You would be able to work with the disabled. You would be able to fight for the disabled if you wanted. Once you have that major you could go to law school and get your degree in that."

Regan has been signing for about four years and said he thinks learning about this topic increases diversity and a presents chance to break stereotypes.

"It would be an amazing opportunity for Truman State because it would give more interest into diversity," Regan said. "Disabilities make people uncomfortable, and this would give people a chance to break that barrier."

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