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Truman State University INDEX

102 years of excellence

Thursday, December 2, 2010

The University's student-produced newspaper

www.trumanindex.com

Timeline for removal of handicapped barriers outside Violette Hall:

Beginning of fall semester

Barriers placed in handicapped parking spaces due to construction

Psychology professor Sherri Palmer's two calls to DPS do not result in removal of barriers

Palmer contacts President Paino, but the barriers are not immediately moved

The barriers are initially removed, but are moved back several times: DPS and the Physical Plant deny moving them back

Nov. 18



Photo Submitted

Two yellow emergency barriers stand in handicapped parking spots outside of Violette Hall earlier this semester. The barriers, which have since been removed, were placed there because of work to the Physical Plant.

Handicapped spaces blocked

BY REBECCA SMITH
Staff Reporter

There has been a barrier for people with disabilities on campus recently in the form of yellow emergency horses.

Two handicapped parking spots have been blocked outside of Violette Hall all semester to allow heavy equipment access to the Power Plant, which is undergoing renovation. This, among other things, has caused difficulties for people with disabilities on campus.

"Blocking off these handicapped parking spaces was the only route available for heavy equipment," said Tim Baker, assistant director of the Physical Plant.

Campus Planner Mark Schultz said that this was not the only route, but the shorter and more convenient one, the other being equivalent to two city blocks and accessible only by backing down the sidewalk.

Often both routes were used, as multiple types of equipment were needed for

the renovation to progress, Schultz said.

Vicky Wehner, coordinator of disability services, said she thinks the spots were continually blocked out of convenience for construction crews because new equipment was rarely, if ever, brought in through the Violette parking lot.

"We removed the barriers at the beginning of the school year, and someone put them back up and we were unaware of it," said Tom Johnson, director of the Department of Public Safety. "We do not know who put the barriers back up."

A lack of communication between departments likely led to this problem, Johnson said.

Johnson said the barriers were left up much longer than they should have been.

Wehner said the construction was blocking the Physical Plant's regular parking and the sidewalk near the Violette lot was the nearest parking to the tools and equipment needed for projects.

"Blocking those spots was not a deci-

sion that was made lightly, and if anyone had complained to us, we would have been glad to work with the Department of Public Safety," Baker said.

Psychology professor Sherri Palmer teaches in Violette Hall and requires handicapped parking. She said that she called and complained to DPS more than a month ago. Palmer said that the first time she called, the operator who took the call was very understanding and assured her it would be looked into.

"I was told that Physical Plant must be doing it because DPS would not be doing it, and that they would talk to Physical Plant and make them fix it," Palmer said.

Johnson said the original complaint never reached him because he was in and out of the office all semester, and the message did not get where it needed to go because so many people were involved.

After no action was taken, Palmer said that she called DPS again to inform them

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Education professor gets reassigned mid-semester

BY JACKIE KINEALY
Staff Reporter

A professor hired at the last minute by the education department was taken out of the classroom and reassigned to work on two projects, for which the University will continue to pay her contracted salary of \$9,000.

Just days before classes began this semester, the education department hired Sarah Bowers as a "temporary part-time lecturer," but Bowers was later removed midway through the semester.

Bowers, a nationally certified primary-school teacher for 35 years, taught two sections of the graduate-level education class Psychological Foundations of Education. She was replaced by Professor Beverly Perrachione after midterm break.

Sam Minner, dean of the School of Health Sciences and Education, said Bowers was hired "literally days, not weeks," before the semester began, after the original candidate informed the department that she could no longer fill the position.

"At that point, the department chairman Dr. Paul

Yoder was on the spot to find someone else, and he checked around with his contacts, called around the school districts, and one of the individuals that was recommended to him was Professor Bowers, and he hired her," Minner said.

Bowers signed a nine-month contract with the university in August that will expire in May. The contract stated Bowers will be paid a \$9,000 salary throughout the course of the Fall 2010 and Spring 2011 semesters.

During the remainder of this semester Bowers will write a presentation about

national board certification for students in education classes. In the spring she will work with Minner to develop a research topic.

Yoder said he made the decision to hire Bowers in August, shortly before classes began. "She came in and we talked, and that constituted the interview process," he said.

Yoder said Bowers did come with a recommendation, but he would not discuss who made the recommendation.

One of Bowers' students this semester, who wished to remain anonymous, said stu-

Sarah Bowers:

- Hired days before school started in Fall 2010.

- Removed from teaching her two classes after midterm break.

- Currently being paid the remainder of her \$9,000 contract to complete two presentations for the education dept.

dents first brought concerns to Yoder a few weeks into the semester because Bowers spent class time talking about her personal life rather than course material.

"After a few weeks, we weren't following the syllabus anymore and people began to be concerned that we weren't learning very much,"

the student said.

Bowers denied that she was unprofessional in the classroom.

"When you're professional, you don't bring your personal life into stuff," she said. "I'm a professional and I'm an excellent teacher, so I would never

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Students will see registration changes in the spring

BY ELIZABETH KOCH
Staff Reporter

The early bird will get the worm — and the best class schedule, starting with fall 2011 registration.

Registration this spring will now open at 7 a.m. instead of 5 p.m. Students will register for Junior Interdisciplinary Seminar courses on a separate day.

The time change was made to benefit students with evening commitments, said Martin Eisenberg, associate provost and economics professor. It might affect athletes with morning practices, but the earlier time will disadvantage fewer stu-

dents overall, Eisenberg said.

To help the process run more smoothly, no more than 500 students will register per day, Eisenberg said. There will also be more days of registration to help thin out traffic on the website.

The registrar will finalize these changes next semester.

"The aim ... is to try and have it a little less frustrating for students," Eisenberg said. "When you have 750 people all trying to do the same thing simultaneously, the system gets a little overwhelmed. And I think everyone knows that experience, and it really doesn't make sense to use the resources to buy a system that

wouldn't get overwhelmed, because it's only 15 minutes twice a year that that happens."

Students probably will be notified of the changes through e-mail, Eisenberg said.

Also, students waiting for an override will be more likely to obtain an override the same day with an earlier registration time, he said.

Many students with conflicting obligations previously gave their password to a different student and had that student register for them, Eisenberg said.

The new time of 7 a.m. was chosen because it wouldn't interfere with student and faculty work

throughout the day, he said.

The registration time was not changed to be later than 5 p.m. because staff and ITS need to be available to monitor the registration process.

Eisenberg said he has not heard any negative student reactions about the change, although he was expecting to. He said students told him registration is worth getting up for, and that once a semester isn't inconvenient.

"I talked to a fair number of students about this ... and knew that this was not really controversial among students, but I also know that registration issues are probably some of the most sensitive issues for students because which courses you get mat-

ters to people," Eisenberg said.

Eisenberg said they might enact a new policy that declares holding a seat in a class for another student unethical and unacceptable.

"Right now, I would say, a large percentage of students don't see that there's anything wrong with that practice," he said. "The first step is saying, 'This is wrong.'"

Some departments are already trying to prevent saving seats or are using a waiting list process, he said.

Eisenberg said a wait-list feature is being explored, but a policy has not been reached yet.

Eisenberg said the problem of sav-