



Asit Mishra/Collegian

African and African American Studies professor Cary Fraser discusses culture and politics with students in the HUB on Wednesday.

Students discuss culture, politics

By Anita Modi
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

From immigration to education and human rights, Wednesday's "Culture & Politics Discussion and Taste of the Diaspora" showed students that politics is an essential cultural element.

To promote open discussion, the Paul Robeson Cultural Center's Heritage Hall was remodeled to resemble a coffee shop, featuring lounges that subdivided politics into four aspects: education, immigration, human rights and general politics.

Penn State students from both University Park and Commonwealth Campuses were invited to log on to any of the four chat rooms corresponding with the four lounges from 1 to 3 p.m. through ANGEL. Moderators assigned to the chat rooms relayed insights and opinions from students who couldn't attend the event back to those seated in Heritage Hall. Melissa Landrau-Rodriguez, moderator of the Culture and Immigration lounge, said that contrary to popular belief, functioning well in a new country and honoring one's roots are not mutually exclusive.

Though festivals, clothes and food might vary from culture to culture, people's values are usu-

"Politics develops values and beliefs. It shapes who you are..."

Brittany Martin
senior - political science

ally similar, said Landrau-Rodriguez, director of the College Assistance Migrant program.

But media coverage of immigration doesn't seem as hopeful, said Tiffany Lawrence-Bell, who attended the event.

"The media has a negative outlook on people of different countries coming to the U.S.," Lawrence-Bell (senior-psychology) said. "People are uncomfortable with immigration, and I think it's because of a hidden ignorance passed down over the years."

The event was part of the weeklong World Cultural Festival. While Tuesday's event focused on films and Thursday's event will feature the arts, Wednesday's discussion centered on the links between culture and politics.

"Politics develops values and beliefs," organizer Brittany Martin (senior-political science) said. "It shapes who you are and what group you belong to."

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Haas will stick to republican values if elected to Pa. House

By Megan Rogers
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Pennsylvania House of Representative candidate Joyce Haas told a crowd of supporters at a campaign kick off Wednesday night she will continue to embrace family and republican values if elected to the House.

Haas, the vice-chairman of the Pennsylvania Republican Party, is running for the 77th seat in the House — currently held by Rep. Scott Conklin. To challenge Conklin, D-Centre, in November's general election, Haas must defeat fellow Republican Ron Reese in the May 18 primary election.

"It's a daunting task, but one that I will love," she said. Haas, a lifetime Centre County



Haas

resident and Penn State graduate, said if elected, she will work to decrease taxes, spending and government involvement.

She said she supports Tom Corbett for governor and hopes to back him in his promise of no new increases in taxes.

Corbett has also proposed instituting a two-year budget, which would better help Penn State plan for the future, Haas said.

Like Conklin, Haas criticized Gov. Ed Rendell and the legislature for withholding Penn State's appropriation during last year's budget process.

But while Conklin has called for a constitutional convention, Haas said she does not see the need for a convention.

She would rather enforce the current constitution because she said she would not trust legislators to create a new constitution. "I cannot trust what would go into it," she said.

"Instead let's embrace what's there."

Penn State student Anthony Christina worked with Haas this past fall to campaign for municipal elections and said Haas has values he admires.

"Joyce is the true pro-Penn State student candidate in both the primary and the general election," Christina (freshman-political science) said.

Because Haas has a background in both education and politics she will be proactive in obtaining state appropriation money for the university, Christina said.

"Joyce will be very Penn State friendly when it comes to getting our appropriation in next year's budget," he said.

Christina, the treasurer of the Penn State College Republicans, said the club does not endorse either candidate during the primaries, but will fully support whoever runs on the Republican ticket in the general election.

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UPUA to host spring conference

At tonight's meeting, held in Beaver Stadium, goals and ideas for next semester will be talked about with officials.

By Casey McDermott
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Student government will host its annual Spring Academic Council Conference tonight, bringing together representatives from student councils, faculty members and administrators.

Held in the Beaver Stadium recruiting lounge, the invitation-only event changed its format this year, moving away from a "lecture-like" meeting to a more open discussion.

University Park Undergraduate Association Academic Affairs Chairman Sam Loewner and Academic Affairs member Leanna Usnik organized the event, saying the conference provides the chance to exchange

contact information, goals for the upcoming semester and ideas for working together.

Loewner (senior-political science) anticipates about 50 people will attend, representing at least 10 of the university's academic student councils.

A majority of the associate deans for those respective colleges will also be attending.

"At end of the day, our goal is to allow student council presidents a greater role in undergraduate education," Loewner said. "We're going to facilitate discussion between all parties involved."

And Usnik (sophomore-biobehavioral health) said the event's new format should help get that discussion going even further.

This year's event will take place over dinner, providing a more relaxed and conversational atmosphere, she said.

Keynote speaker Jeremy Cohen, vice president and senior associate dean for undergraduate education, will give a speech entitled, "Democracy's Education: Whose Community Is It?"

"The fundamental value of an education is to develop an understanding of our role in a democracy," Cohen said. "Whether a student is an English major or a chemistry major or an IST major, in addition to learning about what they hope will be their profession, students also need to learn first and foremost how education can be used to sustain a democracy and to sustain liberty."

Wil Santivasi, Eberly College of Science student council president, said this kind of collaboration — on issues such as the IT Fee, class launch lists and the Penn State Book Exchange — has been helpful at past conferences, even when college councils disagree.

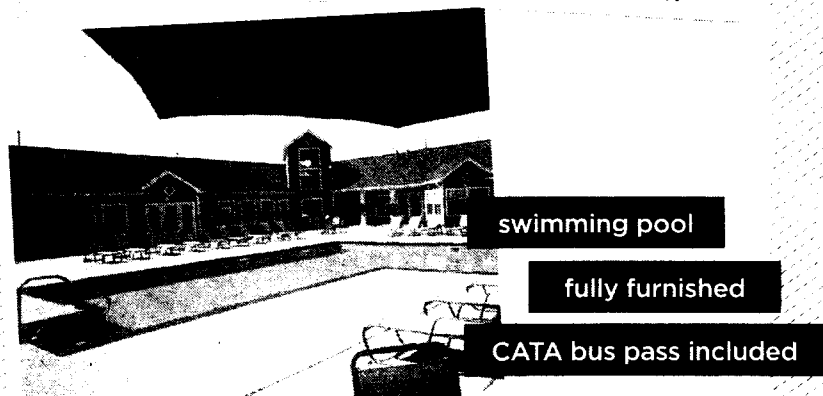
"The discussion is never petty — it's always allowing us to anticipate and react to problems that may occur because of the decisions we make," Santivasi (junior-premedicine) said. "It's nice to be questioned by others that don't always share the same experiences as you."

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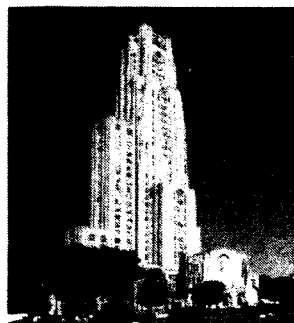
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