

# Putting a spin on orientation

## Student groups trying to attract visiting freshmen with programs

**Nick Montfort**  
Daily Texan Staff

A first-ever "supplemental orientation program" separate from the dean of students' summer freshman orientation and sponsored by students and campus groups will begin its second week Tuesday.

The "Campus Culture Wars" session last Wednesday dealt with political correctness. It was one of four programs in the Alternatives orientation session.

The session featured a film based on an incident at Washington University and speeches from two faculty members and Students' Association President John Black. The session was sponsored by Students Advocating a Valid Education.

The First Amendment Coalition and the Young Conservatives of Texas will sponsor two of the other sessions.

There were 30 people at the Wednesday session when it began at 9 p.m., but only five identified themselves as entering freshmen.

"What I see a problem with is that freshmen aren't seeing this, aren't seeing the clash of ideas ... face it, y'all are hiding that," said Jeremy Wade, the only entering freshman who spoke during the question and answer session. The discussion after the talk was mostly between orientation advisers and members of the groups that sponsor Alternatives.

"The university should be the place where society fosters new ideas, where creative thinking is encouraged, as a matter of fact, where you can read outrageous books without being in danger of being censored by your boss," said Joe Horn, professor of psychology, who spoke after the end of the film.

"The problem with political correctness is that certain questions are not to be answered," he said.

Horn recounted an incident in which a graduate student he supervised decided to discontinue her line of research because it encouraged "people to think of women in ways they shouldn't."

"This is happening all over the University," Horn said. "There are professors who will not do research because they'll get in trouble if they do it."

John Ruskiewicz, associate professor of English, told students about the 1990 conflict over proposed changes to the English 306 Rhetoric and Composition course, which would have focused on race and gender issues.

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had all the answers, it didn't provoke any questions," Ruskiewicz said.

Ruskiewicz handed out a policy statement of the American Association of University Professors, a policy that limits how professors should express their personal political views in the classroom.

Black said he came to "focus on your rights as students" and he told students the SA was one of the channels through which students could secure their rights.

"If I feel that socialism is the best course for this nation to take, and I want to argue that in class, that is my right," Black said. "If I feel that the best way to resolve foreign policy is to nuke the world and to have an absolute ruler, that is my right."

Orientation advisers for the dean of students program were not notified of the Alternatives sessions before leaflets advertising them were handed out to freshmen. The coordinators of both orientation programs said the advisers "were taken off guard."

Although Wesley David Wynne, the coordinator of Alternatives, contacted Associate Dean of Students Maralyn Heimlich on June 10 to tell her about the program, Heimlich had already finished her weekly meeting with advisers.

"As long as it doesn't intrude on the required parts of our program, we have no problem with them offering the sessions they are offering," Heimlich said.

Wynne said the Alternatives program will be expanded this week to include a session on religious life at the University, and that he had contacted Hillel, the Probe Center and the University Catholic Center about participating in the session.