

Debate team receives first faculty leader

by christie mcdonald

staff writer

Stability and continuity are prospects for the UNLV Debate and Forensics program, thanks to the hiring of Thomas Murphy by the Department of Communication Studies.

Murphy is the first full-time faculty member to be responsible for the program, after several years of student-run activity.

He recently completed a law degree from Texas Tech University and holds a Master's degree in Communications from the same school.

Murphy said he accepted the position because of his interest in the team and because he wanted to teach at a school in the West.

"I'm glad this school has made a commitment to care for the debate team," Murphy said. "That shows a step in the right direction."

Murphy also praised CSUN which appropriated \$2,000 to help the team travel to tournaments. He said he appreciated the fact that the students saw the value of the program.

As a Westerner, Murphy did his undergraduate

work at Eastern New Mexico University where he received a degree in speech.

At ENMU he was a member of the debate team. During his last two years at Texas Tech he was an assistant coach for the debate team.

At present he teaches two courses of Communication Studies 101 in addition to directing the debate and forensics program.

As far as Murphy's expectations of the debate team go, he said he hopes to try and qualify as many of his students as possible

for the national debate tournament.

That shouldn't be difficult, he said, because of the talented returning members.

Current members of the debate team are Ty Coon, Dan Bunin, Joe Bunin, Kevin Stevens, Charles Navarro, Andrew Bagdanov, Todd Espeland, Tammy Gardner, Jeanine Roberst and Don Wiseman.

Murphy said he expects about 20 students to participate in the program this year.

Last year, UNLV took second in the region (the

University of California, Berkeley was first). In addition Dan Bunin and Navarro took second and Coon earned a first in individual competitions at the regional tournament.

Being on the debate team doesn't necessarily mean one does only debate. A person can also be involved in different types of speeches, such as oratory, extemporaneous speaking or oral interpretations.

Murphy said this year's debate topic, set by a national organization, is Resolved: Continued U.S. Involvement in Central

America would be undesirable.

He said it takes three weeks to prepare for the first tournament.

"The first debate is always the greatest challenge," he said, "because members have fresh, new ideas."

It can never be known when a victory will come because no one really knows anything about the opposing team, the director explained.

Murphy invited anyone to join the debate team. All it takes is an interest and some self-motivation. The debate office is FDH 445.

Americans think college too expensive

by steve hong

staff writer

Most Americans think that a college education is important but expensive, according to a recent poll by Media General-Associated Press. According to the poll, 72 percent of those surveyed thought that a college education is important, but 51 percent said that public college or university is too expensive, while 58 percent believed that private college or university is too expensive.

Asked his opinion about the cost of colleges in general, one UNLV student said, "It is much too expensive. College costs are going up faster than the inflation rate and interest rates, and the average income does not go up to keep up."

Another student agreed. "I think it is too expensive. Some cannot afford to attend a college without a lot of financial aid."

A majority of those questioned said they felt that the cost of colleges in general were too high, although many felt that the cost at UNLV was reasonable.

Nationally, college costs are expected to increase, and some students expressed doubts.

"It may come to a point where college education will be reserved only for the rich, with the average folk going to community

colleges for a two-year program at best," said one student.

At UNLV, a student taking 15 credits a semester will pay \$1,080 in tuition and fees and room and board will cost around \$2,500, while Arizona

State University students will pay anywhere between \$2,700 to more than \$4,000.

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