

Involvement forum draws few students

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really is the voice of the students for this campus," he said.

ASUN often serves as a liaison between the students and the administration, and the more people who get involved, the more representative ASUN is, Schafer said.

"We try hard to be representative," he said. "But it's important for us to reach out and bring students in."

During the forum, students talked about minority and international student representation in the senate.

They also discussed ASUN's constitutional convention, which would revamp the structure of student government.

Kevin Sheen, a junior advertising major, said he thought the concerns brought up by students were valid.

Sheen also said there needed to be more forums for students to discuss issues important to

them. Sheen said he didn't come to the forum because he felt underrepresented. Instead, he attended because he wanted to learn more about running for office.

"I think (the senators) are doing their best, but more needs to be done," he said.

Nick Fitch, a senior German major, said he attended the forum because he wanted to hear student concerns as well as learn about running for an ASUN position.

Fitch said he was pleased to hear other students' views about ASUN.

"I feel that there are many people who are not represented, but those who are on the senate try to do their best," he said.

ASUN elections are often filled with politics, and Fitch said he didn't think the best candidate always got elected.

"I just hope that some people who want to do the right thing get elected," he said.

Outcome lies with Supreme Court

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the Florida Supreme Court violated neither federal law nor the Constitution because the court simply interpreted the law; it did not rewrite the law, they argue.

"Even if federal law had something to say about the scope of state judicial authority to construe state legislation, which it does not, the decision (of the Florida Supreme Court) effected no change in Florida law which cannot be reconciled with state statutes enacted before the election," Gore's brief states.

Gruhl said most legal observers were surprised the court agreed to hear the case at all, so they are reluctant to make predictions.

More often than not, when the court agrees to hear a case, it overrules a lower court's ruling. But that is far from a certainty here, Gruhl said.

In order to hear a case, four of the nine justices must agree to it. The court does not release which justices vote to hear a case.

In this case, Gruhl said, the

court may well have agreed to take the case in order to provide a definitive ruling amid the chaos of lawsuits, public relations dueling and political warfare.

"The Supreme Court may have believed it could lend its prestige in trying to dampen the controversy," he said.

At first glance, Gruhl said, the court would seem reluctant to overturn the Florida Supreme Court's ruling. Under Chief Justice William Rehnquist, the court's most notable change has been its emphasis on states' rights, he said, often in 5-4 rulings.

Bush's lawyers will argue the issue goes deeper than states' rights. They will argue the U.S. Supreme Court must act to prevent one branch of state government - the Florida Supreme Court - from usurping the authority of another - the state legislature.

"But it's not clear at all that the Florida Supreme Court in any way usurped the authority of the Florida Legislature," Gruhl said. "The state law was internally inconsistent, and the court chose to emphasize one part rather than the other."

Justices like Antonin Scalia - arguably the most conservative justice on the court and consistently sympathetic to states' rights - may be interesting to watch, Gruhl said.

Appointed by Ronald Reagan, Scalia is at times unabashedly partisan and may favor Bush's arguments over a states' rights argument in this case, Gruhl said. But he cautioned his view was speculation, not a prediction.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's questions during oral arguments also will be watched closely because of her strong support for states' rights, Gruhl said. Before being

appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court, O'Connor served in the Arizona Legislature.

For a ruling of this magnitude, some have suggested the court will seek a unanimous ruling.

"I think they would like it to be unanimous," Gruhl said, "but this court has been pretty fractured, and I don't know that that would happen."

Although the court's ruling is unlikely to resolve all of the disputed legal issues, it could be viewed by the public as a barrier that should halt any further legal challenges, Gruhl said.

"As soon as the Supreme Court rules, I think there will be strong sentiment to get it wrapped up, regardless of how it rules," he said.

In accordance with the Supreme Court's policy, today's oral arguments will not be televised. But the court has agreed to release an audio recording.

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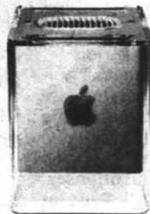
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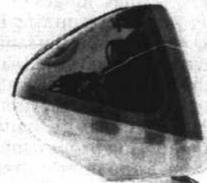
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