

Student lobbyists fight for tuition decrease

High costs squeeze university enrollment

By MARY BETH BOWEN
Of the Emerald

The Chancellor of the State Board of Higher Education, Dr. Roy Lieuallen, says tuition at Oregon's four-year colleges and universities will probably increase 10 per cent during the next two years.

The coordinator of the Oregon student lobby, Kirby Garrett, is pushing for a six per cent decrease.

But how much money Oregon students actually shell out depends on how much the Legisla-

ture appropriates for higher education.

Tuition at Oregon's four-year institutions has increased 25 per cent during the past two years, says Garrett. He says further increases will prevent many lower and middle income students from going to school.

Mark Cogan, an ASUO legislative lobbyist also advocating the tuition decrease, agrees.

"Studies have shown that as tuition rises," said Cogan, "a greater percentage of students can no longer afford the cost."

Another justification for the tuition decrease, says Garrett, is the disparity between the cost of instruction and what the state charges for it.

"Instruction costs have risen 66 per cent since 1969," said Garrett. "But the instructional fee has risen 83 per cent. Fees should be related to costs. Why is there a 17 per cent gap?"

Lieuallen says the gap exists because the state has budgeted less money for higher education over the years, so the student has paid more in tuition.

"It's our normal budgetary process," said Lieuellan. "We take

the expenditure limit for higher education set by the Legislature, subtract the state funds the Legislature appropriates, and what's left is the amount of money that must be raised by tuition."

Lieuallen says the Board of Education asked the governor's office for increased state funding this year, but didn't get it.

"If I had my druthers," said Lieuellan, "the state would appropriate additional funds and tuition would stay right where it is, but additional money isn't available. Now my assignment is to defend the governor's budget before the Ways and Means Committee. If it is approved, it will be necessary for tuition to increase about 10 per cent during the biennium."

A 1.9 per cent decrease in enrollment at Oregon's seven four-year institutions (not including the Oregon Health Sciences Center), suggests that tuition increases may be keeping students away. And since state funding for higher education is based on the number of full-time students, the decline will result in less state money for schools. This could mean increased tuition if the quality of existing programs is maintained.

Garrett suggests that a six per cent tuition decrease would boost enrollment, thus generating more state money.

"By reducing tuition," said Garrett, "you'd give the student an added incentive to go to school. In the long run, it would be much more economical than raising tuition."



Garrett says both the ASUO and OSU lobbyists will be working to convince legislators of the need for a tuition decrease, but adds that their success depends on the response of students statewide.

"The students will have to mount a campaign," said Garrett. "If they don't communicate with their legislators, and tell them they want the decrease, we won't have the influence with the Legislature we need."

The student lobbyists have their work cut out for them, as evidenced by a comment from Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene. Fadeley chairs the Joint Ways and Means subcommittee on Education, whose budget recommendation will carry great weight with the full committee and the Legislature.

"Philosophically," said Fadeley, "I have no desire to see tuition increase, but I recognize that costs go up. Then comes the decision — will tuition go up, or will we decrease welfare benefits or homeowners' and renters' relief or some other program. It will be a hard decision."

New group starts study to examine youth rights

At its first meeting Tuesday night at city hall, the newly-formed Eugene Commission on Youth speculated about the possible consequences of the proposed revisions of the 25-article juvenile code now pending legislation under Senate Bill 2.

The proposed revisions include broadening the jurisdiction of the courts over youth and provisions allowing fingerprinting and emancipation of minors. A possible consequence of broadened jurisdiction could place the courts in shelter-finding situations for youths with unstable homes.

The bill is expected to pass through the Senate but might face problems with the House of Representatives.

Other issues discussed at the informal meeting included:

- Inadequate facilities for juvenile offenders. Apparently, present facilities are not regularly checked. A proposed solution was to make juvenile corrections facilities accountable to the commission.

- A youth employment program for the summer to be considered on the agenda of the Affirmative Action plan.

- Youth involvement with legislative action.

- Better utilization of community centers.

The commission also offered to donate some of its \$1,300 budget to help start new community projects.

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