

Tuition planners differ on students' \$\$ burden

By MARY BETH BOWEN
Of the Emerald

Editor's note: This is the third and final story in a three-part series on tuition. Today's article deals with criticism of a proposal to charge tuition according to credit hours taken at each academic level.

T.K. Olson, director of the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission (OECC), thinks tuition should be charged according to the number of credit hours taken at each division, level (with lower, upper, and graduate division rated on a sliding dollar scale).

Dave Quenzer, assistant budget director for the State System of Higher Education, thinks such a system would keep some juniors and seniors out of school.

"Tuition would be low during the first two years," said Quenzer, "but it would go up during the last two. Since the student has to pay the same lump sum over the four year period, why not have him pay the same amount each year?"

Olson says his proposal to charge tuition based on cost per division level is a strictly "unofficial." The OECC is "officially" re-

commending that the state reimburse schools according to the total number of credit hours taken by all students at each division level. Olson says extending this method to include tuition charges is the "next logical step."

Currently, state reimbursements and tuition charges are both determined by the number of students enrolled in each course level (lower, upper division and graduate), regardless of whether they're taking courses at their division level.

Olson says present tuition charges per division level are inequitable because they don't accurately reflect actual instruction costs.

"Right now, a graduate student pays one-third more in tuition than the undergraduate, even though the graduate may be taking all lower division courses," said Olson. "And a lot of lower division students are taking graduate courses, but they're paying undergraduate tuition."

Currently, tuition for each division level is determined by a "weighting system," according to Quenzer. A lower division student is worth 1 unit; an upper division — 1.25, a graduate carrying 12 hours — 1.6, and a graduate carrying 15 hours — 2 units. A state school system divides its total

operating cost by the total number of student units, and arrives at a cost per division level.

So, if the University spends \$100,000 a year and has 60 lower division undergraduates and 20 "15 hour" graduates, the cost per lower division student would be \$1,000 and the cost per graduate student would be \$2,000. The student picks up about 27 per cent of this cost, and the state picks up the rest.

Olson contends that this weighting system "should be scrapped" because it doesn't take into account that students enroll in a mix of different level courses.

Quenzer says the weighting system does reflect the mix.

"The weightings don't mean that the cost of a graduate student is twice the cost of an undergraduate," said Quenzer. "They mean that the 'typical' graduate student costs twice as much. We know that graduate students take a lot of undergraduate courses, and that undergraduates take graduate courses. If we assumed that all graduate students took only graduate courses, graduate tuition would be four times as much as undergraduate, not twice as much."

Quenzer also says that basing tuition on

actual instruction cost is very difficult, because some courses cost more than others, even within the same division level.

"Physics is more expensive per credit hour than English or psychology," said Quenzer. "Is it fair for the lower division English student to pay the same as the lower division physics student? If you were really going to get serious about relating tuition to cost instruction cost, you'd have to base it upon costs per discipline, in each division level. But then you'd have everybody taking English or sociology, and nobody taking organic chem. It would turn education into a supermarket."

There is no shortage of proposals for a more equitable way of levying tuition fees. But whether a new one will be adopted or the status quo maintained depends primarily on the actions of the Joint Ways and Means subcommittee on Education. Sitting on that subcommittee are Rep. Sam Johnson, R-Redmond (378-8878), Rep. Vera Katz, D-Portland, (378-8792), Sen. Debbs Potts, D-Grants Pass, (378-8808), Rep. Howard Cherry, D-Portland, (378-8819) and Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene, (378-8812) chair of the committee.

If you have an opinion, that's why they have telephones.

Board proposes health fee hike

The Health Services Advisory Board agreed unanimously Friday to raise student health care fees and make grievance procedures available for patients at the center.

The proposal to raise health fees now goes to Vice-pres. for Student Services Gerald Bogen, the Inter-instructional Fee Committee and then to the State Board of Higher Education for final approval, according to Long.

The board decided to propose the health fee hike to Bogen, in-

stead of closing the Student Health Center infirmary, which is suffering from rising operational costs.

Members of the board agreed the fee hike of \$2.50 was small in comparison to the services offered to the students by the infirmary. Currently the health care fee is \$18 and is part of the student incidental fees.

Dr. Avarad Long, director of the student health center, said, "For people who get sick and use this

infirmary, it's a hell of a bargain." Long also believes that the center hospitalizes many people that Sacred Heart could house.

Long said if the fee was not raised they would close the kitchen, which supplies food for students in the infirmary.

The infirmary in the health center usually has on the average of three students in it at a time, but the kitchen also supplies meals for the health center staff.

The advisory board also agreed that grievance forms should be available to students who are treated at the Student Health Center.

Michael Jones, member of the advisory board, said "Students don't have ways to get to the administration. A lot of times, people don't want to do this face to face."

Long reported the health center receives one complaint a month on the average, and those are usually taken by Long's secretary.

The grievance form will consist of one general question asking students to comment on the quality of the care they received.

Prof gives finance plan

The state should assume 100 per cent support of the cost of elementary education, a University professor and nationally recognized expert on taxation said Friday.

Economics professor Richard Lindholm told members of the Lane County Rubicon Society the state should levy a two per cent tax on all land within the state to raise the money needed to finance elementary education. He said this would relieve school districts of a large portion of their tax burden and allow them to concentrate on financing secondary education and adding "frills" to their elementary programs.

Lindholm said his plan would insure uniformity of primary education goals and "eliminate inequities" found among districts under the present school finance system.

He also suggested the state use a land value tax rather than property tax, a change which would shift the tax burden from individual landowners to large landholders.



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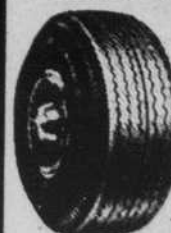
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