

Axe hangs over Guide — Bassett challenged

To spend money is easy, but to successfully budget expenses over a given fiscal period requires much more thought and effort.

This year's ASUO is showing itself to be less than successful in doling out student-generated funds. The resulting confusion may now force the student course survey bulletin (often referred to as the Guide) to discontinue publishing.

The Guide has become a valuable tool for many students who attempt to make intelligent class and instructor choices at the beginning of each term. It has been funded up to now by the IFC, which makes its budget decisions before the beginning of each fiscal year, in July.

OURS

The ASUO has criticized the staff of the Guide for spending more money than allotted, and Guide staffers have made counter-charges critical of the ASUO's approach to budgeting. The Guide's business manager, Siva Hari, claims the ASUO originally promised \$12,950 for a full year of publication, then slashed that figure by 60 percent at the last minute. Hari says this action puts an unreasonable burden upon the shoulders of Guide staffers, and could result in a projected budget deficit of \$4,300 by the end of the year — if the Guide continues to publish.

The ASUO's lack of forethought, resulting in a failure to reasonably fund a project of proven

demand, is compounded by the poor judgement of Guide staffers. They have made a bad situation worse by publishing a student calendar without clear approval from the IFC, and by spending \$2,246 of their allotted \$5,180 to do it. Guide staffers point out that advertising revenue was expected to cover the calendar and even add to the revenue of the entire Guide operation, but they have admitted their expectations fell short of the mark.

To complicate matters further, neither the Guide nor the ASUO can legally operate with a deficit because they are classified as state agencies.

The ASUO and the Guide staff are now running around like headless, directionless chickens — making accusations, formulating excuses and looking for "panic buttons" to push, as ASUO Pres. Scott Bassett puts it.

Their initial reaction will not help the many students who use the Guide as their main criterion for deciding on a particular class-load selection. Students may be bored with the inner politics of student government, but if they are denied use of this informational tool — because of ineffective management by the ASUO — they have every right to feel cheated.

The ASUO must use its own judgement in deciding whether to dismiss the present Guide staff for its unapproved calendar fiasco, but it must find a way to fund a decent course guide for

winter and spring terms without delay.

Bassett disagrees with Hari on how more advertising can be generated for the Guide, claiming students should continue to sell space for the publication. Hari says only professionals can land enough advertising accounts to make the project financially solvent.

Bassett has not yet proposed an alternative solution that will keep the Guide operating; he doesn't appear to have any established policy to help formulate such a solution. He must establish priorities and then stand behind preferred projects, while evaluating progress at regular intervals. Budgetary problems should not be sneaking up on an elected representative; they should be anticipated well ahead of the "panic button" stage.

The Guide's financial problems glaringly reflect a breakdown in communication within the ranks of student government, a breakdown that leads to last-minute policy making. And policy formulated in this manner is almost inevitably doomed to failure.

Deciding the fate of the Guide may be the challenge Bassett needs to bolster his image as an effective leader, if he can deal with it sensibly. If not, this situation may result in confirmation of a well-discussed truism called the Peter Principle: Individuals are promoted (or elected) to their own level of incompetence. The test for Bassett is at hand.

YOURS

Class defense

This letter is in reference to the guest editorial "Tabled Indefinitely" of (Oct. 9, Emerald) concerning the personal axe-grinding job Greg Wasson did on Prof. William Strange (unnamed in the column, but obvious) and his course, Dylan and Others, Eng. 410g. Mr. Wasson carries this grudge due to the fact that he failed to do the work required to pass the class and consequently flunked. He felt this was unfair in view of the fact that he's a graduating senior and the credits were necessary for the degree.

But let us examine the evidence. He took the course to be entertained and didn't find it entertaining. So what? Professor Strange makes it abundantly clear at the outset as to the amount of work required, and he doesn't want you there in the first place if you're just looking to be entertained. He makes no pretense of being "hip" or "groovy." Perhaps one of the classes Mr. Wasson missed was the initial lecture, wherein we were informed emphatically that this was not "...finger poppin' 101, it's a 400 level English class."

By his own admission, Mr. Wasson missed at least one third of the classes, in which attendance is mandatory (due to the nature of the material covered), and Professor Strange does keep attendance records.

Lastly, for the record of ongoing work in the class, Mr. Wasson tried to produce a satisfactory "journal" in eight hours at the end of the course. The results of such perfunctory effort could scarcely be considered adequate; I know, having myself spent many long hours with the material when I took this course spring term. The so-called edicts and dogma referred to as demotivating factors for participation in the class were, in reality, a very thorough and professional examination of

the context in which this literature exists and is developing, carefully prepared by Dr. Strange to illustrate the depth and breadth of the material. It wasn't easy, but neither is Shakespeare and nobody expects free credits for enrolling in those classes, either.

The material covered in this course is controversial, and I for one am grateful there are enthusiastic and challenging professors like Dr. Strange, who are willing to go out on a limb, academically speaking, to present it.

Good luck in law school, Greg!

Lorna Moffitt
sophomore, undeclared

Pit vs. Caine

The recent announcement by the Athletic Department that consideration is being given to the construction of a new basketball facility once again demonstrates the insensitivity of John Caine and his cohorts toward the students of the University and the surrounding community.

Aided by the fine mind of Blaine Newham, strenuous efforts are being made to convince us that we cannot do without this project. We are told that more people would be able to attend events in greater comfort, and that the addition of a new arena would create an overall physical plant which few impressionable recruits could say no to. Another element of this campaign is the downplaying of the Mac Court "mystique." After years of reading about the unsurpassed homecourt advantage which the Ducks enjoy in the Pit, all of a sudden we find that it's simple to relocate it. All you have to do is throw enough money in the right direction.

The Athletic Department, with the support of President Boyd, is probably correct in its as-

sumption that a new facility would generate more money. But it might be appropriate to consider the opinions of the customers before a final decision is made. Exactly how do students feel about walking across the footbridge at night in the middle of winter to see their team compete? What do the fans believe about the ability of modern architecture to magically transfer the aura of Mac Court from University St. to Centennial Blvd.?

I dare the Athletic Department to conduct, objectively, a survey of those in attendance at the UCLA game, in January, regarding their opinions on this issue. I double-dog-dare them to make public the results of such a poll, and to employ the results when making a final decision on this endeavor. My suspicion is that the results would show, overwhelmingly, that a new building is unwanted.

History tells us, however, that no such courtesy is extended. Caine's record on student seating, ticket prices, banner policy and the attempted bribing of ASUO executives speaks for itself. In the Athletic Department's mode of thinking, students are little more than an

inconvenience, and the feelings of paying customers an irrelevant consideration. This looks like a project which will be rammed down our throats, like it or not.

Rico C. Maloney
Law student

Doubting Gus

Forgive my skepticism, but I am not persuaded that "Gus" knows the truth about life. He does seem to have made one worthwhile (though rather pedestrian) observation, however. That is that most students spend a lot of time thinking and talking about subjects which seem uninspired relative to the search for truth. Gus believes that students would do better to spend less energy on ordinary subjects and more on loftier business. He also blames this misallocation of mental resources on the educational system, which, Gus says, seems to "channel the student away from the best use of his head."

Accordingly, Gus prefers society at large to the University for pursuing truth. What he seems to have missed is that students are not unique; people

in general spend more time in the lackluster world of the ordinary than in the metaphysical realm. That might legitimately be called a characteristic of human nature, and, in that sense, a truth about life, but it certainly is not the fault of any finite cause such as the educational system.

Furthermore, it may be no fault at all; since most of us are humbly convinced that we are unlikely to discover the truth about life, what could possibly make more sense than spending less than all our energies pursuing it? I am not suggesting that we give up the search entirely but we're probably right not to give so dubious a goal too much of ourselves.

For now, Gus seems to have convinced himself that he has indeed discovered the truth about life, so to him it will seem that my argument is obsolete. Later, perhaps, he may appreciate this interpretation of one of his own simple observations. Or maybe an exceptionally sly moonie will convert him mid-theory at his podium (washing machine).

Bruce Robinson
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Friday, October 19, 1979

