

A second chance for state board

It had all the trappings of a first class bureaucratic snafu.

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education placed appearances above substance at its March meeting. It refused to approve two proposals that would have improved Oregon higher education — not because they would cost anything, but because it might look like the board was being less than frugal.

Good motives. Bad move.

Fortunately, the board can reverse the thumbs-down sign and undo the damage Friday when the board meets at Oregon College of Education in Monmouth.

The two proposals considered at the March 27 meeting — one for a computer science doctoral program here at the University, one for part-time, off-campus, OSU-based liberal arts courses in Bend — were turned down because the board feared initiating such new programs might give the Legislature the idea that Oregon higher

education was not completely paralyzed.

Both proposals locked at a 4-4 tie, and board president Ed Harms cast the deciding vote. When Harms later wanted to reconsider the proposals, his motion failed.

But the proposals are back on the docket this week.

In times that must certainly be considered a watershed, the board is understandably concerned with its image. But Oregon's students and administrators don't need to dress in tattered rags

ours

and beg on the corner to convince the Legislature that higher education is dirt poor.

The danger is in being too careful, too conservative, too worried about finances and forgetting about students and learning.

Putting on the ritz would be one thing. But

displaying organizational creativity and administrative innovation is exactly what the board needs to do. It must demonstrate that no matter what, Oregonians have a firm conviction in the value — and the resilience — of higher education.

The board should be telling the Legislature: "Look, we need a lot more money. But we're going to do the best we can with what we have."

Not: "We aren't going to do anything else until we get more money."

Making the right choices — and changes — is exactly what the board needs to do. The board needs to demonstrate that they — as Oregon Senate president Fred Heard, D-Klamath Falls, says — aren't willing to "president over the dismantling of Oregon higher education."

Yeah, it's all about sending signals to Salem — sending the right signals.

We hope the board recognizes that. And makes amends Friday.

yours

Jesus, 33, dead

The following obituary could have appeared in a Jerusalem newspaper shortly after the death of the man called Jesus.

Jesus of Nazareth died by crucifixion last Friday evening outside Jerusalem on a hillside called Golgotha. He was 33.

Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great, in Bethlehem. He moved with his parents to Nazareth, where he studied theology and carpentry. At age 30, Jesus left Nazareth and traveled throughout Galilee, Judea and Samaria. During the last three years of his life, he taught his personal theology of unconditional love throughout the region.

Jesus was acknowledged widely for his authoritative style of speech and his unsurpassed knowledge of religious doctrine. In addition to his scholarship, he was known for insight into the basic human needs and for the ability to meet these needs in miraculous ways. Jesus was reported to have returned sight to the blind, healed the crippled and fed thousands of people with a handful of bread and fish.

Controversy surrounded Jesus because of his criticism of prominent religious officials, because of his teaching on love and because of his claim of divinity. Although complaints about Jesus' activities in Jerusalem could not be substantiated, legal authorities, under pressure from the religious community, convicted Jesus and sentenced him to death.

Jesus' claim of power over life and death prompted legal and religious officials to cancel funeral services and proceed immediately with the burial. Jesus was buried in a tomb of solid rock outside Jerusalem. A squad of officers will guard the tomb to prevent the possibility of further disturbance.

Editor's note: This paper has recently become aware of reports that the body of Jesus of Nazareth disappeared Sunday. Although officials could not be reached for comment, this paper intends to investigate the incident.

What do you think?

Dave Kao
Journalism

Idealist bull

Re Jerry L. Peyton's letter (ODE 4/1) in which he insists — in essence — that capitalism is God's gift to the working class:

Point one: Just as there are elements of the petty bourgeoisie who take up a working class position politically, there

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"WAR MAY BE HELL... BUT PEACETIME IS GREAT"

are also, unfortunately, a few people from working class backgrounds who consciously sell out. This is not simple ignorance, but malicious idiocy and moral cretinism. Marxists call Peyton's ideological position "class collaboration"; such ideological panderers are often well-rewarded by the interests which they serve (as for example, Eric Hoffer has been).

Point two: Because Peyton's position is demonstrably sheer nonsense, he resorts to vague, abstract moralizing about "free enterprise" (apparently not having heard of monopoly capitalism). The one thing he does not, will not and cannot do, is to offer evidence to back up his rhetoric. On the other hand, I — and many others — can provide stacks of empirically verifiable data to prove that capitalism is, in fact, a death machine at home as well as abroad (imperialism).

Some of us, of course, don't need such data — e.g., the families and friends of the 15 coal miners whose bodies were just recovered from the Dutch Creek mine in Colorado. (Isn't it strange that this wonderful capitalist system can put men on the moon, but can do nothing to stop the slaughter of the very people whose work provides the wealth with which to finance the space program?) In fact, Mr. Peyton, your glorious capitalist

system is at this very moment attacking what few gains have been made in industrial safety regulations and workers' compensation.

Really, whom are you trying to kid? Yourself — to justify your desire to join the slave masters? Me — third generation organized labor (former member of CWA and AFSCME), an individual whose father and grandfather (not to mention numerous other relatives and friends) were victims of serious industrial accidents? Or is it the bulk of the university's students and faculty, petty bourgeoisie who've had no direct experience of blue-collar life?

For anyone who is honestly ignorant (and God knows this system does everything it can to keep people ignorant) I will be happy to provide a bibliography of sources that substantiate my position. And, by the same token, if anyone wants to challenge this letter, please do so with facts and figures (sources cited), and not with any more mindless idealist bullshit.

Cathi beavers
Sophomore, anthropology

Impure motives?

Recently the Register-Guard published a letter I wrote addressing charges

of discrimination at the University Law School. A fellow law student, Brenda Brainard, responded critically in your April 17 issue. Unfortunately, she was either unable or unwilling to correctly paraphrase the contents of my letter forcing this response.

For the benefit of those who don't read the Guard, I never stated that "minorities always file discrimination suits when they do not achieve a desired goal," as Brainard maintained. Nor did I state that "no discrimination exists at the law school."

I did cite several instances in which racism at the law school was alleged. I argued that while it was possible that the law school was racist, "A more plausible conclusion is that some members of disadvantaged groups... feel they are owed not only a fair chance to succeed, but also a guarantee of success." Continuing, I suggested that when such an individual gets bad grades or is fired, the response is likely to be the charge of discrimination and a possible lawsuit.

Brainard simply refuses to consider the possibility that allegations of racism could be based on anything but the purest of motives, and dismisses my supporting examples as "sweeping generalizations and inaccuracies." Perhaps she should reconsider one such example, the case of Ron Griffin. A black man who taught at the law school several years ago, Griffin was told that due to his teaching performance, he would not be rehired. Raising the cry of "racism," he sued the University. In a decision handed down last week, a U.S. District Court soundly rejected Griffin's allegations.

David B. Peters
Third year, law

letters policy

The Emerald will accept and attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on issues, ideas and topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words.

Each letter must be signed and the author's field of study or faculty or staff status noted. Each should be dated, and must also include the address and phone number of the author for verification prior to publication.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content. Publication of letters is dependent upon available space and can not be guaranteed.