

# Terminate semester switch proposal

On paper, it's a great idea. But that's where the attractiveness of switching the University to the semester system ends.

Students who have operated on both systems know that having four shorter quarters rather than two long ones is a better way to learn.

It's finals week in the law school right now, where they're on the semester system. Students there are being tested over material learned in January, when the semester began. It may work for learning law, but five-month semesters just isn't the best system for undergraduates.

The proposal's disadvantages stack up decidedly against the switch.

Summer begins near the end of June, not the middle of May. And it stretches well into September. Adjourning in May and beginning in August would make returning that much harder, the lure of nice autumn weather that much more irresistible, and the urge to neglect studies that much easier.

The argument that suggests students will diligently learn and study more — and that profs will teach more — in a 16-week term hints at naivete. Considering the typical undergrad, such a switch would mean not extra time to study harder, but a few extra weeks to goof off between exam periods.

## OURS

Moving to a semester system would also hurt students who depend on brief immersions in a variety of subjects. By eliminating one-third of the different topics studied, it would make constrict the focus of those who seek a broad-based education.

The plan does have some advantages. With

fewer registration and grading periods, money would be saved. And a longer Christmas break would let hard-working students make some quick bucks. But the long interim periods would be a waste for students who don't have Christmas jobs.

The switch would also add to the hassle of transferring from other universities and community colleges. That added difficulty might even mean the difference to fence-sitting transfer students between the University and Oregon State University.

The beauty of the switch would be the savings. And in these days of belt-tightening fervor, that's a valid consideration.

But the savings don't outweigh the disadvantages — disadvantages like sitting in a sun-baked classroom wishing like hell to be spending an Oregon Indian summer doing something — anything — else.

## YOURS

### Explain delays

I read your recent article on computer registration with hopeful anticipation and was surprised at the patent contradictions between the statements of University administrators. Paul Civin is quoted as saying "despite general agreement that the system should be implemented, additional higher education funding cuts will hamper progress," while a few paragraphs later Pres. Paul Olum states that the system will save money "because we won't need as many people processing information and it will reduce costs of registration." The cost savings from computer registration would be huge and would include the value of the wasted time of students, the savings that would result from rational departmental planning, and the value of all the staff time used to register students in Mac Court and handle later problems.

I will be sorry to see Mac Court registration end because it will deprive me of the best example of inefficiency for my beginning economics class, but it is really time that people quit dragging their feet and get a system in place that most schools have been using for at least 10 years. Can our financially troubled University really afford to wait any longer? At the very least, I feel that the University community needs a better explanation of the delays than it is receiving.

**Ross Anthony**  
Assistant professor  
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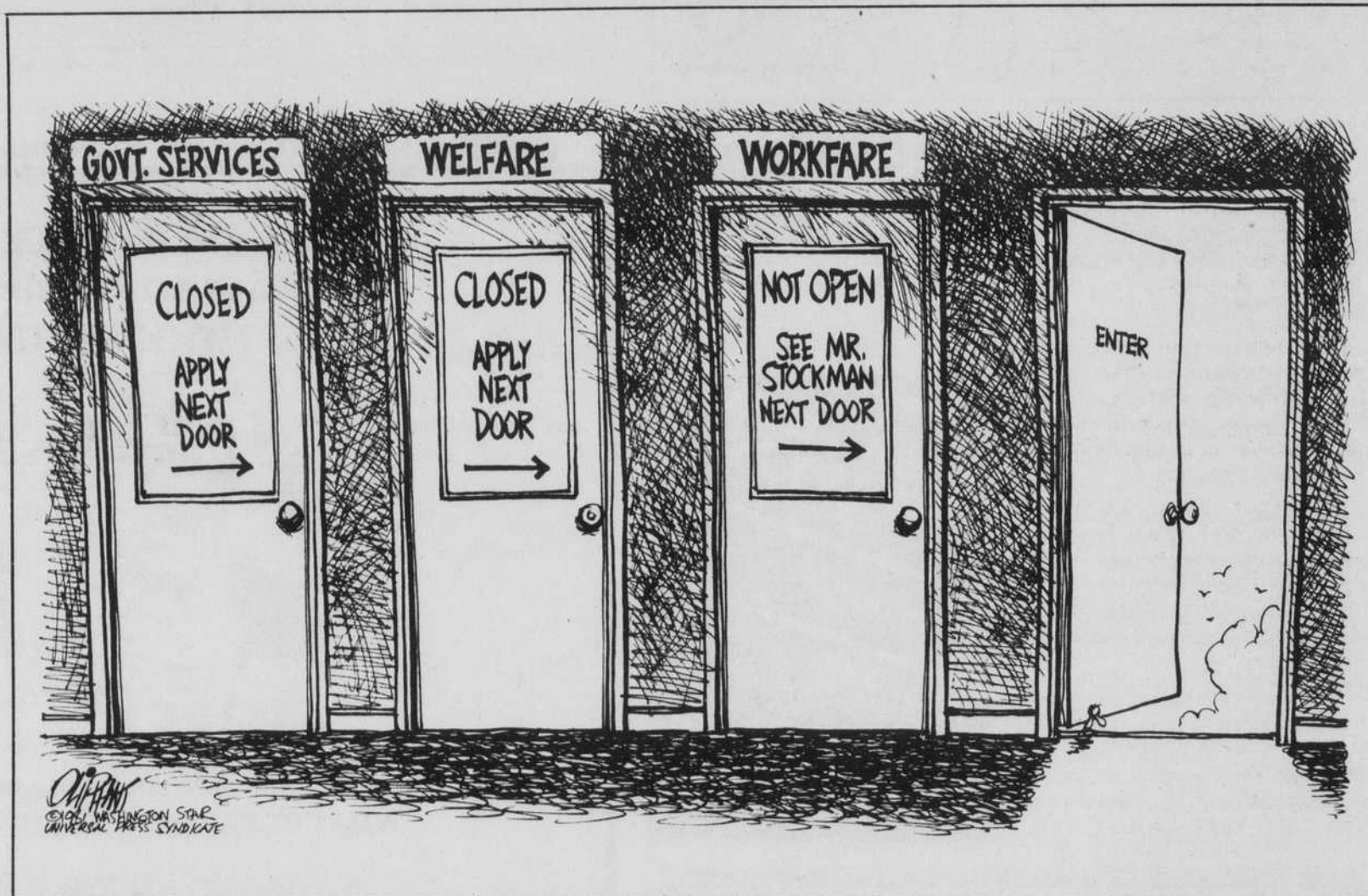
### Oppressive dance

The message of the Organization of Arab Students that was presented in the International Night regarding the "Middle Eastern" dance was badly and unseriously conveyed. The belly dance, which is unfortunately seen by many Americans as an art, is considered in the Arab world as one form of women's oppression. Such a dance should not be performed on a respectable university stage. What would an American woman feel if a strip dance was performed as an art representing her culture?

We as Arabs do not consider such a dance a form of authentic Arab art because it is a misrepresentation for the role of women in our society.

The real Arab women are not the ones who are lying on the floor to stimulate and arouse men in such a disgusting manner. Our real women are the ones who are trying very hard to change the mystified conceptions of the role of women. Our real women are the ones who are fighting to liberate themselves and their society from the chains of

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oppression, conditioning and backwardness in order to acquire a better and humane life for both men and women.

**Khalid Al-Same**  
Organization of Arab Students

### Yea Jolin, Rijken

Residents and voters of Lane County — and especially House District 44 — have been betrayed by a majority of the State Representatives who supposedly represent districts in Lane County.

Two of the seven Lane County delegates deserve praise for their "no" vote on HB2001, the legislation that sets new boundaries for House districts. Those representatives worthy of our continued support are Rep. Peg Jolin, D-Cottage Grove, and Rep. Max Rijken, D-Newport.

Rep. Peg Jolin made a superb speech condemning the plan that would have created a monstrosity of a district that extends from Highway 58 in Lane County to Canby in Clackamas County.

Not only those of us who live in present House District 44, but all of Lane County, should be proud of Peg Jolin. She was one of only five who opposed the plan — five who refused to knuckle under to a "political" solution that served the House incumbents but not those whom

they are supposed to represent.

Now that HB2001 has gone to the State Senate for action, I urge you to write the Senators from Lane County demanding that they oppose the splintering of the Lane County delegation in the legislature.

The Senators are Fadeley, Isham, Kulongoski, and Wingard. Write them at: State Capitol, Salem, OR, 97310.

While you're writing, include Peg Jolin and Max Rijken at the same address and tell them how much you appreciate them and why.

**Bill Rogers**  
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### A piece on 'ass'

I realize that it's probably far too late to do anything to change the situation, but I must draw your attention to the widespread North American misuse of the English word "ass" (your May 11 article "Eugene's Best Butt").

An ass is an animal (genus *Equus*), also known as the donkey. Because of its reputed obstinacy and slow-wittedness, the word is often used, correctly and acceptedly, as a metaphor for a doltish person. E.g. "The fellow's an ass." One is hereby comparing the subject to a rather stupid animal, *not* to that part of the anatomy upon which one sits. The

correct, if indelicate, word for the butt(-ocks), and which is persistently mispronounced by North Americans, is *arse*.

I suspect the error arises from two sources. (1) The North American preference for the short "a" sound generally pronounced long "a" in Standard English. Consider "grass," "charade," "bath," etc. (Ask a Southern Englishperson to say "Grant's Pass!") (2) The aspirate "r," widely used in Standard English and almost indistinguishable from the long "a" sound. E.g. "farce," "cars," "arsenic," etc. Given these two regional variations in pronunciation, it is understandable, one supposes, that "arse" would become "ass" in the general American dialect. However popular usage does not — in the long run — make for correct usage; the word is still "arse," and should be so pronounced, using, of course, the strong American "r" thus — "aRse."

Finally, while in Rabelaisian vein, I should point out that this erroneous articulation makes comic nonsense of the expression "A piece of ass." You are talking, gentle reader, about a lump of horse meat. Now a piece of *arse*, on the other hand.

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