

# Higher ed budget struggles in Salem

By ANN PORTAL  
Of the Emerald

To understand what's happening to the higher education budget, remember one thing — what you see is not necessarily what you get.

Although the state Ways and Means Committee approved a \$1 billion 1981-83 higher education budget June 12, it has not forwarded the budget to the House. And until the budget is sent on, Ways and Means still can cut, add to or amend its proposal.

The \$1 billion budget is a pessimistic estimate, including the 10-percent reduction that would be necessary if Gov.

Atiyeh's revenue package does not pass. The budget includes \$381.5 million in state general fund support — a \$25.3 million increase over the 1979-81 budget — \$173.7 million in federal support and \$460.9 million in other support, such as fees.

The committee recommendation should not be considered a final decision on the level of funding for the next two years, says Paul Civin, vice provost in charge of fiscal affairs.

Instead, onlookers should realize that the Ways and Means budget is just part of a "very different from normal" political process that the Legislature has adopted this session, he says.

The main intent of the Ways

and Means budget is to identify the priority of 22 cuts proposed by the committee, Civin says. All 22 items would be eliminated from the higher education system budget if the governor's revenue package is defeated.

However, Ways and Means isn't saying where the dividing line should fall on the list of 22 cuts — that's largely up to the Revenue Committee, which is expected to discuss at meetings this week how much of the 10-percent cut in the governor's budget it is willing to restore.

Ways and Means has listed the 22 cuts in ascending order of priority. Cut number one would eliminate a \$434,332 revenue increase for Continu-

ing Education overhead, while cut number 22 would lop a whopping \$5 million from program expenditures.

Civin says he doubts Ways and Means will change the order of priorities. In effect, he says, the committee is telling Revenue, "Here it is, we won't pass it out, but we would like it in this order."

The priority list clearly identifies the amount of revenue measures that must be approved in order to save each item. Civin says that there is a "high likelihood" that at least items number one through number 14 will be eliminated, meaning an additional 3-percent cut of \$109,000 will be added on to the 3.5 percent previously eliminated from the budget by the University.

Provost Richard Hill said at a special faculty meeting on June 10 that the University "can respond to this additional three percent with pain, but without a serious reduction in programs."

The 3-percent cut could be met "with careful planning and not filling some positions," University Pres. Paul Olum said at the same meeting. But beyond that level, "we're in real trouble."

Olum said that if the Legislature doesn't fund items number 21 — \$2.5 million for staff and enrollment support — and number 22, there would be "nothing normal we could do to make it" and that he would recommend the closure of departments and schools rather than a weakening of all areas.

Civin says he only can guess when the verdict will be in for higher education. After the Legislature ends in late July or early August, the state higher education board still must meet to decide how it will cope with the final budget, which may take until late August or early September, he says.

"We may not know the full details of fall operation until school is starting," Civin says.

## Tuition due to rise this fall

Two things in life are certain — death and taxes. Students now can count on a third certainty — tuition increases.

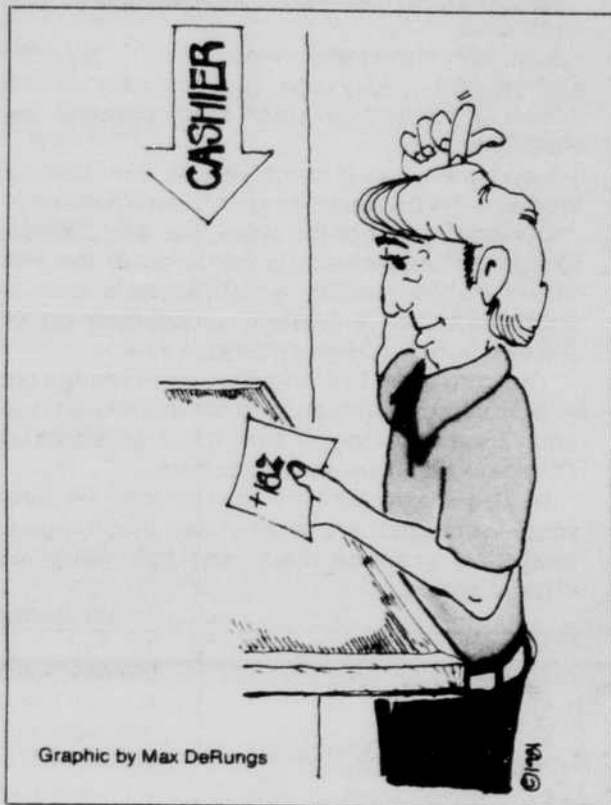
To offset the higher education budget crisis, the state Ways and Means Committee has recommended an 18-percent tuition hike each of the next two years for resident undergraduate students. Tuition for the 1981-82 school year would increase from \$693 to \$819, not including building, health center and incidental fees.

Allowing a 15 percent inflationary increase in the cost of room and board, books and personal items, the total undergraduate cost-of-education would increase from \$3939 to \$4510. Costs would rise again during the 1982-83 school year to \$5209.

However, the Ways and Means Committee cannot raise tuition, it only can advise the state higher education board, which has the legal authority to set tuition.

But the higher education budget approved by Ways and Means is based on an 18-percent tuition increase, and a footnote attached to the Ways and Means Education subcommittee's report clearly states the committee expects an increase.

Ways and Means also recommended other tuition increases, including a resident graduate tuition increase of 18 percent each of the next two years, a nonresident undergraduate tuition increase of 17 percent for 1981-82 and 7 percent for 1982-83, and medical, dental and veterinary tuition increases of 25 percent.



Graphic by Max DeRungs

Keith Jackson, higher education board assistant budget director, says the board is waiting for the Legislature to make the budget final, but tuition levels may be set by the end of the month.

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