

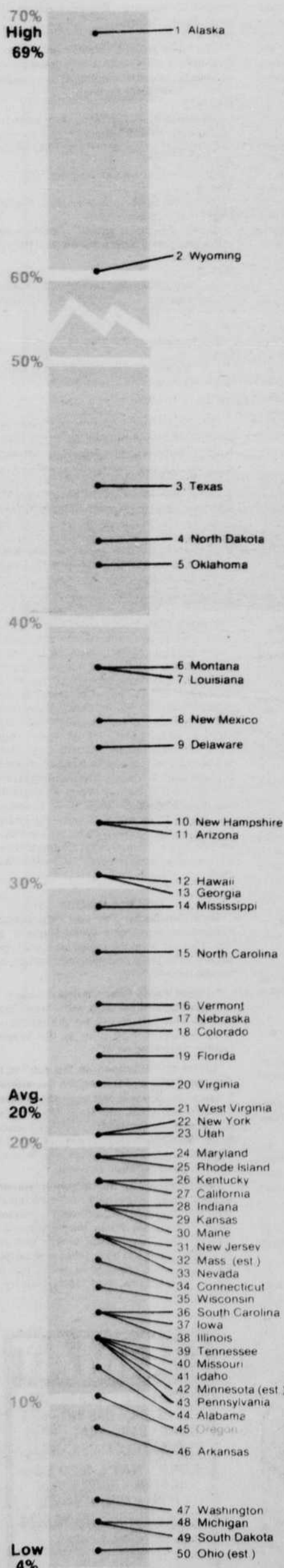
oregon daily emerald

Vol. 83, No. 42

Eugene, Oregon 97403

Monday, November 2, 1981

Per-cent increase in appropriations from 1979-80 to 1981-82



State support for higher ed slips

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

A recent nation-wide survey of higher education funding confirms what some University students might have suspected after experiencing crowded classes, higher fees and fewer services this fall.

Compared to other states, higher education support is slipping in Oregon.

Oregon ranks 45th of the 50 states in its higher education funding increase for 1980-81, according to a report by M.M. Chambers of Illinois State University.

The \$252.5 million allocated by the Oregon Legislature for 1980-81 equaled only a 10-percent increase in higher education support, compared to a 20-percent average increase nationwide.

Yet individual Oregonians continue to spend an amount nearer the national average, earning a rank of 31st, in the per-capita contribution to higher education.

Oregonians will spend \$10.27 on higher education for every \$1,000 they earn, compared to the \$10.64 national average.

The difference between the money given by the state and the dollars given by each individual illustrates one of the reasons higher education in Oregon is in trouble, says state representative Grat-tan Kerans, the Legislature's house majority leader.

"Yeah — we're in the middle of the pack (in the amount spent individually), but look at the load we're carrying," Kerans says.

"One of the problems is that we've overbuilt," providing too many state schools and too much access, he says.

Oregon has more colleges and universities than most states its size, the result of a "massive commitment" to offering four-year schools in every corner of the state, Kerans says.

Barbara Mitchell, assistant director of the Oregon Educational Coordinating Commission, says Oregon's low rank in the funding survey needs to be put in perspective.

The state actually had a surplus in 1979-80, compounding the bleak revenue forecast for 1981-82, she says.

"An effort is being made, but Oregon — at least recently — does not have revenue projections as good as in other states," Mitchell says.

The statistics are more a reflection of the state's lower general fund estimates than a decline in Oregonians' higher education support, she says.

University Pres. Paul Olum has a different viewpoint.

"The support of the universities in this state has typically been bad," Olum says.

He agrees per-capita support historically has been high, but the amount spent per student has always been low, Olum says, predicting that figure will "drop really low" this year.

But don't look for relief during a special legislative session this spring or summer, Kerans says.

"You're best hope is that we (the legislature) don't get back together."

He says state revenue projections continue to decline, leaving legislators with two ways to finance deficits — raise taxes (two months before a general election) or, more likely, make further budget cuts.

"I don't think there's any doubt about it," says Kerans.

A plan proposed by Sen. Ed Fadeley, D-Eugene, would restore \$75 million to higher education funding by adding \$25

million each of the next three years. But Kerans says the odds are against a restoration on that scale in light of the state budget's inadequacies and the withdrawal of federal education funds.

"The money isn't there to just wholesale, jump back," he says. The

restoration will be smaller and slower, unless the state revenue situation turns completely around, Kerans says.

Even a smaller restoration may be four or five years away, he says.

"In general, things are going to get a lot worse before they get better."

Campus heating

Garbage fuel explored

By MATT MEYER
Of the Emerald

The University may soon be burning garbage to heat classrooms, if tests by the physical plant are successful.

After five years of planning, the physical plant is conducting "test burns" this month to decide whether specially treated solid waste is feasible for producing heat and electricity for school buildings, says Harold Babcock, director of the University physical plant.

Although the treatment process is costly, Babcock estimates that refuse-derived fuel may cost less and be more readily available than the wood chips, or "hog fuel" the plant now uses.

But burning garbage has its drawbacks.

Burning plastic made of polyvinyl-chloride produces potentially harmful vapors, and the garbage the University would use contains PVC waste materials.

The fuel would be supplied by the Solid Waste Division of the Lane County Public Works Department, and department representative Mike Turner says it would contain very little PVC because it is derived from residential garbage.

But, the Simpson Plastics Company — a manufacturer of PVC pipe used in plumbing — disposes its waste at the Glenwood dump, the same dump that the University's fuel would come from.

Randy Osterman, an engineer for the company, estimates that his firm ships out roughly 200 tons of PVC waste material each year.

Burning PVC releases hydrogen chloride, an acid gas that irritates the respiratory system, according to Don Arkell of the Lane Regional Air Pollution Authority, one of the 10 organizations

involved in the testing.

Babcock says waste fuel systems have had "excellent track records" and that "no serious problems" have resulted from their use in the past.

Although test results won't be in for a month or so, Tom Miles, a Portland consultant also working on the project, says that most of the PVC can be eliminated before burning, and that most of the remaining hydrogen chloride vapors can be trapped by the physical plant's air pollution control system.

If the refuse fuel passes tests for air pollution, hazardous gases, burning efficiency, ash content and moisture characteristics, it could be used as early as this spring, Babcock says.

Besides the possibility of PVC emissions, there are other problems with burning fuel derived from solid waste.

Refuse-based fuel leaves about six times as much ash as equivalent amounts of hog fuel, Babcock says, so the burners would have to be cleaned much more frequently.

Solid waste fuel, although shredded, sifted and compressed, isn't as dense as hog fuel, and isn't as efficient to use, he says, and it has to be kept dry.

Also, the University's burners aren't designed for the garbage-derived fuel, so it will have to be mixed with 60-80 percent hog fuel, and the burners will have to be adapted for its use.

Finally, Babcock says a slight odor left after processing the waste would be noticeable in the immediate vicinity of the physical plant.

If these problems could be worked out, though, the University could utilize fuel materials that would otherwise be used as landfill, Babcock says.



*Cinderella
not coach
turns into
pumpkin*

Architecture student Dave Ruggles didn't quite make it home before midnight on Halloween.

Photo by Bob Baker