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Forecast: rain, increasing tuition

Board probes ways to stand up to cuts

By ANN PORTAL
Of the Emerald

Chancellor Roy Lieuallen's suggested higher education cuts skimmed through a two-hour committee meeting Tuesday, the first stop of their trip to a special legislative session in January.

The finance committee made no changes in the composition or order of the four cuts proposed Monday by Lieuallen, although members added several resolutions for the full state board's consideration later this month.

The cuts, proposed in four packages of five percent each, include another $8 million reduction in institution budgets, the foregoing of 1982-83 scheduled pay increases for state system employees, and the elimination of about 425 academic members, 85-90 classified staff and 5,000 students in each of the last two packages.

The finance committee's discussion also outlined additional consequences that could result from the cuts, including a state system declaration of financial exigency, a three to five-day "all-furlough" and selective tuition increases for "career-oriented" schools and summer session students, possibly on top of a tuition surcharge.

"The whole thing is so obscene, and the necessity for doing it is so obviously not there," said Oregon State University Pres. Robert MacVicar.

"This state is not bankrupt, if it decides to avoid bankruptcy."

Institution presidents indicated this week that they would support a $20 tuition surcharge beginning winter term, Lieuallen said. The surcharge, necessary to make up tuition lost because of fewer out-of-state students, is not even part of the 20-percent cut requested last week by Gov. Vic Atiyeh.

Presidents also endorsed the possibility of another $20 tuition increase at selected institutions, including the University, OSU and the Oregon Institute of Technology in Klamath Falls, he said.

Board member Marion Weatherford said he thought "students won't be affected by a $20 increase," although they will be concerned about where tuition increases will end.

"You're raising tuition and the students are getting less," said board member Alvin Batiste.

One resolution called for by board member Robert Ingalls was in response to board member Jane Carpenter's concern about the "destructive" potential of another $47 million cut in the higher education budget.

The resolution, to be presented at the Dec. 10 and 11 meetings of the board, will offer state legislators alternative ways of dealing with the state deficit.

"I think some innovative legislation could solve this problem," Lieuallen said, refering specifically to the possibility of decreasing everyone's salaries instead of just freezing the salaries of state system personnel.

Board members indicated their reluctance to approve the cuts, but Lieuallen told the members there is a strong feeling among institution presidents that no more funds can be obtained through program cuts, leaving few alternatives except tuition increases and salary cuts.

The possibility of adopting the cuts outlined in the third and fourth packages, which would require the closing of programs and possibly even institutions, are "almost impossible to discuss," University Pres. Paul Olum said.

Rich Wilkins Photo by Bob Baker

Consider closures, says ASUO pres.

By BRIAN BUBAK
Of the Emerald

The state's higher education budget crisis shouldn't be solved by raising tuition and cutting programs, but by eliminating waste and duplication within the entire system, says ASUO Pres. Rich Wilkins.

"I seriously think that if they took a good, hard look at duplication, things could be a little better," Wilkins says.

Waste and duplication of programs abound in the state system even though efforts have been made to curb excess spending, Wilkins says. Serious consideration of plans to eliminate such excess is crucial, he says.

Oregon could look to the state of Washington for an example to follow, Wilkins says. Washington has twice Oregon's population, but only two state universities compared to Oregon's three.

There has been "no substantial proposal to eliminate a college yet," Wilkins says, but "this is the kind of thing we may need to look at."

Proposed methods of coping with the problem -- such as the usual tuition increases and faculty cuts -- are just not the answer, Wilkins contends.

"I understand things have to be done," he says, but adds that he disagrees with the State Board of Higher Education's proposal yesterday for a series of four budget cuts in their attempt to comply with Gov. Vic Atiyeh's mandate for a 20 percent budget reduction.

The cuts are in the wrong places, Wilkins says and suggested tuition increases are also not the answer.

Wilkins says he concurs with a statement made by the Oregon Student Lobby that "if you raise tuition too high, students will drop out."

And increases in tuition would be even less justified if proposed faculty cuts are made, he says.

"You don't raise the price of something when the quality goes down."

Wilkins admits, however, that tuition increases are probably inevitable, but vows that "we (the Oregon Student Lobby) are going to lobby extensively to ensure all options are looked at before the final decision is made."

ASUO forced to cut programs 2 percent

By DANE CLAUSSEN
Of the Emerald

ASUO officials asked student-funded programs Tuesday to propose 2 percent cuts in their own 1981-82 budgets by January 11 and to consider the limited funds available when making 1982-83 budget requests.

Groups who do not plan for the cuts in their budgets will be cut nonetheless.

Due to decreasing income from dropping University enrollment, the ASUO projects a $65,000-$100,000 revenue shortfall in 1981-82. The 2 percent reduction is designed to reduce ASUO program expenditures by $43,000.

"We're probably $28,000 down now," said Jim Edmunson, ASUO vice president of program administration. "This is an extraordinary situation."

The incidental fee shortfall, coupled with an estimated $125,000 under realization in athletic ticket sales could theoretically be offset by the Incidental Fee Committee's approximately fee over realizations currently controlled by the University administration, and the $43,000 saved from programs.

An increase in incidental fees has not been ruled out to help alleviate the problem, Contreras said.

"If enrollment goes up, the cut may not be necessary," Edmunson said. Enrollment above or at projected figures is not expected however, he added.

The question for budget hearings for 1982-83 budgets is not how much more money or groups, but how much less, and which groups to allocate less to, IFC chairer Karsten Rasmussen said.

ASUO officials have also decided on three other actions to deal with current and projected future fiscal problems, according to Edmunson.

Those actions will include using the 2 percent cut as a "benchmark" for future budgets, and recommending that University Pres. Paul Olum cut EMU and athletic department budgets by 2 percent and allow those surplus "over realization" funds from previous years to go toward uses recommended by the ASUO.

"There is one incidental fee," Edmunson said, criticizing the idea of a separate athletic fee that would be outside the ASUO's jurisdiction. The ASUO will resist any such plan, he said.

A key question for the ASUO's financial picture is "the extent of our obligation" on athletic tickets, Edmunson said.

The ASUO did recommend cuts in the athletic department last year, but "that's as far as it got," Edmunson said.

The ASUO will continue to "fight to the state board (of higher education) and legislature," Olum's rejection of uses of student funds recommended by students, said Wilkins.

"We will lobby the legislature to get control over our own money," Edmunson had said before the meeting.

"If the state board controls incidental fees, call it tuition. Why waste our time if our recommendations are meaningless," he said.