

# Proposal tightens admissions rules

By Debbie Howlett  
Of the Emerald

Concern about high drop-out rates and apparent inability to handle college level work among students entering state colleges and universities has led to a proposal to increase admissions standards for state institutions, according to officials at the University and within the state system of higher education.

And while nearly all of the officials and representatives agree students need to be better prepared to enter college, they don't all agree about how that goal should be accomplished.

One of the first things Bud Davis discovered after assuming the duties of chancellor is a "generally good response" to efforts at raising the quality of education in Oregon and the development of a "college prep" program in the state's high schools, says Claretha Kahananui, acting vice chancellor for academic affairs.

The proposal to increase admissions standards at state institutions would effectively do both, Kahananui says. The proposal, which has been modified several times, would implement basic course level requirements which high school students would have to meet to be accepted into Oregon colleges and universi-

ties. Kahananui says she expects the proposal to be adopted by the State Board of Higher Education at its November meeting.

The requirements, with an implementation date targeted at fall term 1985, include four years of English, three years of math, two of science, three of social science and two years of "other college prep," which could include study of a foreign language.

## 'There's some back-to-basics involved.'

The requirements, she says, will better prepare students for college and so fewer will leave school because they can't handle the course load.

"The whole point is not to lose 25 percent of the entering students who are not prepared," Kahananui says. "They're coming to us with one hand tied behind their back."

Math, according to Kahananui, is the biggest problem with entering students. She points out only one-half of the women entering college and two-thirds of the men have taken second year algebra.

The proposal to increase admissions standards has gained the acceptance of University officials too.

"I'm very much in favor of (the admission requirements)," says Richard Hill, University provost. "I think as that's implemented, we'll see some significant improvement to the degree to which students are prepared to come to the University."

"That's great. We're finally sufficiently sure of ourselves. I suppose, to take a position of telling students what they will really require to derive the benefits that are available," he says.

"I suppose there's some back to the basics involved. I am not a back-to-the-basics person," Hill says, "but certainly if you don't have the language and mathematical skills required, you're just not going to make it in a college."

"We're getting pretty good students these days," he says. "I don't think you're going to see revolutionary improvement, but you're going to cut off the bottom."

Hill expresses concern the proposal might limit access somewhat.

"However, if you're concerned about the student who has the capacity to profit from a college education, that simply hasn't demonstrated that capacity in high school,

there are other avenues for that student," he says. "If you maintain access and destroy quality, who would want (an education)."

Perhaps the strongest questioning of the proposal has come from the Oregon Student Lobby.

The OSL is questioning some possible outcomes of increasing admission standards. Bob Watrus, director of the OSL, says major concerns

## 'It's not intended as a barrier.'

discussed at the last board meeting included decreasing access to minorities and decisions "placing the burden (of deciding about college) on 13 and 14 year olds."

The announcement of increased requirements in New Mexico, Davis answers, resulted in an increase in minority student test scores and an increase in minority student enrollment. "It did not appear to have a negative impact," Davis says.

"It's not intended as a barrier to keep people out, it is a road map," Davis says. "We're not trying to get rid of

students, we want to keep access."

And Kahananui says one of the goals is to have students decide on the type of curriculum they desire early in their high school careers.

"That's one of the objectives — to get (high school freshmen) to start making a decision and to start planning early, at the right time in their lives," Kahananui says.

Davis says the proposal will also have "built in flexibility" for "late bloomers," people who don't decide until later to pursue a college education and unusual cases.

The proposal to increase the standards boils down to the need to increase quality and decrease the number of students who don't make it through their first year of school, most administrators agree.

Hill says he thinks there is a problem with the quality of higher education in Oregon, "but I don't think it stems from the admission of unqualified students."

"The cost of admission for a student that really is not prepared to come to college is borne by that student," Hill says. "The attrition rate for such students is very high. The real cost of admitting unqualified students is the cost of exposing that student to painful failure."

# Panel lashes at mixing food, politics

One of every four Americans goes hungry daily

By David Brown  
Of the Emerald

One out of every four Americans goes to bed hungry or nutritionally deficient, according to a speaker at a symposium observing World Food Day on Tuesday.

"Food is being used as a political weapon," said Manuel Pacheco, director of the University's High School Equivalency Program. "Consequently we find ourselves supporting oppressive or fascist regimes throughout the world in foreign aid, military aid, and that aid is not going for food."

"We can't cure hunger or bring up nutrition without also taking care of housing, hygiene, medical attention, employment... they all go together," he said.

Pacheco pointed to corporations as the criminals, citing profiteering as their main incentive. They concentrate capital, running farmers out of business and creating unemployment, he said.

"To keep supply down and profits high, (corporations) feed animals, cattle," Pacheco said. United States cattle are fed enough grain each year to feed the populations of China and India, he added.

The symposium featured a panel com-



Manuel Pacheco listens to Mica Gonzales as she tells of her own land in Mexico. Gonzales was part of a symposium commemorating World Hunger Day Tuesday.

posed of Pacheco; Congressman Jim Weaver; Mica Gonzales, a Mexican-American; and Emily Johnson, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees and of the American Federation of Teachers. The event's four-speaker panel gave opening addresses, then fielded questions, predominantly directed to Weaver, from an audience concerned about food, the economy and politics.

"I was reading the budget earlier this year, proposed by the president... it struck me that they cut \$775 million from child nutrition, and then increased \$765 million to nerve gas," he said.

"We must start weaning ourselves away from the oil/chemical agriculture because it's not going to be with us for many more decades," he said.

Weaver added the United States is selling grain overseas at a loss, dictating

a market price that damages the export abilities of Third World nations.

Weaver has introduced an organic farming bill in the House of Representatives.

Gonzales told of how she lost her U.S. aid when officials discovered she still owned land in Mexico. She tried to sell the property with no success, she said. Her son and daughter have been providing her with a meager subsistence.

Photo by Mark Pynes