

GET OUT
the vote!

Polls open 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

oregon daily emerald

Tuesday, November 2, 1982

Eugene, Oregon

Volume 84, Number 43

Educators debate access vs. quality

By Debbie Howlett
Of the Emerald

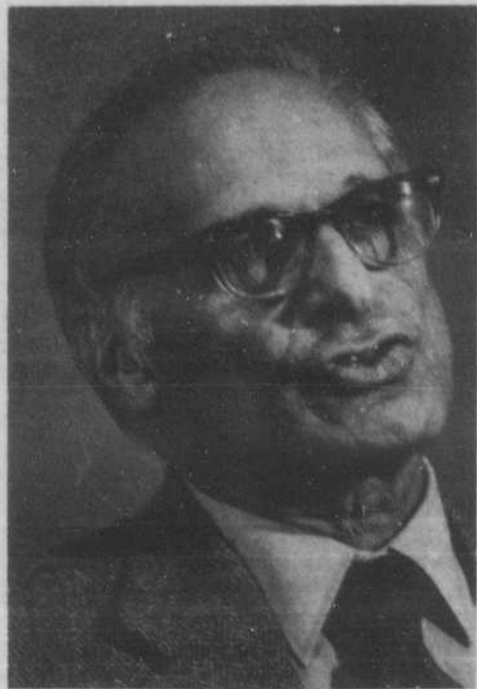
Some higher education officials say a quality education cannot be accessible to everyone. Others say an education that isn't accessible to all is "elitist," not quality.

University Pres. Paul Olum says that the argument of access versus quality is a "false dichotomy."

"I don't think quality and access should be pitted against each other," Olum says. "There is no simple formula linking them. If you mean by reducing access, you improve quality — I reject that completely. The student-faculty ratio doesn't determine quality."

Chancellor Bud Davis agrees with Olum's sentiment.

"To pose that question is to assume that they are mutually exclusive," Davis says. "It's almost unconstitutional to expect any thing less than quality and access."



Pres. Paul Olum

But if Olum and Davis are insistent about lack of correlation between access and quality, several groups and individuals are just as adamant — in the other direction.

Former Chancellor Roy Lieuallen, now an adviser for the Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, says the University will have to choose between quality and access.

"I happen to believe that you can't have both quality and access," Lieuallen says. "The argument I offer (to improve or maintain quality) is to reduce access."

And between those two ends of the scale are many people balanced somewhere toward the middle.

A few weeks ago the Oregon Education Coordinating Commission's advisory council met with the commission to review budget policies for the next two years.

The meeting was a chance for on-lookers and council members to tell the commission which direction they would prefer to see education go — toward access or quality.

But coming up with a solution that will satisfy everyone is no easy task.

Before his retirement, Lieuallen says members of the state board asked themselves some of the questions the OECC is now pondering.

"We were making the case that we had to reduce the number we were serving or reduce the quality," Lieuallen says. "If you reduce money and the number of people (proportionately), you can preserve quality, but you're reducing access."

"You have to ask, 'does the public put a higher value on access than quality?'"

"In order to have good quality you need good faculty, a good library, what I'd call 'state-of-the-art' equipment and support staff. All of that costs money... good people tend to go where the money is," Lieuallen says. "When someone says you can maintain

quality without that, I don't believe it." And the OECC's executive director also offers his set of definitions.

"You can argue that you can't define quality," says T.K. Olson. "I think that's not true."

Olson says he feels peer evaluation and student-faculty ratio are indicators of quality.

"In access," Olson says, "the distinction that's meaningful is between access and choice."

Olson defines access as the chance to attend school, which he says is not as limited as some believe. He defines choice as a decision about which school to attend, which he says may be somewhat limited.

Robert MacVicar, president of Oregon State University, has expressed concern that a good balance has not been achieved. In a statement mailed to the commission, MacVicar mourned the passing of OSU's "open door" policy.

"We're now having to close the door to too many students," MacVicar wrote. "We're having to say to some who would have enrolled and succeeded, 'sorry, we can't serve you.'"

An "elitist approach to education is evident in Oregon now on the part of some, including some legislators," MacVicar added.

The legislature becomes involved because the argument of quality versus access revolves mostly around one thing — money. Or more precisely, the lack of it.

Ed Harms, a member of the State Board of Higher Education, says the shortage of state money might be the major reason for the argument's increasing intensity. State budget shortfalls were often compensated for by cutting services rather than raising revenue.

"Some choices have to be made in the face of a budget deficit," Harms says. Those choices have boiled down to a question of whether access



Roy Lieuallen

or quality is preferable. And from the way the 1983-85 budgeting process has begun, the trend away from access will probably continue.

The OECC's advisory meeting was a prelude to a budget assessment hearing outlining the policy and philosophy behind OECC budget recommendations.

Olson says to maintain the present access level in the state system, more money would have to come from the legislature; to maintain quality, fewer students will be able to attend school and more teachers may be out of work.

One thing is clear: officials don't agree about which is more desirable.

"If you maintain access and destroy quality, who would want (an education)?" says Richard Hill, University provost.

"It isn't a clean-cut thing," Harms says. "You're weighing to get a balance that's equitable. You want the most quality with as much access as is practical."

Nuclear freeze demonstration 'kills' 50 people

By Richard Burr
Of the Emerald

With some casualties using backpacks as pillows to comfort their demise, about 50 people "died" Monday on the EMU Courtyard from a hypothetical nuclear warhead.

The students were "dead" for three minutes during the noon hour to show their support for Ballot Measure 5, which urges the United States and Soviet Union to mutually freeze the production and testing of nuclear weapons. The event was organized by Students for a Nuclear Free Future.

"There will be a 30-second Civil Defense warning before you die," said event narrator Michael Sheehan, who drew laughter from the audience for the comment.

Sheehan gave the demonstrators their cue to die and described the theoretical damage done in the time period as a black-robed flutist played in the background. The blast would

destroy four hospitals, three colleges and all government buildings in the area, he said.

Some nonparticipants carried their bicycles over the bodies as members of the media scurried among the demonstrators for pictures.

About one year ago, students staged a similar event to bring attention to the nuclear freeze issue as it began gaining momentum.

A panel discussion of five University professors followed the event. Although the professors agreed on a mutual freeze, they had different interpretations of the political intentions.

Albert Szymanski, associate professor of sociology, said the Soviet Union has mostly reacted in self-defense to American nuclear superiority. The Soviet Union has trailed the United States in numbers and technology of nuclear weapons, he said.

The Cuban missile crisis was a turning point for the United States because it made people

suspicious of former Pres. Kennedy's claims of missile inferiority to the Soviet Union, said Cheyney Ryan, associate professor of philosophy.

The Soviet Union was willing to take their missiles out of Cuba if the United States took missiles out of Turkey, which the Kennedy administration already planned to do, Ryan said. But Kennedy, "for sheer political motivation," refused the solution to assert the image of American superiority, he added.

Aaron Novick, biology department head who worked on the first atom bomb, disagreed with the two professors' statements.

"I can't believe there are that many evil people in the world or else we're all lost," he said.

The solution is to figure out why people oppose the freeze and persuade them by keeping in mind their perspective, Novick said.

"It's great to have die-ins, but that's not enough," he said. "You have to use your head."



Photo by Dave Kao

"Dead" bodies litter the EMU Courtyard as 50 students participated in a "die-in" to demonstrate the hypothetical effects of a nuclear bomb blast in the Eugene area.