

ASUO sees deficit if fees don't rise

By Richard Burr
Of the Emerald

The student incidental fee will go up again next year if early predictions from University student government officials hold true.

The ASUO would have a deficit of \$50,652 if the incidental fee and student program allocations remain the same, says David Gibson, ASUO vice president of administration and finance. That shortfall is based on a projected fall 1983 enrollment of 15,050 students with the current fee level of \$52 per student per term.

The EMU probably will request a \$100,000 increase for next year because of rising energy costs and delayed salary increases for staff, Gibson says.

"I do not see a way of escaping a raise in the incidental fee," he says.

Gibson's estimate is based on projections from Bob Schutz, former EMU business manager, says EMU director Adell McMillan. The exact amount will not be calculated for another two to three weeks, she says.

The ASUO office of ad-

ministration and finance probably will recommend cutting ASUO-funded programs by \$20,000 and raising the fee by almost 7 percent, the maximum increase allowed, Gibson says.

The maximum increase, from \$52 to \$55.50 per student each term, would pay for an EMU increase, although the EMU still may not receive its full request, he says.

Students will notice an increase in fees next year regardless of whether Gibson's recommendation is accepted.

This year, students paid only \$42 per term for the \$52-per-term services because of a \$10 refund from the State Board of Higher Education's State Restoration Fund.

Students may not want to pay the \$402,000 increase when the refund ends after spring term, but relying on budget cuts to take up the slack is unrealistic, Gibson says.

The future for incidental fees is grim as well, he says. Projections show enrollment declining for the next few years, and a major ASUO-funded service may be cut to

prevent further fee increases, Gibson says.

Such a service cut would come from one of three areas — the EMU, Athletic Department or student programs — "none of which is a pretty picture for the University as a whole," he says.

"Our programs benefit the entire University also, not just students."

Some Incidental Fee Committee members seem resigned to raising the fee in addition to cutting programs.

With effort, the committee could cut programs enough for little or no fee increase, says committee member Jeff Nudelman, who pledged during last spring's elections not to increase the fee.

"Incidental fees are getting way out of hand as it is," he says, referring to the amounts and the programs receiving the money.

The EMU is a good example of a campus service that doesn't warrant its full incidental fee budget, which is almost half the \$2,240,000 incidental fees budget, says Nudelman, an IFC representative on the EMU Board.

Nudelman says he'll look for

services or hours worked as possible areas to trim from the EMU's expected request. Groups such as political organizations like the Survival Center and Students for a Nuclear Free Future, may not get his vote in budget hearings, Nudelman says.

Shrauger and Fry say they'll seek a mixture of fee increase and program cuts, although they do not wish to increase the fee. Fry says she will cut no more than Gibson's recommendation from programs.

The Athletic Department will not escape a cut, Fry and Shrauger add. If programs must be cut, the Athletic Department will have to do likewise, they say.

But committee member Dianne Ritterband-Mason says she won't vote to cut student programs. The surplus account has enough accumulated fee money to prevent a fee increase for next year, she says.

Two committee members, Mary Shrauger and vice chairer Betzy Fry, disagree with depleting surplus money.

"Surplus can only go so far and then what do you do..." Shrauger says.

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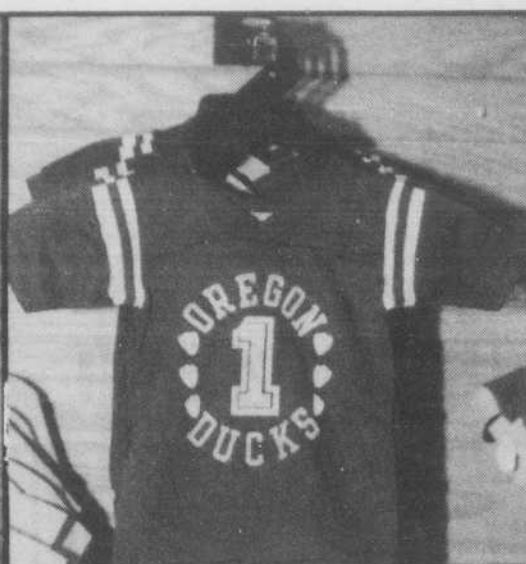
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