

opinion

No valid survey

Three of the five ballot measures in the general election are opinion questions. Placed on the ballot by ASUO President C. J. Balfe, the measures on ROTC and the semester system are attempts by this year's ASUO executive to survey students.

Ballot Measure One, an initiative to establish the campus as a nuclear-free zone, was placed on the ballot by a Students for a Nuclear Free Future petition.

The measures have problems: The ASUO election is not a representative survey of student opinion and the "survey/ballot measure" results, have not been geared toward changing any ASUO policy, influencing the Student University Affairs Board or the administration.

First of all, the ballot measure results will not represent the student population. The ballot measures will be racked with bias.

"It's a lot of second guessing," according to sociology asst. professor Patricia Gwartney-Gibbs.

Gwartney-Gibbs suggests that the ballot measures will show only the opinion of involved students, "more civic socially-responsible" students and students who live on campus. It is a straw vote.

The range of questions, according to Gwartney-Gibbs, who conducts a class in survey methodology, may attract more students to the ballot — one reason they are on the ballot, says Balfe.

Balfe and the administration which follows him, cannot in earnest use the results of the ballot measures.

Even if they could, they would need to have a plan on how to use the information.

Presently SUAB members, the 18 students from each department or school who represent students on the faculty senate and assembly, vote according to the department or school they represent. They "discern" what their departmental peers feel. They are not bound to survey opinion.

There has been no discussion, until perhaps Wednesday night's SUAB meeting, as to what they will do with the results of the election tomorrow.

To make matters worse, Ballot Measure Four, requires students to know the background of the ROTC's current affirmative action stance.

It is absurd to ask the University student body whether they agree with affirmative action compliance of the Military Science Dept. Would it be wise to gather opinions on whether the Romance Language Dept. or the Music School should follow University affirmative action policy? We don't think so.

To briefly mention Ballot Measure One, SUAB, the likely group to bring this nuclear-free zone initiative in front of the assembly, has made no plans.

What force do these measures have?

Both candidates for president next year have pledged to reach out and gather student opinion. Let this spring's series of ballot measures be a warning, a ballot measure sampling of University students is a self-selective straw vote.

A representative sampling of student opinion could be done by a mail out/mail back survey (including a stamped self-addressed return envelope), a random telephone survey, or a face to face survey — all done according to survey methodology.

There is an inherent bias in all surveys — even the one in today's Emerald on the semester system. This survey taken by telephone has a bias toward students who can afford telephones. However, all the survey methods suggested above would better represent true student opinion.

The Emerald suggests that either victor in today's election conduct their opinion polls by placing a form in the registration packet. Gwartney-Gibbs confirmed this would be a valid survey method.

Surveys to discern the "student voice" are worthless unless they are representative. Inform the students on what the information is going to be used for. Inform all those groups, such as the SUAB, who will need to use the results to argue for a student voice in University policy.

Valid or not — student opinion is worthless if it rests in a file in the ASUO president's office.

letters

Freeze fees

The incidental fees, allocated from each full-time student, go to fund numerous programs designed to serve the various needs of the students. Those fees presently total \$156 per year, the figure for the 1983-84 school year will equal \$169.50. It is my contention that the incidental fees for the 1984-85 school year (to be determined next year) should not be allowed to exceed the 1983-84 figure of \$169.50 per full-time student per year, and that any proposals for a fee increase be rejected.

Yet, at the same time that dollar amount will have to be apportioned in such a way as to most efficiently serve every student. To accomplish this, adjustments could be made through the use of at least a portion of the \$160,000 of accumulated surplus funds the University currently holds, and also by several other means such as ASUO fund-raising drives.

By itself the task of efficiently and effectively channeling funds will not be easy, nor will any of the tasks that the Incidental Fee Committee embark upon in the upcoming school year.

However, I have the willingness to make the personal commitment required of an IFC member. Your vote for me will assure responsiveness, dedication, a member who'll listen to you, and most importantly decision making in the better interest of all students.

Bill Odegaard

No Nader fan

The recent push to reinstate OSPIRG on this campus through unethically obtained incidental fees forces me to respond. Anyone who knows of OSPIRG realizes its founder was consumer advocate Ralph Nader. Through this man's ignorance, General Motors was forced to stop producing the most innovative car ever built in America — the Chevy Corvair.

Nader is also responsible for the downfall of the American auto industry through useless emission control and safety devices which are now mandated by the government.

Nader's outspoken socialistic policies preach that the government should pamper consumers and assume that no one can make intelligent decisions by his or

her self. Since OSPIRG believes that Ralph Nader is the champion of public interest and an example to be followed, they have lost my support.

Nader called the Corvair a safety hazard because of its rear engine rear axle design. Yet this same design was used by Volkswagen Beetles until 1975, by Porsche, Mercedes Benz, and even BMW's throughout the 1960s.

Why didn't Nader condemn the VW Bug or Porsche as being "unsafe at any speed?"

His quest for fame with his book that condemned the Corvair destroyed a great car and American innovative spirit. The Corvair was not unsafe at all — in actuality, it was the safest handling American car built. Either Ralph Nader is a blatant liar, or he is so ignorant that his consumerism actually jeopardizes our safety.

Vote No on Ballot Measure No. 2. OSPIRG and any organization that seeks to promote the insane ignorance professed by Nader shouldn't be supported by intelligent students.

Brandon Shepard

Beneficial

As a visual design student working on graphics for OSPIRG, I would like to explain yet another way in which this organization can help students. In addition to the more publicized projects of OSPIRG, such as the consumer hotline, formation of a citizen's utility board, informational surveys and handbooks, OSPIRG can help the student develop his or her own personal or career-oriented interests and skills as well.

During this school year, I have been serving an internship with OSPIRG, designing posters, charts and other graphic materials. Besides the benefit or earning uppr-division credits in my department, the experience I have gained working for an organization outside the classroom has proved to be valuable in many ways. On a professional basis, getting some experience working in my field is helping to bridge the sometime difficult gap between school and career. From a personal standpoint, it's great to be designing posters which are a vital necessity to a real group and not simply discussed in a class and never printed and distributed.

From the benefits OSPIRG has to offer both to the public and to the individual, I believe the \$1 per term per student traditional OSPIRG funding should be reinstated and encourage the student voter to show similar support by voting Yes on OSPIRG funding April 20th and 21st.

Anne Kriebel
senior, visual design,
art history

Credentials

As chair of the Incidental Fee Committee, I have worked with David Gibson and Sheila Shain on a daily basis.

Gibson and Shain are

reliable, knowledgeable, efficient and experienced student leaders.

Their combined experience in student government totals seven years. Shain worked as director of an ASUO-funded program and recently served as ASUO Budget Director. Gibson was a member of the EMU Budget Committee and Board of Directors. He recently served as ASUO Vice President of Administration and Finance.

Both Gibson and Shain were members of the Incidental Fee Committee.

Their credentials are outstanding. They are dedicated to helping students and student programs on campus. I worked with Gibson and Shain for programs ranging from Women's Research and Referral to the Foreign Student Organizations to the Emerald. This week, I worked with Gibson and the Athletic Department to get the most for the students out of our incidental fees.

In my opinion students are qualified for student government only with experience. Gibson and Shain are aware of problems and loopholes in student government. They have solutions for those problems and experience to carry them out.

Vote for two qualified individuals. Vote Gibson and Shain.

Betsy Fry
senior, journalism

Judge and vote

Students for a Progressive Agenda would like to thank everyone who came out to vote in the primary (especially the 1362 who voted for us). You helped make this year's primary turnout the largest in more than 20 years.

SPA's Mary Hotchkiss won that election by 17 votes. But because of the large number of write-in votes (thanks, Bob Waldron), that wasn't enough to elect her. There will be a run-off election this Wednesday and Thursday.

We need everyone to come out and vote again this week. Not only do we need students who voted last week to vote again, we need all the graduate and foreign students who didn't realize they could vote and all the other students who didn't realize there was an election going on, to vote.

SPA would also like to ask your understanding and forgiveness for the craziness that can be expected to prevail on 13th Street during this week. Every vote counts — that's why everyone will be trying to get your vote, every time you walk down the street. It's all part of the fun.

The best way to judge whom to vote for is to read the voter's guide.

Together, we can make student government better — by letting candidates know we care enough to express our opinions of their ideas (or lack thereof) at the polls on the 20th and 21st.

Sherri Schultz
SPA

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