

# opinion

## Budget won't cure higher ed's problems

Let's set the record straight. Oregon higher education is suffering and the proposed budget, currently being drafted by a state legislative subcommittee of the Joint Ways & Means Committee, will not do much to relieve the pain.

After Gov. Vic Atiyeh submitted his recommendation for an almost \$80-million injection into the state system's cut-weary budget, it seemed as though the state was ready to get serious about improving higher education.

But despite an intensive lobbying effort by state system professors and officials, the subcommittee has seen fit to add higher education to its cut list.

The actual budget, if adopted this week as recommended, will be \$9.5 million less than the governor's proposed budget. A new \$68 million shortfall makes the cuts necessary, the subcommittee says.

The State System of Higher Education has been cut by the Legislature for the last decade. This year the governor recommended stopping the cuts and what is fast becoming a decline in the quality of Oregon's higher education.

Those who do not understand the needs of higher education say the \$70 million increase over last year's budget is sufficient to stop the drain of lifeblood out of the system. They are wrong.

Of the \$70-million increase, \$65 million is already earmarked for such things as previously promised faculty salary adjustments, a tuition freeze, inflation, maintenance, library acquisition, and a paltry \$4 million for special high-tech research.

The subcommittee, after weeks of higher education testimony, knows that faculty salary adjustment and a tuition freeze are the minimum necessary requirements for curbing declining enrollment and faculty evacuation.

The budget increases are really pre-planned decisions. The Legislature still does not seem to trust higher education to do its own planning. In fact, some legislators would like to see the \$20 million mandated for a tuition freeze in writing.

The "extra" \$5 million that is not specified will be eaten up in declining enrollment, estimated in Atiyeh's proposal to cause an \$8 million funding decrease next year.

The Higher education system still faces the same dilemma it has faced for the last few years. How does it spread cuts around the system without decreasing program quality? How does it appease a faculty which has more work and less research support facilities? How does it stop the brightest students from leaving the state?

The Legislature has decided *again* not to make higher education a force for recovery in the state. \$4 million is a nice gesture, but it is just that — a gesture. When divided among three universities and four programs, as mandated by the Legislature, \$4 million for high-tech education is thin.

With the cuts and the mandates, there will be no money left for bettering higher education in Oregon. For example, there is no money to replace retiring faculty, to increase the number of classes or lessen the classload of professors.

If the subcommittee could see fit to leave Atiyeh's proposed \$4 million for instructional and support services in the budget, it would be a step toward alleviating what have become chronic general education problems.

Should the Legislature restructure the tax system to increase revenue for the next biennium, or should the economy improve and the state realize a surplus, higher education needs to be on the top of their list for increased budgets.

The subcommittee has recommended a budget that only meets the minimum survival requirements for higher education.



## letters

### Nuclear arms

We of the Faculty Arms Control Groups appreciated the article published in the Emerald on May 20 describing our activities. In the interests of proper education, I would like to correct one statement attributed to me.

Titan missiles are not extremely accurate. These are the oldest missiles in our arsenal, are liquid-fueled and are generally considered to be the least reliable components of our nuclear force. They have not been tested for many years, and there is serious concern that many of them would not launch properly and end-up coming back down on us.

I would also like to remind Emerald readers of a talk on "Nuclear Arms: An Historical Perspective" to be given by Allan Winkler on Wednesday, May 25 at 3:30 in room 123 Science I.

John Moseley  
professor, physics

### Shovel in hand

Speaking of bullshit, I read the Wednesday letters with my shovel in hand and my hand to my nose. The stench was overpowering but I think I've recovered enough to respond rather than retch.

R. Davis and others of his political persuasion are correct in saying that the issue in the recent ROTC controversy is not solely a question of whether homosexuals are allowed to take Napalm 246. The question is whether ROTC is part of the University and whether it shall abide by university rules or whether ROTC is part of the military

and therefore should not be on campus but on a military base.

The issue, in spite of protestations to the contrary, is simple: Either ROTC will follow the rules, policies and guidelines that govern the University or ROTC will remove itself from this campus.

If affirmative action and equal access rules apply only when it is convenient or simple or doesn't cause anyone any problem, why bother to have the rules? Affirmative action laws were passed for the explicit purpose of causing social change, redressing past discrimination and with full knowledge that some people would be inconvenienced by their enforcement.

ROTC has made a mockery of this university. Paul Olum has disgraced himself and I wonder just which side Derrick Bell is on — maybe his bloated salary has indeed bleached him beyond recognition.

Mary Hope  
senior, sociology

### Motivation

As one who has taught in, and strongly advocates, the "open" classroom approach to education, I feel compelled to respond to Nyland's column critical of that style.

Most important to this issue is to remember that the "open" classroom has never had widespread popularity in America, due to parent and teacher resistance, especially from teachers who recognized (correctly) that it is often harder to do well than the traditional methods.

Almost as important, the Oliphant cartoon on the left-

hand side of the editorial page underscores the real problem: garbage in, garbage out. Just as John Dewey's experient failed in the 1930s because of public misunderstanding and teacher inadequacy, the 1970s attempt at humanizing education was doomed to failure for exactly the same reasons, increased by a new phenomena — student inadequacy.

Disintegrating families, television babysitters, widespread lack of self-discipline (among parents who have little to offer their children as models) and a finely developed sense of narcissism (perhaps coupled with nuclear fatalism) has created a generation more attuned to the demands of Space Invaders and purple hair than the demands of Shakespeare, William James, and quantum physics.

Perhaps if Dad (speaking generically) had been around to read to Nyland when she was three, instead of Mom plopping her in front of the television, things might have turned out differently. But millions of Dads are gone, and millions of Moms aren't too good at modeling after working all day, and hundreds of thousands of teachers are burned out from spending far more time motivating than teaching and tens of millions of little eyes spend two or three times the hours focused on the tube than they do in the classroom.

Where the desks are placed in the room is inconsequential. Student attitudes are far more crucial, as well as committed, well-trained, and adequately compensated teachers.

Michael Morrow  
graduate

## oregon daily emerald

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