

# opinion

## 'Open mike' policy needs to go farther

This country is unique in that our Constitution provides for free speech. Of course, there are limitations to this provision — shouting "theater" at a crowded fire, certain areas of obscenity and national security — but, in general, citizens of this country are free to say Pres. Ronald Reagan is a racist, sexist, warmongering Bozo. Or is that Bonzo?

The EMU Board's "open mike" program is one we applaud, but with reservations about the newly instituted policies regarding which groups may use the "open mike" and how much time they will be allotted.

Originally the EMU Board had no policy to govern the "open mike." Anyone could use the "open mike" for any length of time. The only aspect of control during this time was a member of the EMU Board with a finger on the volume knob. The board member could adjust the volume down if students in class were being disturbed.

Because of concern over monopolizing the "open mike," Dan Cohen brought a new policy before the EMU Board. The board accepted Cohen's policy recommendations and instituted them.

We find Cohen's policy to be a well-intentioned, but misplaced step in the right direction.

The new policy permits only registered or recognized groups access to the "open mike."

We understand the intention of this is to prevent monopolization of the "open mike" by off-campus groups and to ensure student groups' messages will reach students. But doesn't this defeat the concept of an "open mike"?

By limiting access to the "open mike" to only registered and recognized student groups isn't the EMU board limiting what information students will hear?

We would prefer the "open mike" to live up to its title and truly be open to all — whether they be registered, recognized or not. The only restriction on who speaks should be "first come — first served."

The board's new policy limits the amount of time a person (from a recognized or registered group) may speak and how often. A person is permitted to speak only two hours a day and a group may use the "open mike" for one hour per month. The group must petition the EMU board for permission to use the "open mike" for more than an hour a month.

We like the idea of imposing a time limit on use of the "open mike" but don't think it goes far enough. The two hours a day time limit is too much time. Not that some groups can't fill two hours with their message. All too many groups can fill two hours *ad nauseum*.

A more appropriate amount of time would be 15 minutes per speaker. Fifteen minutes should prove more than adequate. The prospect of hearing a speaker (or gang of speakers) for two hours at a time speaking on the same topic is frightening.

The limitation of one hour a month cannot be upheld by the ASUO itself. Cohen expects the ASUO to petition right away for special permission to exceed the one hour per month limitation.

Will the ASUO's petition to the EMU Board be denied? There's more likelihood of its petition being accepted than some other group getting the opportunity to speak.

While we agree with the need to set a policy to deny monopolization of the "open mike" we think it should be more specific in certain respects.

The "open mike" last week was monopolized by two groups — SEARCH program advocates and Maranatha. In both cases students outside were treated to endless preaching on the objectivity of SEARCH classes and the usual Christian dogma.

The Maranatha group gave students the dubious honor of hearing Bill Glass, ex-professional football player turned evangelist, recount his life for two hours.

Really, 15 minutes would have been ample time to hear of Glass' fall and rise to grace and the merits of SEARCH program.

We like the concept of a weekly "open mike." The "open mike" provides an opportunity for students to hear divergent views — perhaps a necessity at an educational institution.

We would like to see the "open mike" become indeed "open." To do so the EMU Board must open the microphone to anyone and only limit the time.



## letters

### Long train

A CIA-backed group has just successfully bombed Nicaragua's main oil port, destroying over three million gallons of precious fuel and threatening the lives of an entire city.

In our Declaration of Independence we proclaim that "...when a long train of abuses and usurpations...evinces a design to reduce (a people) under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such a government." Four years ago, Nicaragua did just that. Today, against enormous odds, it is struggling to maintain its freedom.

It does not matter what one's politics may be. By the very fact that all Americans are citizens of a country born out of a revolution, we should be the last people to deny that right to others.

Take a minute to savor your right to free speech, your right to the pursuit of happiness, your inalienable right to liberty. Then pick up your pen and write Congressmen and the president in condemnation of U.S. intervention in Nicaragua and throughout Central America.

Robin Kelley

### ASUO heads

If there's any contests for displays of poor taste and stupidity then I hereby nominate the current ASUO. The graphics for their draft poster would win them first place in such an event.

The poster (which promotes a rally of which ASUO is a sponsor) features a rather obese, nude individual with little soldiers crawling out of its anus.

It doesn't surprise me that the ASUO would put its name on such a poster, nor would it surprise me if our student funds were used to help print up this kind of trash.

If any student wants to see the

mentality and intellectual caliber of our student government, then one look at the graphics of their poster will show you where their heads are at.

Thomas Karter

### Lender

I would like to comment concerning the article in the Oct. 10 Emerald and Mary Shrauger's complaint to the Constitutional Court about the Survival Center's loan for the benefit dance last Saturday night. As the article reported, Shrauger's complaint seems to be twofold:

First, she questions whether two members of the three-member Credit Committee can meet and grant a loan without the third member. IFC regulation 82.8 states that the Credit Committee may approve credit to any IFC-funded program by a vote of at least two of its members.

It was not the Survival Center's intent to ace a third IFC member out of the decision-making process. At the time we requested the loan, the IFC had not appointed its member to the Credit Committee. Meanwhile, the Survival Center needed to get on with the business at hand.

Secondly, Shrauger questions whether the Committee can loan money for a benefit dance where proceeds go to an outside organization. The Credit Committee is empowered to loan money for events where admissions fees will recover the loan. The purpose of the event should not be the Credit Committee's concern. Their job should be to decide whether the money will get paid back.

Administrative regulations state that proceeds from fundraising events can go to legitimate charitable organizations. Oregon Natural Resources Council (to which the monies will go) is a legitimate non-profit non-partisan charitable organization.

If we are to be successful in attempting to solve some of the problems that confront our world today, and successful in giving students the opportunity to be involved in these processes, then open communication and cooperation is a necessity from all.

Doug Norlen  
survival center

### Functions

I am responding to Mark Makler's letter concerning the Greeks at football games. Reporter Frank Shaw's column made one clear point: saving six rows of seats for friends is not fair to other fans.

Sure, there are others that save space for friends, but only a few seats, not an entire block of the stadium. Shaw's comments on public drunkenness were harsh, but were incidental to the above point.

Two of the major criticisms of the Greek system are its exclusiveness and the overconsumption of alcohol by its members. Hordes of inebriated fraternity men saving seats for their buddies at football games can only strengthen this perception.

Alcohol can be enjoyable in social situations, but is not necessary to have a good time. This principle can be applied to football games as well as "functions."

As a public relations major who wants to influence campus opinion, perhaps Makler could best serve his interests by encouraging his fellow Greeks to sometimes sit in smaller groups, intermingling with the rest of the student crowd. Maybe then the Greeks could meet the rest of the campus population, and vice-versa. It would sure help erode prejudices and misconceptions on both sides.

Jason Ruderman  
senior, biology

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**emerald**

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