

Atiyeh requests 'big ticket' items for higher education

By Michael Hosmar
Of the Emerald

Gov. Vic Atiyeh has requested two "big-ticket items" in his 1985-87 budget request — items aimed at improving higher education in Oregon.

One is a salary enhancement package designed to bring Oregon universities and colleges up from the cellar position in terms of salaries, said Senate Majority Leader Steve Starkovich, D-Canby.

Atiyeh is requesting that \$20 million be divided between the University and Oregon State University to improve faculty salaries, Starkovich said in a free public discussion at the University Wednesday night.

Average faculty salaries in Oregon are currently the lowest in the West. The University ranked 75th out of 107 public doctorate-granting institutions in the 1983-84 academic year, according to a recent report circulated by the State Board of Higher Education.

More than ever, teachers are leaving their jobs at Oregon's colleges and universities for better-paying jobs in the industry.

The second big-ticket item in Atiyeh's budget is a \$33.6 million allocation to four Oregon schools for capital construction projects, Starkovich said. If approved, half of this money would come from the state lottery, which is scheduled to begin April 26. The other half would come from the higher education's general fund, he said.

The University would receive \$6 million, the largest chunk of the capital construction funds, to build a biological science building. Oregon State University would get \$4.3 million for an economics and computer science facility.

Portland State University would receive \$3.5 million and the Oregon Institute of Technology would get \$3 million.



Steve Starkovich

Starkovich also outlined the state budget and discussed possible tax reforms that would remedy problems of the current Oregon school finance system. He said legislators are still in the process of formulating opinions about the sales tax and property-tax relief.

One of the most important questions legislators are asking each other, Starkovich said, is "What do you do with property-tax relief? Do you take it out of the governor's budget or do you leave it in and remain committed to funding it?"

"Another important question is: What in the higher education budget are you willing to cut to fund property-tax relief?"

Answers to these questions are still being formulated, Starkovich said. He predicted that the Senate will probably elect to phase out property-tax relief and cut agency budgets, rather than eliminate property-tax relief altogether as Atiyeh requests in his budget.

The Senate will also have to grapple with Atiyeh's sales-tax proposal. "It's not inconceivable that the sales tax will go down (this year) and show up on the next ballot" as another Ballot Measure 2, Starkovich said.

Computer registration may be a terminal issue

By Diana Elliott
Of the Emerald

When Darryl Joannides transferred here last fall from Boston University, he couldn't get over how "archaic" the University's registration system seemed. He was even more surprised, however, to discover the multitude of obstacles involved in changing the system.

"Computerized registration is a frustrating issue, but it's not a dead issue," says ASUO President Julie Davis.

After two harrowing experiences with registration this academic year, Joannides appealed to Davis with a couple of questions: Why hasn't the University switched over to a computerized system? And what needs to be done to change over to a computerized system?

Instead of answering his questions, Davis asked the University sophomore to act as a student advocate and get the ball rolling on this issue — one more time. In fact, the issue of computerized registration has been raised nearly every year during the past decade, according to Registrar Herb Chereck.

Davis directed Joannides to Chereck, who says he's eager to establish a computerized registration system.

"When you have to sit through two days of registration, that's not an efficient use of anyone's time," Chereck says. Although

Chereck is unsure about the reality of establishing a new system soon, he does believe the University has to keep trying.

The biggest obstacle so far has been getting funds from the State System of Higher Education. The state system is reluctant to hand out funds for a computerized system because it would prefer to funnel money into a broader method that could be used by all eight colleges in the system, Chereck says.

Davis also is skeptical about obtaining funds from the state system. "If we squawk too loud, they won't give us any money," she says. "And if we don't squawk loud enough, they won't hear us."

Of course if funding is allocated for this project, there still will be other things to be worked out, Chereck says.

For instance, finding the kind of system that best fits the needs of University students and faculty is one problem, he says. Also, working out the best conversion process needs to be addressed, he says.

"But for now, there will be no action because there is no money," Chereck says.

Joannides isn't discouraged, though. He says his first step will be to appeal to Dick Hill, provost and vice president of academic affairs. "Then we'll slowly work on the government (the state system)," he says.

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