

Editorial

State Board should watch over ASUO

The State Board of Higher Education, through the state chancellor's office, is seeking to take greater control of student government. This is not only prudent, but essential to representative student government at the University.

The state education system recognizes student government as a body devoted to representing the interests of students — to speak for the student body as a whole, as the ASUO Constitution puts it.

However, in the past few years, particularly last year, student government has come to represent only a thorn in the state's side. Moreover, they have failed miserably to represent the interests of certain parts of the student body, particularly conservative students.

With its heated drive to evict ROTC from campus last year and its persistent harassment of the Oregon Commentator, the University's right-wing student magazine, student government has shown its tendency for political favoritism.

Furthermore, their efforts to introduce "student input" into the proposed Riverfront Research Park and Autzen Stadium Dome have created a tremendous amount of frustration among the University administrators pursuing those projects.

Perhaps most significant is the ongoing divestiture suit the ASUO is pursuing against the State Board, seeking to force the board to sell its investments in companies that do business in South Africa.

The ASUO intended to pay the attorney for this suit with student fees — which are defined as state money. The board eventually did pay the attorney with state money, but on the condition that no more state money be used to sue the state.

The State Board has never defined student government, preferring simply to delegate it certain authorities.

This gives student government considerable freedom, allowing it to sometimes act as an agency and sometimes not. However, when student government begins incurring lawsuits on behalf of the State Board, there must be a strict legal definition of its responsibility.

Furthermore, the strict regulations which guide agencies were written for a reason; they were to prevent documents from getting lost, to prevent decisions being made on an arbitrary or biased basis and to insure that the people who the government serves have some means of redress.

Student government is not a professional body and should not be; it should not have to follow the strict legal guidelines of state agencies. It should truly be student government.

However, the State Board and the University must ensure that student government is responsible and that it serves the interests of the students in pursuing the interests of the University.

Ultimately, in other words, student government must serve the needs of the University.

In the last ASUO election, 12.5 percent of the student body voted. This is because students by and large don't know what student government does or don't like what they see it doing.

The State Board, with the help of University President Paul Olum, is ultimately the only body who can ensure that student government speaks for the student body as a whole. Student government must represent responsibly the University's students, who do support the University, its plans and its diversity of opinion.

Otherwise, student government will come to represent no one but itself.



Letters

Exploits

Julie Davis was criticized two years ago for taking a trip to Nicaragua as student-body president. However, unlike Steve Nelson, Ms. Davis took the trouble to show slides and give a public presentation of what she did in her travels.

If Steve Nelson sought to justify his visit as a fact-finding mission, he would at least have the guts to give the student body a chance to question him in a public forum and present what he saw that would justify having the ASUO blow \$800 or so to report the obvious; that there is a horrid little war going on.

Due to the fact that all Steve was willing to do was gloss over his "heroic" exploits in *The Record*, all I can think of is that Steve was only interested in "political education," with him posing as a heroic martyr to the cause. If so, Steve can damn well say why he didn't spend \$800 on badly needed school supplies and explain what he would do to aid the university in El Salvador now that an earthquake has now killed over 200 people in the capital, San Salvador.

However, earthquake relief doesn't present a convenient political education platform,

and Steve will undoubtedly wait for a more opportune time for further "heroic" exploits.

Andrew Beckwith
Graduate student, physics

Trojan

The *Emerald's* Oct. 7 article about anti-nuclear organizers failed to address some of the most important aspects of Ballot Measure 14.

Clarice Barnes stated the waste storage facility at Trojan is safe. She fails to explain, however, the real problem of storing waste at the Trojan site.

Twice since 1975, PGE has asked the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a license to rereack the spent fuel rods stored at the site. Twice they have been granted the license. PGE claimed if they weren't granted the license, Trojan would have to cease operation due to lack of storage space. There is already 291 tons of high-level waste stored in a spent-fuel pool less than 100 feet from the Columbia River, and PGE wants to put more there.

Vermont and Minnesota have filed lawsuits against rereacking because of concerns about unlimited storage of spent fuel assemblies. Trojan is no different.

In 1975, PGE said Trojan's wastes would be moved in six months. It has now been 10 years. In fact, the Energy Facility Siting Council stated Trojan's highly radioactive waste may remain on the site until it is closed in 2011.

Barnes also stated that Trojan

is a safe facility. But J.B. Martin, the regional administrator for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, said his staff revealed a near absence of quality control at the Trojan Nuclear Plant.

Measure 14 suspends the operation of Trojan until the federal government licenses a permanent repository for high-level radioactive waste.

Bruce Philbrick
UO Survival Center

Non-guide

Philip Mitchell's letter is neither a "guide" nor an argument. It is a shrill tirade with no facts to back it up and an unjustified attack against Mr. Stamm, an English department secretary.

Mr. Stamm does a remarkable job of translating bureaucratic red tape into workable procedures for hundreds of students. As a result, he is often caught between stacks of requirements and panicked students. Yet Mr. Stamm answers even the dumbest questions, such as, "Is this the English department?" and deals with chaos day after day. Without Mr. Stamm, the English Department could not even begin to operate.

Perhaps Mr. Stamm did not smile at Philip Mitchell or rewrite the English department's requirements for him, but I'm sure Mr. Stamm answered Philip's questions accurately and put up with yet another confused, rude student.

Melissa Mentzer
English GTF

Letters Policy

The *Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the *Emerald* office, Suite 300, EMU.

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