

Despite the surprise, board's pay raise OK

Last week, the Oregon State Board of Higher Education voted into effect salary and expense account increases for the chancellor of the state system and the presidents of the state's eight colleges and universities.

The increases are retroactive to Jan. 1, and will cost the state a total of \$57,420 — really not very much money in the greater scheme of things. Unfortunately, the raise was clouded by what Jim Sellers, director of communications for the state system, called a "goof-up."

Richard Hensley, board president, brought the proposal before the board without any prior notification. It was not listed in the board's agenda, board members didn't have any information on the proposal in their meeting packets, and neither the public nor the press was aware of the possible increase.

Supposedly, Hensley thought board members had received the information about the increase. And Sellers said that it was only accidental that they didn't get the information before the meeting. Sellers said Chancellor Thomas Bartlett suggested the increase to Hensley after the faculty received a 5 percent salary increase effective Jan. 1.

So, the agenda addition took board members by surprise too, and some did gripe publicly about wishing they'd had the information earlier. Perhaps members were afraid the sudden pay raise would be viewed as a dirty trick, similar to the recent pay hike pulled off by the U.S. Congress.

If that's the case, we'd like to ease their fears. The state system pay raise does not, to us, seem inappropriate, and if we'd had the chance to examine it beforehand, we would have been for it.

As mentioned, faculty salaries were raised 5 percent; this raise would boost the salaries of administrators at exactly the same rate. The total cost to the state, slightly more than \$50,000, is a bargain investment in keeping quality administrators in state.

That said, it must also be noted that while this small increase is tolerable, any further salary raises — which will one day become necessary — should wait until the state Legislature makes a commitment to refund higher education. Currently, students are carrying the load for these salary increases, through higher tuitions. That can't continue; students shouldn't be priced out of an education.

Higher education is a tricky business. It's also a competitive one. It is important to be able to hire and maintain quality administrators for our colleges and universities. Without a competitive salary and benefit package we would not be able to lure the kind of people we want for our higher education system, and without raises we wouldn't be able to keep them here to ensure that the system grows and improves.



"It says the deplorable state of our education system may HELP us compete globally. Our competitors are celebrating with champagne from California."

State should change Sports Action lottery

It is intended to help college athletics. It is supposed to make up for the money the state didn't allocate for its college sports teams. It is expected to bring in an estimated \$8 million a year.

It is the Sports Action lottery, and it's kicked off yet another controversy.

Never mind the debate over the wisdom of bankrolling college athletics on a lottery game, or the various lawsuits filed against Sports Action by the National Football League and National Basketball Association. The newest dispute is centered on the sports programs not getting the money at all.

Between October and December of last year, Sports Action showed a \$1.6 million profit. The money was intended to fund college athletic departments, but instead it went to make up a shortfall in the regular Megabucks lottery game.

Lottery officials had expected a 12-percent increase in Megabucks sales for the October-December quarter, totaling \$16.2 million. The money didn't come in, and because of a small (and up until now, little-known) clause in the Sports Action bill, the sports lottery had to make up the difference.

The clause was a compromise the bill's

sponsor, House Majority Leader David Dix, D-Eugene, had to make to get it passed last summer. In the general happiness at getting the sports lottery, athletic officials either didn't notice, or didn't care, about the clause. They're regretting it now.

One possible outcome out of all this is a drop in the amount of Sports Action participation. People who played the game, thinking they were helping college athletic funds, will surely be turned off by having their efforts taken from the very program they were trying to help.

The Oregon lottery owes the Sports Action fund \$1.6 million, and if the Megabucks game ever has a surplus, the money will be repayed. Even so, it doesn't make up for the anger at seeing expected revenues get stripped away at the last moment.

The only solution is to repeal the clause that requires Sports Action to make up Oregon Lottery shortfalls. The two games have different reasons for being in existence. Sports Action helps college athletics, the regular lottery contributes to economic development. They should be kept separate, and non-dependent on each other.

Letters

Take a stand

The students at the University are in danger of having their cost of education next year rise a minimum \$300. That translates to a \$100-per term increase. This increase will go to an insurance agency because health insurance will be mandatory for all students who attend the University.

On Dec. 1, 1989, by a 4-1 vote, the ASUO Student Health Insurance Committee decided on a plan for 100 percent participation in the ASUO health plan. Under this proposal, every student, regardless of their coverage under any other health plan, would be required to purchase the ASUO plan at a cost of \$250 to \$300. Currently, this plan is servicing around 1500 students; less than 10 percent of the student body.

On Dec. 15, Gerry Moseley, Vice-provost and Head of Student Services, wrote Scott Wyckoff, ASUO Vice-president and SHIC chairman, requesting

an amendment on the mandatory proposal, advocating a plan with a restricted waiver policy.

This proposal would require that every student be insured, but how one might receive a waiver has yet to be decided. The cost of the plan will increase, above \$300, varying on how restricted the waiver will be: The looser the waiver, the higher the cost of the plan.

The University Democrats have voted to reject any form of mandatory insurance next year. We request other groups and students to take a stand on this matter, and let Scott Wyckoff and Andy Clark know how you feel.

Robert C. Kenneth
Chairman
University Democrats

Hughesphobic

There are two things that I would like to say regarding Tim Hughes' letter "On suck-

ing" (ODE, Jan. 15):

1) I am utterly amazed the *Emerald* would publish such a completely tasteless piece of garbage in a daily, public newspaper. The passage brought to mind some of the stellar literary masterpieces I have had the pleasure to read on the walls of rest areas on Interstate-5.

2) To Hughes: gimme a break. I am so tired of hearing you scream "homophobic" while at the same time you go about campus making your group look foolish.

Case in point: With "On sucking" I believe you have succeeded in recruiting a whole new following of homophobics. Hopefully, this is not the case. Hopefully, there will only be an increase in the number of "Hughesphobics" — people afraid of Hughes and what stupid thing he will do next.

Michael Keep
Eugene

Etymology

Many agree the expression "you suck" should be "jettisoned" as Tim Hughes suggests (ODE, Jan. 15). However, Hughes only offers one possible origin: "you suck (and are therefore a disgusting faggot)." From this he deduces the words are homophobic, bigoted and ignorantly used.

It's true many of us don't know the original meaning of "you suck," but it's unfair to limit the meaning to gay people.

For many, "you suck" means "you're stupid," or "it sucks" means "it's lousy." With some looking, Hughes might have discovered "you suck" in nonsexual contexts, such as to be a sponge, a cheat, or a dupe.

Also worth noting is the Latin etymology of "to suck," *felare*, which includes the root "fe," meaning "to suckle." The root is found in *fellatio* (for both gays and non-gays) and in

female.

Furthermore, it's possible the verb "to suck" did not originate in the genitalia, but from mother to babe (note non-sexual use in Matthew 24:19). In *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* (HW Wilson Co., 1988), slang use is said to come from "a figurative sense of a young animal, hence a naive person."

Using Hughes' logic, I might deduce that "you suck" is a derogatory remark toward children — or better yet, the female, who gives suckle to her young.

My point is "you suck" is an offensive expression applying to everyone — "devalue" comes into play regardless of sexual preference. It's best that people know more than one possible origin in order to more properly evaluate and "jettison" the expression.

Jennifer Price
English