

Administrators veto SHIC's plan

By Brian Bloch
Emerald Associate Editor

The Student Health Insurance Committee is back at the drawing board after the University administration vetoed the committee's Dec. 8 recommendation for 100 percent mandatory ASUO health insurance.

During a Tuesday meeting, the SHIC voted 3-1 to maintain its pursuit of a mandatory insurance enrollment plan, this time with the goal of exploring some form of restrictive right of waiver.

The waiver option, depending on its level of restriction, would allow students to opt out of the otherwise mandatory ASUO insurance coverage.

The administrative veto, spelled out in a Dec. 15 memorandum to the committee from Gerard Moseley, vice provost for academic support and student services, shot down the SHIC's recommendation to require all University students to carry ASUO health insurance beginning in the 1990-91 academic year.

According to the memorandum, "the president's staff is concerned with any recommendation which would require every student to take a specific UO plan at their expense. Our offering might not be the best health plan for that student, it may duplicate insurance protection they already have, or it may be a disadvantage to some to transfer plans for the period of their education."

The administration is now recommending a mandated insurance plan with a restricted right of waiver, one that would allow "the closest approximation to a well community, one protected by health care provisions for all students while

not penalizing those who possess an alternative insurance," according to the memorandum.

However, it also states that a waiver option would not present potential insurance carriers with the same number of students participating as would the 100 percent mandated insurance plan. The result: "the average cost presumably would be higher for each participant," under the waiver option.

With the administration's decision behind it, the SHIC is now forced to reconsider options it previously set aside. The most pressing decision now lies in setting the degree of restriction for those students who may wish to waive the ASUO plan, said SHIC Chairman and ASUO Vice President Scott Wyckoff.

Wyckoff said a policy spelling out what requirements need to be met for a student to waive the mandatory coverage must now be addressed by the committee. Under a strict waiver, students may have to show proof of comparable insurance to the ASUO plan.

A loose waiver would allow students to more easily waive the mandatory requirement.

Both waiver options were dropped from the SHIC's initial recommendation because committee members said they felt the options would encourage less participation and higher rates for those who did enroll in the ASUO plan.

Members of the SHIC will be traveling to Tucson, Ariz., this weekend to attend a national student health conference. Wyckoff said the conference will give the committee a chance to explore the insurance enrollment programs of other colleges and universities and use that information in developing a plan for the University.

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