

Groups should tape endorsement process

No election is without controversy. Something will always come along to put a little zest into the process. Usually its measured in degrees of mud slinging and back-stabbing.

This year's ASUO primary and general election has had its share of heated debate, though it didn't even approach the slime level of last year. Mostly, the controversy revolved around the endorsement process, and what was, and what might have been said.

Specifically, the Greek Endorsement Committee was charged with asking "inappropriate" questions during the ASUO executive and Incidental Fee Committee endorsement hearings. While it is impossible to prove what was actually said, the preponderance of the evidence indicate the GEC and its members were in the wrong.

Fine. That's over, and now the only thing left is to debate whether the controversy over the GEC selection process swayed the election one way or the other. That, too, is impossible to tell.

Every student group has the right to endorse candidates for ASUO elections. An endorsement is to support, in writing, someone who best fits your picture of the ideal candidate; someone who shares the same beliefs as you do.

Endorsements are an important part of the election procedure. Candidates and tickets spend hours in front of various "endorsement boards" trying to prove their worth. Endorsements add character to the election and provide a way to get more students involved in the process.

The GEC controversy indicates a problem in the way endorsements are decided. The general public has no way of knowing how a particular group reached its decision on who or what to endorse. Only after the process is complete do voters get an inkling of what an endorsement committee is thinking.

That has to change. Endorsement hearings need to be taped and become part of the public record.

To some extent, this is already done. Some groups keep minutes of their meetings. But taping the whole thing would be more accurate, and give the public a chance to see how a group came about its decision.

Now we're not talking about taping the executive session, where the endorsement committee convenes and hammers out who its going to back. That would be an unnecessary infringement on the group's privacy. But taping the candidate interviews would not be.

The best way to avoid a controversy is to make sure it can't happen. If the GEC, and other student groups who endorse ASUO candidates, will tape their endorsements beginning next year, hopefully something like this year's controversy will not repeat itself.

Given that, the *Oregon Daily Emerald* will take the first step. For next year's ASUO election, and every election after that, the *Emerald* will tape the candidate interviews and allow any student or group access to that tape once the endorsement process is over.

We urge every group considering endorsing candidates to take similar measures. Only by making everything upfront and in the open can we keep controversies similar to this year's from ever happening again. And that will only help the elections, not hurt them. The more educated the voting public, the better.

All in all, it was a good election. Kirk Bailey and Shelia Stickel come into the ASUO executive office with knowledge and enthusiasm for the job. The IFC contains a good mix; previous experience and fresh new insight, with representatives from a variety of groups on campus. Things worked out well.



Letters

Consider this

Hey, idealists everywhere, you can change the world. Need proof? Check out the over-logged forests, overflowing toxic landfills, acid rain, polluted air and water supplies. We have already changed the world. Who's responsible? I am, and so are you. I invite you to use your incredible personal power to change the world for the better.

You can do that by buying bulk goods with a minimum of packaging, and in recyclable containers. Then actually recycle them. It's easy and you'll save money, too. Try buying unbleached paper — no dioxins to poison our water — and organically grown vegetables, which are better for you and the earth.

Consider walking, biking, or taking the bus instead of driving, which releases poisonous carbon monoxide that makes acid rain and destroys our forests and ozone layer. If you must drive, take some friends along and try to avoid using your car's A/C which releases harmful fluorocarbons.

Environmentalism is not only for people who wear Birkenstocks and tie-dyes, and it isn't something you only need to be concerned about one Earthday a year. It's for anyone who depends on our planet for survival, and the time to make the change is now. Our failure to do so constitutes suicide.

Heather Goodwin
Pre-journalism

Take a step

Two years ago, minority faculty members, students of color and faculty were very aware of the condition of non-whites, women and non-Europeans in the U.S. and at the University joined together to propose the new race, gender and non-European American general studies requirement.

Our faculty agreed with the notion that our students need to be exposed to the emerging other — other than white, other

than male, and other than European-American — at some point in their lives, if only to obtain a small understanding of cultural understanding and appreciation that is consistent with a liberal education.

I fully agree with this development. While I am still skeptical of some of the proposed courses, I am fully behind such a move as it will strengthen our student body.

As Kenneth Liberman explained, "Students of color want to be understood by their classmates; they want to reduce the number of enquiring stares addressed to them in the PLC elevator and improve intercultural communication." Foreign students want to improve the quality of their interaction with American students. And American students can benefit from this interaction as well.

We really need to educate our students to the tremendous differences in the world. Oregon students are not racist, as Liberman says. Instead, they are "ethnocentric." With the newly emerging global economy of cooperation, ethnocentrism will only hinder prosperous relations.

The University should take its role in educating students more seriously. This is definitely a step in the right direction.

Michael Colson
Student

Register

Students must register now if we are to make a difference in the Nuclear Free Zone issue. This is a prime opportunity for us to act locally and have a national and global impact.

Eugene is a leader in the Nuclear Free Zone movement; the outcome of this election will have national and international significance. The student vote can change the course of the election. Precinct 213, the University campus, is key in the NFZ vote.

Almost all students on campus are eligible to vote. Surprisingly, most are not properly registered; and many do not even realize it. Because of re-

strictive state laws, if you moved, the Post Office has notified the Elections Office and your registration has been canceled. Students are especially vulnerable to these restrictive laws.

Don't be a victim. Register today.

If you are unsure of your registration status, register again. Registration forms abound on campus. Remember, you live in Eugene and are subject to Eugene laws. You should not be excluded from the political process. We can make our votes count locally and globally.

Diane Sepich
Eugene

Smelly

I'm surprised that the *Oregon Daily Emerald* considers this year's ASUO elections "clean." Perhaps they didn't read their April 20 issue where they accuse the Greek Endorsement Committee of irresponsibility. By using hearsay evidence gathered by a reporter who didn't attend the event in question, the *Emerald* launched a scathing attack on Greeks in general.

This occurred on the final day of voting, and can be seen as a direct attempt by the *Emerald* to sway the election in favor of the candidates they endorsed. Ethically, it smells like the *Emerald* has been playing in the mud for too long.

The *Emerald* didn't even print GEC chairman Tim Ross' comments at an April 20 press conference, where he refuted the *Emerald's* charges. But several representatives from the *Emerald* attended the press conference, perhaps to clear their conscience.

The *Emerald's* actions smell even more like censorship. In the Soviet Union of the past, when a thousand people saw a UFO, the press told them they didn't. Perhaps that attitude has permeated the office of our campus daily.

Patrick Perkins
Student

Letters Policy

The *Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.