

GRADUATE

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tion will find few restraints to keep them from extending their stay at the University beyond four years, said Ed Vignoul, director of the Office of Student Financial Aid.

"We're not here to be unduly restrictive," Vignoul said. "We're here to assist people through school."

Aside from Oregon state need grants and federal Pell Grants, which are both available to eligible students for a maximum 12 terms, most loans and other forms of assistance have dollar limits, not time limits, Vignoul said.

However, Vignoul said his office is not willing to dispense loans and other assistance to students as long as they line up for it.

A student applying for financial aid who has already accumulated about the 186 credits needed to graduate in most fields, is asked to file a petition with the financial aid office, outlining his or her plan to complete a degree, signed by the student's adviser.

"Typically we will allow one year beyond the 186 credits because we realize we are a liber-

al arts institution, which means that students are here to explore different options," Vignoul said.

Vignoul added that he was not concerned about students taking more than four years to graduate.

"Most are completing their degrees in a timely fashion," he said. "I don't think the trend has changed too much in the last five to eight years."

Frustration

Other people on campus are concerned. Despite the varied — and valid — reasons students have for spending more than four years in college, they all have the same effect: more bodies competing for space in departments that may already be stretched to the limits by record enrollments and budget cuts.

In fact, more than a third of the graduating seniors in Morgen's survey said they felt an inability to get required classes when they needed them had lengthened their education.

Students who came to the University as freshmen during the record enrollment years of the mid- and late-1980s are now juniors and seniors competing for seats in upper-division courses — courses that are

often restricted to a smaller class size than lower division courses, and that usually require a more highly qualified instructor.

In many departments, seniors who preregister or who draw early registration times are the only students with a chance of signing up for required upper division courses.

Seeking solutions

Anderson and the rest of the undergraduate education task force will be meeting throughout the summer and fall, gathering information from the academic advising office, the registrar's office, non-traditional students and others to get a feel for the kinds of problems that affect undergraduates.

Depending on what happens with higher education funding next year, the University may find itself faced with the task of finding ways to encourage students to complete their degrees more quickly, while allowing them time for intellectual exploration.

Options include requiring students to declare a major after completing a specified number of credits, or charging a higher rate of tuition to students who accumulate a lot of credit hours without graduating.

The rest of the 1990-91 ASUO Staff includes Shannon Anderson, advertising/publicity coordinator; Carol Cheney, women's diversity program coordinator; Jennifer Collins, assistant university affairs coordinator; Joe Grube, course guide editor; Ed Henderson, assistant finance coordinator; and Brian Hoop, university affairs coordinator.

Other new staff members are Bobby Lee, affirmative action coordinator; Melissa Lunstedt, media relations coordinator; Sam Nehm, finance coordinator; James Pearson, comptroller; Michael Peeler, comptroller; Danny Ramadhany, comptroller; Tad Rockwell, assistant state affairs coordinator; and Cheng Sim, comptroller.

ASUO

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some transitioning of their own, although they admit they have benefited from a year's experience with the ASUO.

Bailey said he's still moving things over from his other desk and trying to wrap up old stuff.

"I'm starting to familiarize myself with the administration more," Stickel said. "All of a sudden my signature is worth so much."

Much of next year's planning will be done during the summer retreat, Stickel said.

"We are going to try and plan some activities and focus on setting the agenda for next year," she said.

Higher education, multi-cultural events, ethnic studies requirements, and recruitment and retention will be heading the agenda for next year, Stickel said.

The competition for the new staff was pretty fierce, Bailey said. The ASUO received more than 40 applications for the 18 open positions.

Of the 20 member staff, five are returnees, including Bailey and Stickel, who were University Affairs Coordinator and Advertising/Publicity Coordinator this year, respectively.

Other staff members with prior ASUO experience include Killjan Anderson, program coordinator, Traci Manning, state affairs coordinator, and Mark Morse, elections coordinator.

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