

# WANTED

## Student Volunteers for UO Preview Day

(an open house for prospective students and their families)

Saturday, November 16, 1991

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## Tuition hike a factor in enrollment drops



EUGENE (AP) — Enrollment at Oregon's public colleges and universities dropped 5 percent this fall, their lowest level in six years.

Preliminary figures from the State System of Higher Education show enrollment at the state's eight campuses at 60,268, down from 63,621 in 1990.

Officials said steep tuition increases and student uncertainty about the system's financial stability are at least partly responsible for the decline.

At Oregon State University, enrollment dropped 7 percent, and the University experienced a 6.8 percent drop.

The only schools to show increases were the Oregon Institute of Technology, where enrollment rose 0.7 percent to 2,661, and Oregon Health Sciences University, where enrollment was up 1.7 percent to 1,378.

A decline in enrollment had been planned, but it wasn't supposed to be so big.

Last spring, legislators and higher education officials agreed to reduce enrollment at seven campuses by 2,000.

Chancellor Thomas Bartlett said it's too early to know all the reasons for the smaller-than-expected enrollment.

"We can speculate that increased tuition and the image of instability are at work," he said, "but there are a lot of other variables and individual decisions involved."

The University remains the state's largest with 16,905 students. Oregon State University is second-largest at 14,900.

Portland State University's enrollment declined 3.2 percent to 14,285.

Among the state's colleges, Southern Oregon State remains the largest, but its enrollment was down 6.3 percent to 4,519.

Western Oregon State's enrollment dropped by 4.2 percent to 3,850. Eastern Oregon State's estimated enrollment is 1,770, down 4.9 percent.

The declines mean more trouble for a higher education system already struggling.

"This means that the University, in addition to facing the prospect of faculty flight as a result of uncertainties caused by Measure 5 budget-cutting, is now threatened with student flight," University President Myles Brand said.

Tuition at the University climbed 32 percent this fall for in-state undergraduates, the highest percentage increase among public universities nationwide.

Bartlett and others said increases in the number of students at Oregon's 16 community colleges this fall are almost certainly related to the tuition increases of the state's four-year schools.

At Lane Community College in Eugene, for example, enrollment is up about 7 percent this fall.

Enrollment figures at the four-year schools are preliminary and are based on attendance after four weeks of classes.



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