

# Thanks very much, but we already know

File it under Useless Information We Already Knew.

The University's Office of Student Affairs conducted a telephone poll in late October to determine the reasons 1,114 University undergraduates did not return to campus this fall. To the surprise of no one, more than a third had the same response: money.

What a shock. When members of the Oregon State System of Higher Education last year ballooned tuition rates at the University by 32 percent, they expected an enrollment drop. In actuality, it was part of the plan to relieve some of the higher education deficit compounded by Measure 5.

Unfortunately, they were all too successful. They were shooting for a loss of 2,000 students. They got almost 3,400. The University's enrollment fell 6.8 percent — nearly twice as much as administrators predicted.

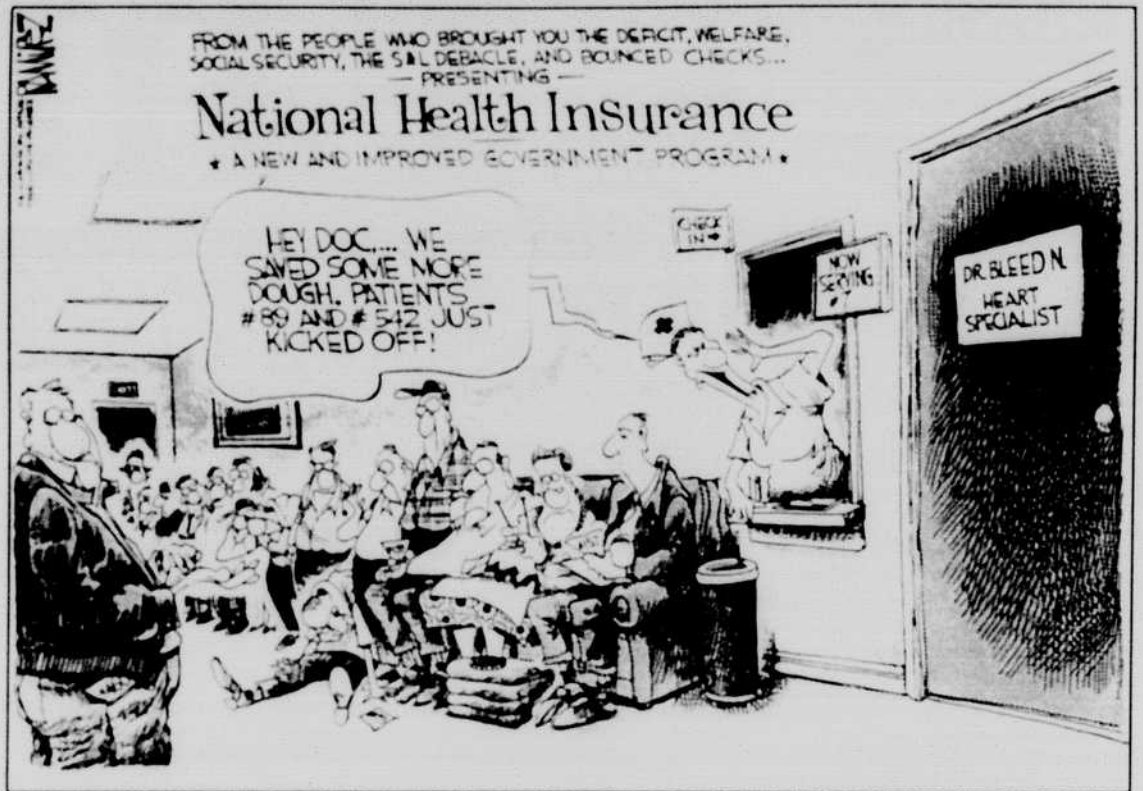
OSSHE's business sense is laughable. Trimming the fat off enrollment figures is one thing, but sticking it to students so they can't afford to return is quite another. Any gain the University's coffers got from the tuition hike has been nullified by the students flocking toward the exits.

For in-state residents, it's a no-win proposition. The tuition rate for the University is \$2,598 a year. Only the University of California at Berkeley has a higher rate among Pac-10 schools. Oregon residents who can't afford out-of-state tuition now can scarcely cough up what the University is asking.

In a state dying for college graduates, OSSHE has effectively slit its own throat. If it continues to cut programs and services while increasing tuition, *nobody* is going to want to attend the University. As unlikely as it seems, higher education in this state could very quickly close its doors.

The solution is obvious, but it's one Oregonians don't want to hear. Measure 5 left this state in poverty, and most residents are just now getting around to realizing it. Even slimming down existing programs won't be enough. More money is needed, and a sales tax is the best way to get it.

But Oregonians won't go for it — or at least not yet. Perhaps the state will change its collective mind when higher education in Oregon crumbles into dust.



**LETTERS**

### So very sorry

Dear JoSonja Watson: Gosh, my friend, I keep reading all this stuff about how wicked you are for stealing a troll doll and post-it pads from the bookstore, and how you didn't apologize, and how it's such a negative reflection on you since you're the ASUO vice president and all.

Gee, it makes me feel so guilty. I mean, I drank beer before I was 21! That's breaking the law, and I've never apologized. I also skipped class a lot (when I was an undergraduate), and got a little too in debt to American Express.

My gosh, what am I going to do? How will this negatively reflect on my capabilities as a University instructor? I mean, does a person like me really deserve a Ph.D.? And what about my kids? I mean, I'm a mother and everyone knows what a responsibility that is. Mothers never do anything wrong (especially if it's against the law)! What should people like us do?

Apologize, I guess. We should be sorry for everything. Sorry for our past, sorry for speaking up, sorry for being alive. That's what we should do.

But you know, Watson, it's weird. I don't feel sorry at all. Crazy world, huh?

Deltra Ferguson  
Eugene

### Don't believe it

Will Rogers once said, "All I know is what I read in the newspapers." Well don't believe it! Newspapers seldom get it right.

The quote attributed to me saying the University should graduate Black students (*ODE*, Nov. 25) was taken totally out

of context. Nothing was mentioned of my strong emphasis on individual responsibility along with institutional responsibility in academic pursuits.

Black students have an opportunity to get an education here, but that opportunity is seriously hampered by a profound lack of Black and other minority faculty, especially minority female faculty.

Clarence Spigner  
Assistant Professor  
School and Community Health

### More dangerous

In response to Matthew Kockeler's letter in the Nov. 20 *Emerald*: Personally, I find the hatred and prejudice in Kockeler's letter far more immoral and detrimental to "the welfare of other people" than two people loving one another regardless of gender and/or sexual preference.

Bridget Wadst  
Student

### All guilty

Dear College Republicans, I would like to respond to your efforts in recalling ASUO Vice President JoSonja Watson. I am sure that each and every one of the petition signers have not lived such an innocent life in which they are able to condemn another for such acts.

If the petition signers would take just a few moments to watch Watson work, then perhaps they may see her as a professional just as Jennifer Bills has commented. Bills works with Watson on a daily basis and has had the opportunity to see Watson handle herself where her job is concerned.

All of Bills' comments have been positive and I will trust her judgment as a student lead-

er. You might consider taking the time to witness Watson in her working environment and then from there base your decision.

I do not see any point in which to recall Watson on the basis of her personal life. Watson has thus far done an excellent job as vice president and I believe she will continue to do so if allowed the opportunity.

If you are the ones who wish to punish her for her deviant act, then you should also consider rewarding her efforts and great contributions as vice president. I fail to see what grounds you have given to remove Watson based on her professional work. Are you sincerely concerned about the effects her act would impose upon her job as a student leader, or is this just another one of your ways to create political waves?

How many of us (students and leaders) can claim that we are solely innocent of such criminal acts as a minor in possession, false identification, consuming illegal intoxicants?

How many of the young men of our campus honestly can say that they have never engaged in any sexual acts with a female under the age of 18? Although the state of Oregon does not have direct statutory rape, it is classified as sexual misconduct. Good luck guys.

I do not believe that many of us can say we are innocent of all these crimes. As it goes, they are all crimes, although some may be more severely punishable, we are all guilty!

I am sure those "innocent" people will come to terms in who is guilty or who is not. As for me, I would rather not catch this wave!

Wanda Lee  
Psychology

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