

Summer tuition hike a Measure 5 legacy

The shock has completely worn off. A good analogy would be a boxing match, where one opponent has been so completely overwhelmed he is numb to the continuous rain of punches.

Once again, University students have been hit with a solid uppercut from the Oregon State Board of Higher Education.

When the OSSHE recently approved a staggering 18 percent summer tuition hike for the University, students could hear yet one more door slam shut on their educational opportunities.

Summer session is important to a lot of students. The low tuition rates — the same for residents and non-residents — were a nice bonus. Students used the summer to make up lost credits during the year when they would have to hold down jobs to make tuition payments, thus cutting into their class time.

But that might no longer be an attractive alternative. It was only a matter of time before summer tuition fees caught up with the other outlandish fee hikes. One more opportunity gone due to the caustic effects of Measure 5.

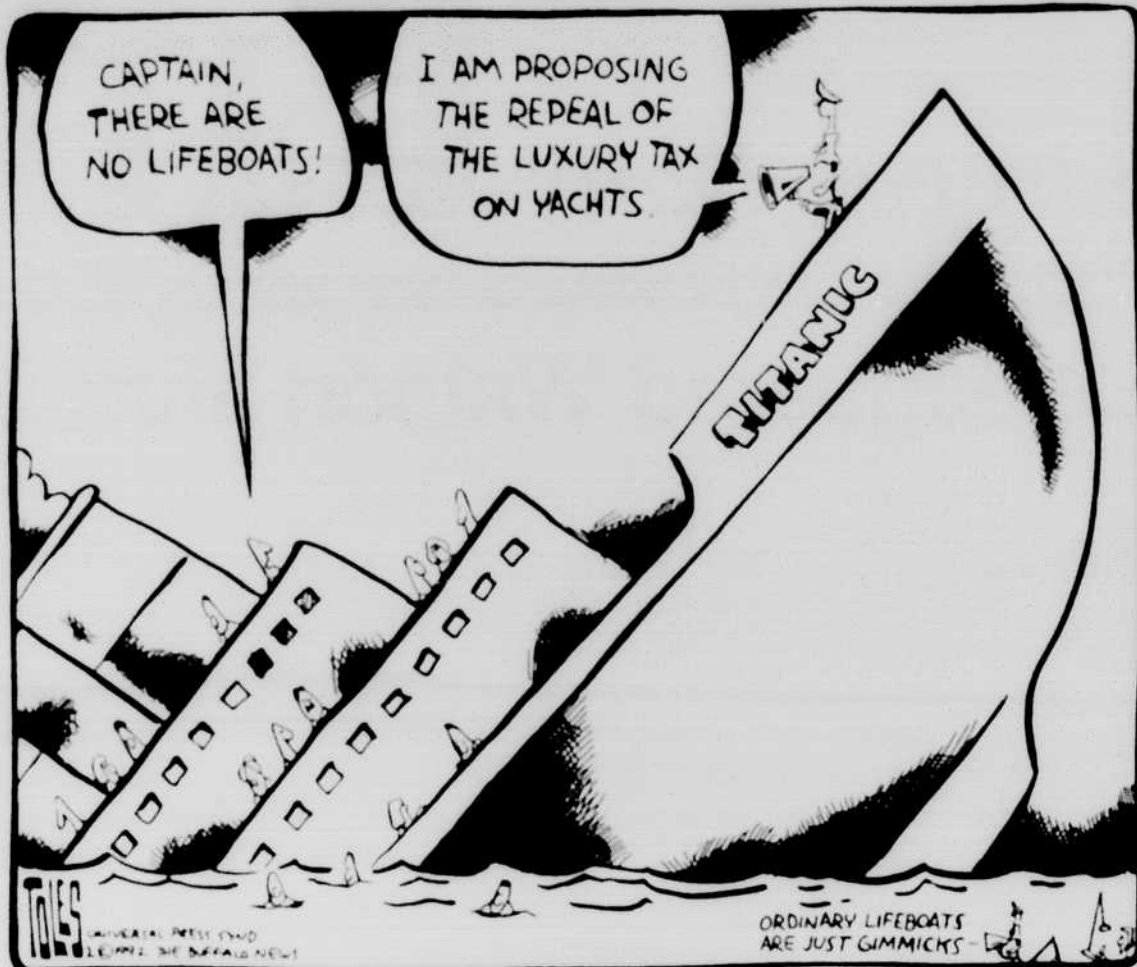
Is there anyone left in the state who can come up with a reason to defend Measure 5? The property tax-slashing measure was supposed to help the state; instead it has turned on the very people who voted for it with the venom of an angered rattlesnake. None of the supposed benefits have materialized, and the predicted problems have ballooned.

Measure 5 was economic ritual suicide. State funding for colleges and universities has dried up. And as the fiscal realities continue to impact higher education, things like tuition hikes are going to continue.

An 18 percent hike is going to keep a lot of summer students from attending classes. It is possible that any gain from the tuition increase could be lost due to declining enrollment figures. Should that happen, the OSSHE will only have managed to turn the University into a rich-only haven — not put more money on the table.

With an economic plan like this, maybe OSSHE members should move to Washington, D.C. They'd fit right in.

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COMMENTARY

Discrimination thriving in ROTC

By Brian Hoop

Recently the University recognized Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. for his great political work for justice and equality. There was much talk of multiculturalism, diversity, tolerance and ending discrimination.

University President Myles Brand has prided his institution for its strong policy on the commitment to ending discrimination and creating an environment supportive of the diversity of students' interests and lifestyles.

Yet, when it comes to upholding the rights of gays and lesbians to serve in the ROTC, the University administration has used every excuse possible to avoid enforcing its own rules against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Oregon Administrative Rules 580-15-005 and 580-15-065 state that institutions shall not assist organizations or employers that discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

The University Senate voted 25-1 on Jan. 15 in support of a resolution urging President Bush to rescind Department of Defense order 1332-14, which states, "Homosexuality is incompatible with military service." On Feb. 12, the Senate will take up two motions barring military recruiters and the ROTC from campus within a five-year time period unless the military changes its policy.

Several other academic senates have voted to ban the ROTC, including the University of Massachusetts, University of Cincinnati, University of Connecticut, and State University New York-Oswego. These senates have set up two-to-five year timetables to insure all students currently enrolled in ROTC would have ample time to fulfill their degree requirements.

This is not an issue of liberals using gays and lesbians as

an excuse to kick the military off campus. Despite my personal conviction that militarism is incompatible with a liberal arts education, I believe this is an issue of giving gay and lesbian students the same equal right as every other loyal American citizen to proudly serve in the U.S. armed forces.

With pressure from universities nationwide, I have every expectation that within the next several years the federal government will rescind its policy against gays and lesbians and the military will be allowed back on campus.

Many gays and lesbians enlisted in and are competently serving in the military. Yet the military discharged more than 14,000 armed service members — many of them students — between 1973 and 1983 because of homosexuality, according to the Gay and Lesbian Freedom Project. Though women comprise only 10 percent of the U.S. Military, they comprised 26 percent of service members discharged because of homosexuality in a one-year period in 1987-88.

Contrary to the myth of "special rights," there exist many unfair prejudices against gays and lesbians in the military and society at large. How can there be "special rights" if homosexuals can't even serve in the military? The University must take a leadership role in not tolerating such discriminatory practices and point out to the people of Oregon the great lack of rights for gays and lesbians.

Despite President Brand's personal opposition to discrimination, he continues to argue the University should not be used as a tool for political and social change, that a university must safeguard the free speech of all viewpoints, and that we must not risk the loss of federal research funding.

The opinion that the University should not be used as a tool for social and political

change is absurd. The very act of organizing events in support of Martin Luther King Jr. is a political statement. The University and President Olum in the mid 1980s took a very political stand against apartheid in South Africa through divestiture.

Would a ban on the military be denying free speech? Proponents of these motions have no intention of denying the military their right to speak out on campus. They will always have the right to debate, lecture and protest just like any other student or citizen.

Employment recruitment is not the same as dissemination of ideas and free speech. The recruiters are not on campus to talk philosophy or politics, but to hire soldiers and technicians just like any other employer.

Therefore, they should abide by the OAR rule 580-15-065.

Will we lose federal funding? A university has the right to bar military recruiters, but the DOD may refrain from future funding.

Paula Burkhart, University Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, said DOD funding at the University amounted to \$1.5 million in 1991-92, and she strongly doubts federal funding would be affected by this.

The University community should show a commitment that discrimination will not be tolerated under any circumstance at the University. We must support the human rights of all citizens in this country.

Brian Hoop is a member of the Student Senate.

CORRECTION

Jennifer Boyd's letter (ODE, Feb. 4) should have read "And please don't tell me OPS isn't doing its job." The Emerald regrets this error.

LETTERS POLICY

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.

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