

IFC leaves budget cuts way too late

Thought Reaganomics was dead and gone? Not so. One can find a perfect working model right here at the University.

The Incidental Fee Committee, in charge of doling out more than \$4.5 million in student monies, has fallen into the trap of "if you've got it, spend it."

One of the professed goals of the IFC this year was to cut student group budgets. The reason for this is to keep students from paying an ever-increasing amount in fees in a time of skyrocketing tuition. This year, students pay a whopping \$103 per term in incidental fees — and that figure doesn't take into account the additional \$54.50 and \$18.50 charged for the Student Health Center and a state-mandated building fee, respectively.

Keep students from paying more fees? Sounds great, right?

But a funny thing happened on the way to the budget cuts. It didn't happen.

Sure, some groups have fallen under the ax. In fact, the IFC has cut more budgets than it has increased, but the net increase is 2 percent.

A 2 percent increase doesn't sound like much. After all, 2 percent of \$103 is just a little over \$2 — not exactly back-breaking. But the money, however small it is, isn't the issue.

The problem is in the system. By not cutting budgets early on, the IFC has put itself in the position of having to slash programs which come later in the hearing process. Even IFC Chairwoman Lydia Lerma has said that it gives earlier groups an unfair advantage.

The IFC should have made across-the-board cuts from the beginning and kept itself on some sort of schedule for doing so. By delaying the cuts, some groups will see their budgets slashed more than necessary.

However, the problem is not only with the IFC. The IFC budget is an estimated figure based on next year's enrollment figures. But the University Budget Office, which compiles such statistics, took its time coming up with a number. And when the enrollment figures finally came, they were significantly high.

There are no simple solutions. The suggestions above will work for next year's IFC, but as for this year, the damage has already been done. The later groups will get draconian budget cuts if the IFC wants to keep student fees from being increased. But the IFC should do everything it can to make sure the cuts are as reasonable as possible.

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Star Wars I: The Particle Beam; Star Wars II: The Laser, Star Wars III: The Brilliant Pebbles



Star Wars IV: The Investigation

OPINION

Maestro pours beer masterpieces



THE FINE PRINT

BY CHRIS BOUNIEFF

Call him The Maestro. Put him up there with Beethoven's symphonic delights or with Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel because almost every Friday, The Maestro is there at his outside station pouring masterpiece after masterpiece.

Of course, not this Friday, and not again until next term, but that's another story.

The Maestro, better known as Lobsang, is the elder statesman of the EMU's Beer Gardens. He has perfected the one craft that appeals to every blue-collar, middle-class kind of guy — pouring the perfect beer.

At \$2 for a 22-ounce beer, the gardens is still one of the best deals around. But beer at a reasonable cost and free chips and salsa are not always good reasons to return. Lobsang is the reason to return.

The 23-year-old Maestro, an exchange student from Tibet, has entertained beer connoisseurs for two years. With just the right tilt and foam separation, time after time Lobsang has poured me the finest Henry's around.

But I'm not the only one to notice. A perfectly scientific poll taken of people with whom I drink beer on Fridays shows that The Maestro's talents are unmatched. Says one, "He pours a great beer." Said another, "He's the best."

Ironically, Lobsang's talents would have gone unnoticed if China had not crushed an uprising in his country in 1988.

Lobsang came to the University in 1987 on a scholarship from the linguistics department and money from the Tibetan government, but the scholarship ran out and China cracked down on Tibet, cutting off all

financial assistance to students abroad.

Unsure of the political climate at home, Lobsang chose to finish school and wait for the right moment to return.

"We could not go home at that time," he said. "We'd been in the states and had ideas of freedom. They didn't want us to bring them home."

To make ends meet, Lobsang went to work at the EMU. Eventually, he started pouring beer, and with his attitude about working and about pouring the perfect beer, success was just around the corner.

What makes Lobsang such a master isn't just his beer pouring. Any stiff can pour a beer, get the right head on it and serve it. However, it takes a master, someone who looks at pouring a beer as a craft, to make a good beer great.

The Maestro is not one of the nameless rabble who slops beer for a living. For him, it is a technique. It's an attitude.

"I feel responsible to pour people a nice beer," he said. "People working hard, studying hard for a week. I pour a nice beer and give them a smile, then they come back."

The technique didn't come naturally. In his days as a trainee, Lobsang had to practice and observe. It's that dedication, the extra beers he poured to get it right and the drive for perfection that propelled him to the top.

Unlike some, The Maestro is willing to wait that extra second for exact foam-beer separation, then dump some foam and pour more beer. If there's a line, he starts dumping beer right away so the head is close to perfect. He's not satisfied, however, with such a quick-fix solution.

Not everyone can appreciate Lobsang's ability. You can't just enjoy drinking beer. You have to enjoy the process of drinking beer.



Lobsang

That doesn't mean making comments on a beer's body or aftertaste. That's pompous, yuppie talk. Beer is beer. Either it tastes good or it sucks. Doesn't matter if it's a lager or a stout, American or import, cheap or expensive.

The Maestro's talents are for all people, but they are best appreciated by those of us who feel drinking beer is a way of life.

And not everyone can take advantage of The Maestro's talents. He doesn't lend his skills elsewhere. It's Beer Gardens or nothing, and the EMU Cultural Forum schedules the gardens on such a piecemeal basis that it's remarkable the event still takes place.

As is the case with any great master, his work is scarce. In fact, the Cultural Forum says the gardens won't return until spring term, and even then you can't count on the gardens every Friday.

So, beer drinkers be alert. The Maestro says once his work is finished at the University, he will never pour again, and a treasure will be lost never to be recovered.

Chris Bounieff is news editor of the Emerald.

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