

FIVE

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"I think that Waseda was a good experience for me, and that it will help me in the long term — in getting a job after I graduate. But it didn't help me to fulfill any requirements within my major," said Hishida. "It is kind of frustrating watching my friends graduating and getting on with their lives when I know that I will be back here in Eugene next year quibbling with professors over grades."

"I made my decision to stay on longer at school in my second year of college," Warren said. "After I had decided where I wanted to go, I did not want to overload myself. I have no regrets."

However, the decision to attend college for five or more years is a costly one. Not only does the student have to pay for the estimated costs to attend college another year, the student is also missing out on a full year on the work force. Just with salary considerations, the cost of a fifth year at college can run into thousands of dollars.

Like Warren and Hishida, many college students choose to remain in college for extended periods of time. Some students add a second major, and other students enter into majors like architecture that make it difficult to graduate within four years. Unfortunately, as Scott Rudi and Tamara Vos said, some college students just do not have the choice.

"I transferred from SOSC, and that screwed me over," said Rudi, an English major. "I went to Ashland for two years. When I came to Oregon hardly any of my credits transferred. I took three terms of Shakespeare — in Ashland where they live and breathe Shakespeare — and it didn't transfer."

Rudi said he transferred to Oregon because it has one of the best Japanese programs on the West Coast. He wants to study Japanese and eventually teach English in Tokyo.

"I was put in a difficult position," said Vos, a Business major. "When I came in, I thought that I wanted to be a Math major. I enjoyed Math, and I still do. But when I started to look at what I could do with a Math degree, people were telling me that my only option was to teach. Not wanting to do that, I had to make a change. By changing my major so late, it's forcing me to stay in college another year."

Herbert Chereck, an administrator in the Office of the Registrar, explained that the question to why students are coming back for more than four years is a complicated issue.

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*Herbert Chereck,
Registrar*

takes to finish college — many students take a year or two off for financial or for personal reasons — you have to consider how many terms a student has taken at the University," Chereck said.

Chereck believes that the University is getting better at graduating students, and graduating them faster. The quality of incoming students at the University is better than in previous years and Chereck believes that these students are better prepared to complete their education in four years. Also with the rising costs at the University, many college students are finding that they need to get out of school, because of the increased tuition.

Chereck is concerned with the problems that students have in graduating, such as new class requirements and incoming students being unable to get the classes that they need. But, with the example of many students, it is still conceivable to graduate within four years of entering college.

"Of course," Chereck said, "there are lots of students who just don't find their academic path as soon as they could or should. And there are students who change their majors during their junior year. But really the reasons 'why' a student stays in school are endless."

However, some students who choose to come back for five or more years may find it difficult to do so in the future. Legislators in Oregon and Texas are brewing policies to save money that would force students who have met the requirements for their major to graduate. How this would affect all fifth year seniors is unclear.

Regardless, the freshmen and sophomores of today are making decisions now that will have a major impact upon their future lives. With a fifth year at college, that forty thousand dollar tassel can end up costing a lot more.

— Jim Davis

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