

ASUO to build center rejected by students

In the recently completed ASUO elections, students defeated a ballot measure that would have raised money to fund the start-up of a multicultural center in the EMU. Nonetheless, creation of the center begins this summer.

How did this come to be? After students rejected the proposal, the IFC and ASUO worked out a deal with the administration to split the start-up costs 50-50. At the new, downward-revised cost of \$80,000, that comes to a contribution of \$40,000 in student fees.

The money is coming from a reserve account, so student fees won't be affected. Yet, Reserve fees, if they are going to be used at all, should be used to either fund under-funded groups (or groups who took cuts this year), or should be applied across the board in an attempt to hold down next year's increase in incidental fees.

Better yet, the ASUO could have simply held onto the money. The key to reserve funds is that they're reserves, saved for a rainy day, etc. But apparently the money was burning a hole in the ASUO's pocket.

But the big flaw in this plan is that it provides no money for operational costs. Guess who's going to get the bill for running the center? Students. Students have already said they don't want to pay for creating a multicultural center, so the ASUO is only going to make them pay for the operation of the center. Hardly an equitable deal.

The multicultural center suffers from the same flaw as the recently returned-to-committee multicultural requirement revision. The center lacks a focus of purpose. According to the ASUO, "The center's purpose is to foster a sense of community through the celebration of diversity for student involvement in workshops, forums and discussions about the various cultures represented on the University campus."

Isn't that what the multicultural curriculum is supposed to do? Why do we need both? What can the multicultural center offer that the combined resources of the ethnic studies department, the multicultural curriculum and other University offices do not already offer?

The center is also supposed to serve as "a clearinghouse for resource material" about race, ethnicity, culture, etc. However, such a clearinghouse already exists. It's called the Knight Library. Rather than create simply another repository for resources, why not work with the library, which is still undergoing renovation, to create a multicultural resource room?

The library could simply consolidate whatever materials students believe to be relevant to multiculturalism and make them available in a centralized location. This is exactly what the multicultural center would do, but it would do it for far less money and would not create a redundancy of services.

Unless the ASUO can justify this expense with specific expectations for the center, it should be abandoned until its purpose is clearly defined and questions as to cost, effectiveness and need are determined. The ASUO should follow the example of the University Assembly and send this one back to committee.

Q WHICH OREGON RETAIL INDUSTRY WILL NOW BE FURTHER REGULATED BY THE UNDERCOVER "COPS IN SHOPS" PROGRAM?



LETTERS

Good outcome

As a voting member of the University Senate and as a student, I was very pleased with the outcome of Wednesday's curriculum meeting. Referring the important and debated issue of multiculturalism in curriculum helps the Senate reach an eventual, informed and decisive decision.

The motion, which referred the pending legislation to an ad hoc committee for review, passed by an overwhelming majority. Nevertheless, many of the students and non-voting members voiced complaints about the outcome. Many felt that such a postponement was merely a way of avoiding the issue.

That is absolutely not so. Some people were hoping for an immediate solution, but by not investigating and considering the options and outcomes before us, we can avoid making a hasty and ignorant decision. Committee members will be individuals chosen from a diverse group of University departments, committees and programs — including a student representative.

For those who are frustrated by the committee referral of the multicultural requirement legislation, realize that this is simply a logical part of the decision-making process. If something is to be done, it must be done right. There are no alternatives. Making an uninformed decision without considering implications is never a solution in any situation.

Joshua William Thomas
Journalism

Yes we can

I would like to respond to Henry M. Goldstein's commentary (ODE, June 2), particularly his "non-PC" explanation of the lack of women as tenured faculty in mathematics, physics and economics.

I know far too many women who are intellectually gifted in quantitative thinking to accept the statement that women have "much weaker quantitative abilities than men." I also know that most people choose not to enter a field simply because it does not appeal to them, not because they lack the ability.

This assumption on the mental faculties of women is exactly

where prejudice starts. It says, "You can't," "You don't have the ability," "You won't make it," and "Don't ever try." It takes away one's freedom to choose her own educational path. It discourages. It places a woman in a stereotype and takes away her individuality.

Concerning the "proof" from the SAT scores, my question to Goldstein is this: How many girls were told "you can't" while still in elementary school, in middle school, in high school? How many girls were discouraged in math before they even heard of the SAT?

A woman has the right to choose her own educational path, whether it be language, social studies or mathematics. Don't assume she can't make it simply because she is a woman, because I guarantee that our reply will be, "Oh yes we can!"

Sharon Graville
English
Psychology

Rude IFC

After surviving an appeal to the Incidental Fee Committee on behalf of the ASUO Women's Center's program Women in Transition, I felt belittled and humiliated.

The other co-director of the program and I were trying to convince the members of the IFC that we needed more money in our budget to pay child-care expenses for a successful single mother student-parent support group that began in the fall of this year. The group wasn't around last year, so of course money hadn't been budgeted in previous years.

The response we got from the IFC was shocking to me. Members whispered among themselves about other things, casually wandered away and seemed to not be listening to what we were saying. Only Steve Masat seemed supportive and concerned about the plight of older single-parent students on cam-

pus. We asked the committee members why they refused to allocate the money and they refused to answer. Their behavior seemed very rude. Strangely, the only person who did pay attention and seemed supportive is now ousted from the IFC. I wonder if the IFC wants him out because he is more open to diverse ideas?

Mary Wertz
Student Insurgent

With or without

"There are three kinds of lies; Lies, damned lies and statistics" (Disraeli).

Henry Goldstein's rambling commentary (ODE, June 2), with his selective distribution of undergraduate grades, provided pathetic support for Disraeli's warning. Goldstein compared apples with oranges, something we learned not to do in junior high school.

He matched the grades of small programs (women's studies and folklore and ethnic studies) with major departments (economics and mathematics). He compounded this absurdity by again selectively using one point in time (spring term 1992) to imply that such grading percentages were traditional.

He went on to suggest that core departments like economics and mathematics, with their permanent faculty, stability and resources, are somehow comparable with the struggling programs (those that directly involve women and minorities, interestingly) he conveniently picked out and picked on.

One more thing. The point of multiculturalism is that it should be integrated into all existing departments and programs. With or without the support of people like Professor Goldstein, eventually, this integration is going to happen.

Clarence Spigner
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