

Board approves new budget

By Julie Swensen
Oregon Daily Emerald

CORVALLIS — The Oregon State Board of Higher Education reluctantly approved the 1993-94 operating budget for the state's public colleges and universities Friday, appropriations that are \$122 million below what would be needed to maintain current levels.

The budget, reduced as a result of 1990's Ballot Measure 5, allocates \$64.8 million less for schools than was provided in 1991-93.

To help make up the difference, tuition will increase 7 percent for undergraduates and 15 percent for graduate students during the next two years. Out-of-state tuition will increase between 15 percent and 19 percent, which is actually more than needed to cover the cost of an education at an Oregon college or university, according to a

board report.

Some people expressed concern over the higher tuition, especially because financial aid levels will remain steady.

"If this trend continues, schools will be only for the wealthy," said Robert Nosse, executive director of the Oregon Student Lobby.

The budget does not, however, provide any cost-of-living or other salary increases for employees of higher education.

Board member Bobby Lee, last year's ASUO president, abstained from the vote because of the tuition increases.

"Putting an economic burden on students at the bottom of the economic ladder is something I'm fundamentally against," Lee said.

By the end of 1995, tuition will have increased by 58 percent in four years, said Weldon

Ihrig, vice chancellor of finance and administration. Ihrig said the increase concerns the board because Oregon is a relatively low-income state, so the student's ability to pay tuition is relatively less.

The estimated 100 programs that have been cut since 1991 will make deciding what programs to cut in the future a difficult task, he said.

"That gives us few options for others to cut in order to meet the needs of Oregon and society," Ihrig said. "Students are nervous as hell about their options, and whether their programs will be here in two years."

That problem is compounded by the fact that Oregon will see a 40 percent increase in the number of high school graduates within the next nine years, he said.

"And that doesn't count the demand for higher education and increased training for people who have already gone through our colleges and universities," he said.

University President Myles Brand, a member of the board, said this year will be a turning point for higher education in the state.

"This is a watershed year for the board, the system and the UO," he said.

Brand said that if the proposed sales tax on the November ballot doesn't pass — a measure that could help offset the shortfall in higher education funding — he couldn't predict what the immediate effect on the system would be. But he said people will see more academic efficiency in the future, and anticipated that some courses may be delivered electronically.

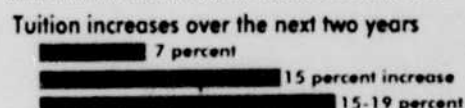
Although many people are upset with the loss of resources for higher education, current funding levels could have been even lower if the Legislature hadn't allocated \$18 million more than Gov. Barbara Roberts recommended, and if it weren't for Oregon Lottery funds.

State lottery funds will provide \$30.9 million for higher education in the next two years, compared to the \$1.5 million used in 1991-93, the report stated.

The state's colleges and universities will also get a revenue boost from the projected increase in undergraduate non-residents. More than 7,700 out-of-state students will come to Oregon in the next two years, compared to 6,100 that was projected for 1991-93, the report stated. This year, more than half of the University's freshmen are from other states.

1993-94 HIGHER EDUCATION OPERATING BUDGET

Out-of-state students attending the University



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