

School of journalism forced to make good

The journalism school has found itself in an awkward — and potentially costly — position.

Students enrolled in J 101, "Grammar for Journalists," were consistently overcharged for class packets that were sold to them by adjunct professor Richard "Whitey" Clark, who has been teaching the class since 1989.

Clark has been selling the packets as a supplement to his lectures for much of that time. The price and size of the packet has varied from term to term, but Clark has made a substantial and regular profit, at students' unwitting expense.

The packet that has been used this academic year cost about \$12 to print. Clark charged students \$28 each for the packet, thereby earning a profit of approximately \$16 each. Clark told the *Register-Guard* that about two-thirds of the students enrolled in his class each term choose to buy the optional packet, which would mean that the professor has made \$4700 over the past two terms alone — and untold profits in the past five years.

In response to student inquiries, Thomas Bivins, associate dean of the journalism school, announced that students who bought the packet this term will have the extra cost of each packet refunded to them ... but the school of journalism will be footing the bill, not Clark.

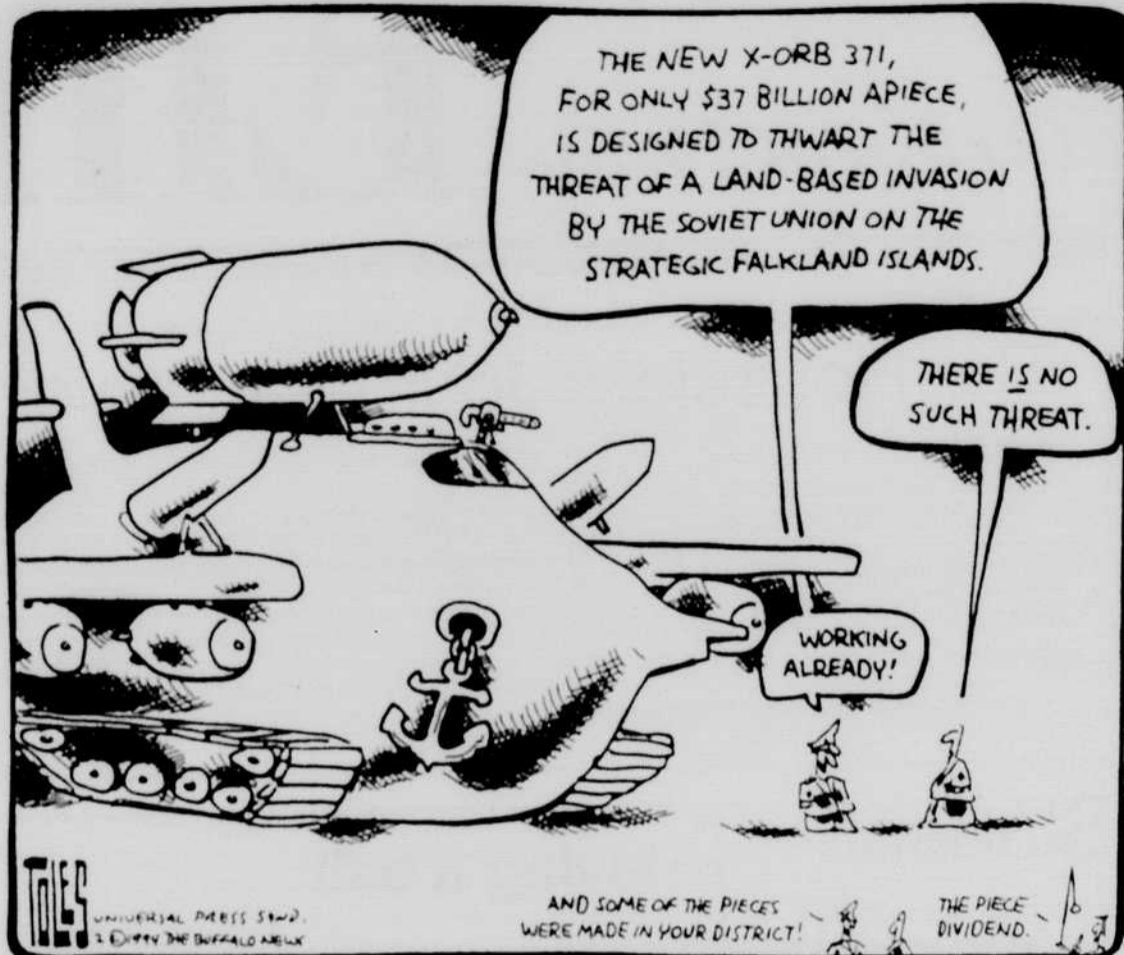
However, students who paid too much for the packet in previous terms appear to have little recourse. There's no way for the school of journalism to be sure who paid for the packet and who didn't, especially since Clark did not issue receipts when he sold the packets.

Clark insists that the profit he has earned in selling the packets is merely payment for the hours of time spent preparing them. But most of the packets' content is identical to the material presented in class — pages from the packet are frequently displayed on an overhead during the lecture. Clark designed the material for his lectures, and he was compensated for his time in the form of his adjunct professor's salary.

Since the material was already prepared, then, all that was involved in producing the packet itself was the printing cost. Clark should have charged enough to cover that expense, and nothing more.

By providing the packets, Clark said, he has eliminated the need for students to buy more costly textbooks. However, the packet is optional. A third of the students in J 101 do without the packet altogether. These students are, in effect, taking the class without any books or packets whatsoever. If some of them succeed, it proves that neither the packets, nor those more costly textbooks, are necessary.

In addition, any exchange of money between a professor and students is inappropriate. Selling the packets directly to students is in violation of state administrative rules. As a lawyer, Clark should have been aware of that fact. Even if he didn't know of the impropriety, however, someone in the University should have discovered it long ago.



COMMENTARY

Faculty should plan curriculum

Ask the President



MYLES BRAND
University President

What are your views regarding the motion to modify the race, gender and non-European requirement? How do you feel about the ASUO's plans not to reappoint a student member to the Assembly Committee on Multicultural Curriculum?

Contrary to the supposition in the *Emerald's* first question, there is presently no specific motion before the University Assembly, or any other legislative body, to revise the current race, gender and non-European single course requirement.

As many will no doubt recall, there was an extended, highly participatory and at times acrimonious, debate about revising this requirement last spring. A proposal has been made to enlarge the requirement to two courses and to focus one of these courses on issues pertinent to African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Latinos/Chicanos and Native Americans.

The Assembly and the University community debated whether these courses as defined in the proposal were sufficiently inclusive, insofar as they correctly covered issues of ethnicity, religion, culture, sexual orientation and geographic distribution. Additionally, there was substantial concern about the incremental costs of the proposed new requirement, given the serious budget constraints the University faces.

In the end, consensus was reached only about the need for

additional study, and an Assembly Committee on Multicultural Curriculum was formed and asked to report by spring 1994. It is my understanding that this committee, chaired by Professor Paul Engelking, will introduce legislation on March 2 and bring it to a vote in April.

Research has shown that a sound multicultural curriculum contributes to student satisfaction and retention. In his recent well-received book, *What Matters in College?*, Alexander Astin draws the conclusion from a longitudinal study involving more than 20,000 students at 200 institutions that: "... taking women's or ethnic Third World courses (is) associated with greater self-reported gains in cognitive and affective development. ... with increased satisfaction in most areas of the college experience, and with increased commitment to promoting social understanding."

Of course, the key questions here are: What is a sound multicultural curriculum, and who decides? The answer to the second question is straightforward: *the faculty decides.*

The University of Oregon, like all nonsectarian universities in this country, abides by the principle of shared governance. In short, that principle specifies that the faculty has the prerogative to set and teach the curriculum and the administration has the prerogative to establish budgets and programs. Determination of a sound multicultural curriculum, then, is within the purview of the general faculty.

The Assembly Committee on Multicultural Curriculum is an appropriate body to make recommendations about any such changes, and the University Assembly is the appropriate legislative body to make the final decision. The role of the administration, including the president, is to make budgetary determinations necessary to implement the Assembly's curricular decision. As president, I would be violating the critical principle of shared

governance if I dictated curriculum requirements in this or any other case.

However, to say that the faculty have the final authority to set the curriculum does *not* mean that the faculty should act without adequate information or consultation. Faculty members have an obligation to seek the best advice available in making these decisions. They should study the successes and failures of similar attempts at other universities, and they should consult with others on campus — particularly students — who would be affected by this curricular change. I am pleased that faculty have consulted widely, including seeking the input of students.

In turn, there is a reciprocal obligation by the campus community to share information about proposed multicultural curricular requirements and to engage candidly and openly in the consultation process.

And this brings me to the second question asked by the *Emerald*. In opting out of this process, the ASUO is doing a disservice to the students who depend on these elected officials to represent them. The stated unhappiness about the Assembly-designed process does not override the obligation of a student representative to participate in committee deliberations or the obligation of the ASUO to appoint a substitute when that representative resigns. Fortunately, an excellent student senator, Hillary Aitken, has been appointed by the provost and is now working with the committee.

One way or another, the Assembly will resolve this issue, and that resolution will have longterm consequences. While it is fine that student senators will be able to speak to the issues in the Assembly, and generally, students can voice their views in myriad ways, the best approach to influencing the outcome in this case is to participate in the formulation of the curricular recommendations.

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