

President seeks to foster feeling of community on campus

By Tiffany Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

Before the University president rests a very full plate.

Dave Frohnmayer officially became University president July 1 and since then he has been very busy tackling issues from how to deal with the November election to fostering community on campus.

Moving from dean of the law school to president of the University, he faces many new challenges.

Frohnmayer's main dish for the fall includes the "four of five ballot measures that could cripple the state's general fund."

"My immediate short-term agenda is to encourage people to become informed as in-depth and as rapidly as they possibly can about what those issues are," he said.

Frohnmayer said that the University will be able to survive the last round of Measure 5 and is in a position to solidly proceed ahead, "assuming that no further damage is done to us at the polls in November."

"That's why I wish we had 100 percent of the University community voting," he added.

In order to raise awareness, Frohnmayer plans to speak out at every opportunity on the importance of a strong higher education presence in the state.

"That's not something that necessarily takes a lot of dollars, but it takes attention," he said.

"In a society where, increasingly, information is power and knowledge is wealth, I suspect that universities will be generators of enormous wealth for the areas and regions in which they reside in ways that haven't been imagined before and we have to be poised to make that contribution," Frohnmayer said as he described the direction the University is headed.

While he hopes to implement this change in vision, Frohnmayer foresees a number of challenges that need to be overcome before change will occur.

"There will be a 35 percent increase between now and the year 2000 in the number of Oregon high school students who will want a college education and right now there is not enough room for them. So we will be faced with a tremendous increase in demand," he said.

Another huge challenge is the continuing rise of tuition and fees in relation to access to higher edu-

cation.

"You have to continually worry about access. At what point do you begin foreclosing real choices to those people who are making the historic leap from blue collar to white collar?" he said.

Frohnmayer said to deal with the issue of access, action has to be taken on all levels, from his position as president to those on the state level.

"We haven't got easy answers," he said. "One of the things we can do that would take the students' cooperation, plus ours, is to speed the time in which it takes a student to get a degree. We'll be doing something to deal with the access and cost issue."

During the last two months Frohnmayer has asked faculty and students to write and e-mail him to get a better idea of what the people from within the University see as the most important issues.

"I got a gratifyingly large response, very thoughtful comments from people reflecting on the campus climate. I expect in short order to have a public response to the University community about what I've learned," he said.

In addition to that there is an affirmative action plan, accreditation, gender equity, undergraduate education issues and federal research policies, among many other issues, that fill a three-inch binder.

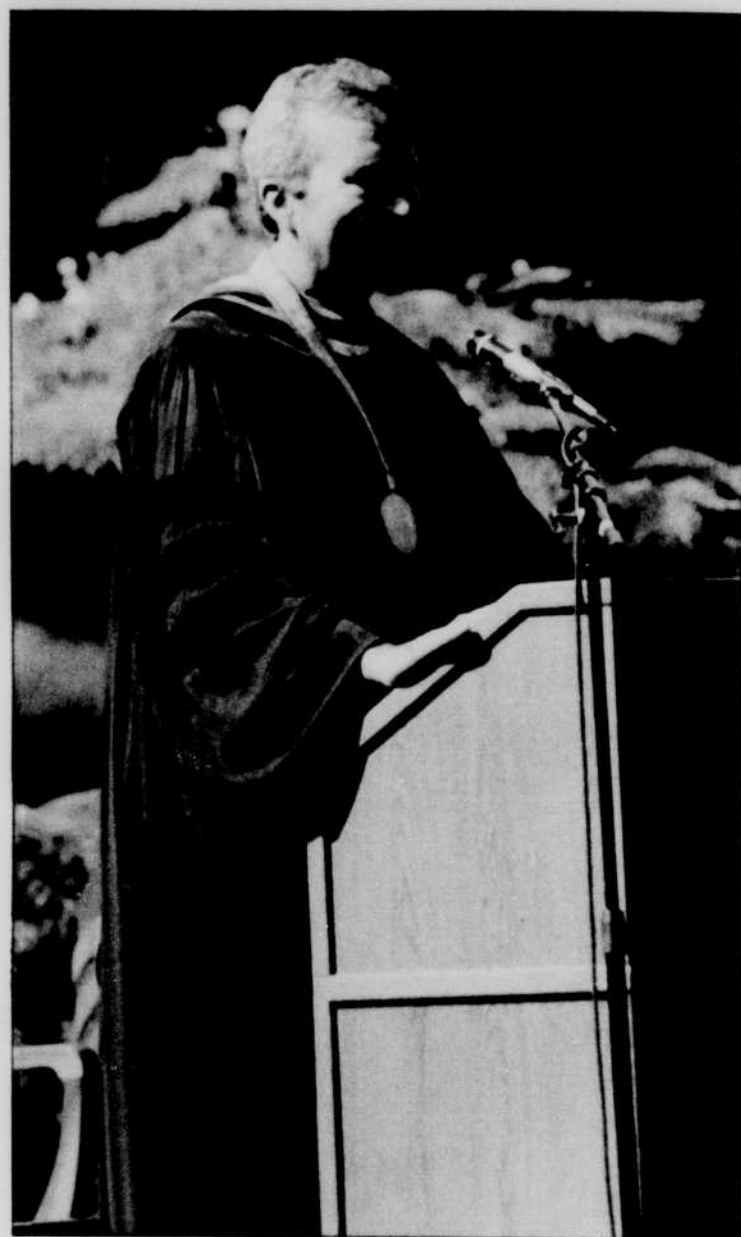
"These are just the must-reads apart from the briefings that people have given me personally," the president said.

A subtle issue the president hopes to tackle is one that was echoed throughout the many responses he received from faculty, staff and students.

"We need to do more than ever before to foster community on this campus. So people won't think of it as merely a place just to go work or study, but as a place that has its own identity that is supportive of the wide variety of people who live and work here," he said.

"Some feel that we haven't done all that we can to strengthen that part of the learning experience. I know it can be done because I saw that change very rapidly in the law school. Surely you can replicate that kind of sense of belonging and that sense of equity."

The new president hopes that students new to University will realize how many resources are



FILE PHOTO
University interim president Dave Frohnmayer has many ideas about how to foster a sense of community on campus.

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