

# Students defend representation in University Senate

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Oregon Daily Emerald

The possibility of losing representation in the University Senate drew criticism and talk of political mobilization in Tuesday's Student Senate meeting.

ASUO Vice President Mark Rhinard delivered a rousing speech to the student senators, who currently hold 18 seats on both the University Assembly and University Senate.

"This isn't an issue that should be taken lightly," Rhinard told the senators. "All students have a vested interest in this issue. If we lose our representation now, we'll probably never get it back."

The University Senate normally introduces legislation to the larger assembly, which votes on curriculum issues including multicultural requirements, grading scales, the semesters-versus-quarters debate and student conduct.

The Assembly usually draws less than 10 percent of its more than 1,000 faculty members to meetings. State law requires that voting bodies have more than 50 percent of members present at meetings.

The Assembly Committee on Governance Reform is likely to recommend that a smaller body such as the University Senate replace the assembly as the primary decision-maker.

The Assembly Faculty Advisory Council recommended to reduce by half the number of students on the 54-member University Senate. The assembly rejected that plan, but formed the ACGR last spring to reassess the

problem.

The ACGR, which includes Rhinard, is expected to deliver its recommendation to the assembly before the end of winter term.

"I'm afraid that the new plan will severely limit the student voice, because we've already seen the old plan," Rhinard said. "[The ACGR] knew this would be an explosive issue and they have their defenses up."

Every year, legislation comes through the assembly. Tempers get heated, and a lot of times it's students versus faculty," Rhinard said.

"The reason a lot of faculty think this process is inefficient is the students," he said.

Student senators have been accused of voting irresponsibly and hindering proceedings. In the past, students have come to assembly committee meetings unprepared to discuss important legislation. At press time, no faculty were available for comment.

Senator Martin Fisher defended students' decision-making role.

"The problem with the University Senate is the University Senate. They're complaining about being inefficient, but they don't even have rules."

The Assembly's parliamentarian, Frank Geltner, is currently in the process of codifying the assembly's operating rules.

The ACGR will hold three forums next week to solicit opinions from students and faculty. The forums will take place on Jan. 17 from 7 to 9 p.m. in the Oak Room of the EMU, Jan. 18 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the

Oak Room, and Jan. 19 from 3 to 5 p.m. in the Walnut Room of the EMU.

Rhinard urged senators to attend the forums.

"There will be faculty in these forums who will say, 'Students get in the way. Students make the process less efficient.' If the [ACGR] wants to lower our representation, we can make things tough for them. It wouldn't be too hard to mobilize against this," Rhinard said.

"We have to prove to the faculty that we are going to be responsible and rational about this," Rhinard said.

As if to demonstrate the value of student's voice in University governance, Senator Joey Lyons unveiled a motion to revise the grading system.

"It is unclear to me what the process is for making academic changes to University regulations, although I am quite aware that it must pass through both the University Senate and Assembly," the motion reads. "I figured the first step was to have it heard in the Student Senate to get backing in the University Senate."

The motion, which Lyons has said he will propose to the University Senate after further discussion in the Student Senate, seeks to change the grading system so that students who earn an "A" in a class for which they have registered "pass/no pass" will receive an "A" on their transcript.

Lyons included a similar proposal in the platform of his unsuccessful 1994 ASUO presidential campaign.

## BUDGET

Continued from Page 1

self-supporting, not wasting money at the margins," he said.

Kerans also said that a proposal made by Senate President Gordon Smith, R-Pendleton, to create an educational trust fund may also help makeup for the 15 percent funding decrease.

Smith's proposal, a \$3 million educational trust to serve the needs of K-12 as well as higher education, was not available Tuesday. According to staff members in the office of Sen. Tom Hartung, R-Portland, meetings will be held later this week to work out the details.

Kerans said the state board had not examined the proposal, but it is clearly in the interest of high-

er education.

"I think there's a lot of work that's going to be done to support that," Kerans said.

MacDonald took a more conservative stance with regard to the proposal.

"We welcome it," he said. "We just want to be sure higher education is part of it."

Faculty and staff compensation has become a priority for OSSHE, Kerans said.

"We are lagging behind Ph.D.-granting and other regional colleges and we're not getting any better," Kerans said. "This is especially true since the passage of Ballot Measure 8."

Measure 8, approved by voters in November, requires public employees to contribute six per-

cent of their salaries to their pensions. Many public employees view this as a 6 percent pay decrease.

Kerans cited inadequate pay to

begin with, a two-year wage freeze for the current biennium, topped by Measure 8 as the strongest arguments in OSSHE's favor.

### ET ALS

#### MEETINGS

Circle K will meet tonight at 6 in EMU Century Room E.

National Student Exchange will have an informational meeting today at noon in the EMU Maple Room. For more information, call 346-3211.

EMU Board of Directors will meet today at 4:30 p.m. in the EMU Board Room. For more information, call 346-3720.

#### RELIGION

Wesley Night College Fellowship will meet tonight at 7 at the Wesley Founda-

tion, 1236 Kincaid St. For more information, call 346-4694.

Newman Center will offer worship and fellowship tonight at 9, 1850 Emerald St. For more information, call 346-4466.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

Center for the Study of Women in Society will hold an open house for graduate students today at 3 p.m. in Room 330 Hendricks. For more information, call 346-5540 or 346-5015.

Department of Biology invites science students to an open house today at 11 a.m. in the Willamette Atrium. For more information, call 346-4502.

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