

Higher education funding priority for lawmakers

Marcia Latta

For the Oregon Daily Emerald

Even if the 68th Legislative Assembly adjourns by "pea harvest" in June, as Senate President Gordon Smith predicts, many Capitol sources are not overly optimistic about the progress lawmakers will make in this session.

Although this session is likely to be shorter and more productive than the previous one, the revenue issues facing lawmakers will not be easy to tackle due to the financial constraints caused by the final stages of implementation of Ballot Measure 5. Also impacting the revenue is the increased revenue demands created by the recently passed Measure 11, which includes automatically remanding 15-year-olds to adult courts and mandating minimum prison sentences for violent offenders.

In addition to difficult budget decisions facing the Legislative Assembly, the control of the power structure has shifted from the Democrats to the Republicans. For the first time in 40 years, both legislative chambers are under Republican control. Despite certain ideological dif-

ferences, the Republican-controlled Legislature and the newly-elected Democratic Gov. Kitzhaber have expressed optimism and confidence in their ability to work together on issues facing the state.

Sources in both chambers say that education issues will be one of the key priorities for both political parties during this session. Republican leaders say they will stand by their pledge to create no new taxes. However, without additional revenue, the challenge to fund programs at current service levels without new money will not be an easy one.

Kitzhaber's recently-proposed budget includes a 4 percent increase in tuition at Oregon's public colleges and universities. Although this is less than the 7 percent increase in former Gov. Roberts' proposed budget, it still creates a difficult financial burden for many students attending Oregon's public colleges and universities, said Rob Nosse, executive director of the Oregon Student Lobby.

According to Nosse, Kitzhaber's budget also contains a straight 15 percent cut to higher education funding. Although students will be facing a lower tuition

increase than anticipated, the budget cut will force reductions in resources in the higher education system, such as fewer course offerings, decreased access to faculty and increased class sizes.

Nosse also said that the tuition increase will not actually be as low as 4 percent. Campuses will be permitted to charge an additional resource fee averaging \$120 for three terms which could bring the increase in tuition to as high as 8 percent. Currently this fee is \$50 for University students and is called the technology resource fee. OSL will work to decrease the proposed tuition hike to 3 percent and reduce the technology resource fee.

Other budget issues the OSL will be working on include the State Scholarship Commission budget. Nosse said that OSL will work to correct inequities in the distribution of the Oregon Need Grant. In the 1993 session, a budget note was adopted that increased grant awards to students at private colleges and universities. OSL will lobby for a flat grant that will award the same amount of grant money regardless of the school the student is attending.

A Student Need Grant lobby day will

take place in February at the Capitol for University students interested in speaking to area legislators on this issue.

Although budget issues will be the primary focus of the Oregon Student Lobby, Nosse says they will be working on a variety of issues. They will be focusing on trying to ensure that low-cost health insurance policies are still available to students, maintenance of tax exemptions for university parking lots and improved voter registration opportunities at all of Oregon's institutions of higher education.

Nosse said he could not make any predictions at this point on the length or progress of the Legislative session. "It's too early to tell if there will be progress or just damage control."

The OSL advocates for the needs of students in the eight colleges and universities in Oregon's State System of Higher Education. The lobby, which is paid for by student incidental fees, has been working on student issues since 1975. They work under the direction of a 16-member Board of Directors made up of students from each campus.

Sigma Phi Epsilon fire reminder of 1993 blaze

Ben Moebius

Oregon Daily Emerald

The President of Sigma Phi Epsilon, Mark Wenrick, felt he was reliving the past when he called his father in Portland from Laguna Beach, Calif., during the holiday break.

His father told him the Sig Ep fraternity, located at 1000 Alder St., had caught on fire and he would have to move into a motel when he returned to Eugene — again. Wenrick heard similar news two years ago.

Two students from the fraternity were injured in a fire started by a space heater in the same house on Feb. 23, 1993. Sig Ep fraternity member Mark Nguyen was treated for smoke inhalation at Sacred Heart General Hospital.

Another member, Juan Martinez, was treated for cuts he received from breaking out his window and jumping from his third floor room. About 40 other people who were in the fraternity at the time of the fire escaped without injury.

Luckily, only four members of the fraternity were present at the

most recent fire and no one was injured.

Mark Wenrick said none of his belongings were seriously damaged. "There was some smoke and water damage," he said, "but the only thing I had to throw away was a backpack. Some people lost futons, stereos and computers."

There was an estimated \$500,000 worth of damage to the house and the fraternity members' belongings. The fire occurred on Thursday, Dec. 28, and was believed to have been caused by a dislodged boiler duct in the basement.

The fraternity members moved all of their belongings from the house last Sunday so that contractors could begin rebuilding.

According to Wenrick, the fraternity is looking for other housing options, but members may have to stay in the Phoenix Inn, located at 850 Franklin Blvd., until the end of winter term. "It's different here at the motel," he said. "We can't be as loud, but we do have maid service."

POLICE BEAT

The following incidents were reported the University Office of Public Safety and Eugene Police Dec. 31-Jan. 8.

- Criminal mischief was reported at the University Inn on Dec. 31. According to police reports, unknown subjects cut the Cyclone fence off the bike cage in an attempted but unsuccessful theft. Damage is estimated at \$50.

- An 18-year-old man was arrested Jan. 1 on an outstanding shoplifting warrant and cited for being a minor in possession of alcohol on the 200 block of East 13th Avenue.

- A 42-year-old man was cited Jan. 1 for theft of services on the 300 block of East 12th Avenue. According to police reports, the suspect took a taxi to the Whitebird Clinic and failed to pay the fare. He told police he thought the clinic paid taxi fares.

- A 25-year-old woman was arrested Jan. 1 for harassment on the 2200 block of Centennial Boulevard. According to police reports, the woman refused a police command to

move from a vehicle. When the officer reached out to pull the suspect back, she struck the officer.

- A student reported his vehicle stolen on Jan. 3. The vehicle was taken while the student was away for winter break. The Lane County Sheriff's Office recovered the vehicle on Jan. 8.

- Four burglaries were reported at the Phi Delta Theta house Jan. 4-6. According to police reports, several rooms were burglarized over winter break. Value of the stolen items is approximately \$2,000.

- Police impounded a student's vehicle after a parking boot was illegally removed from the vehicle on Jan. 5. According to police reports, the vehicle had several outstanding parking violations and was booted. On Jan. 6 a parking enforcement officer noticed the vehicle without the boot and placed another boot on the vehicle. When the owner was contacted, he denied knowledge of the missing boot, but hinted that it could be returned

if the second boot was removed.

- A 25-year-old male student was cited for shoplifting at the Bookstore on Jan. 5.

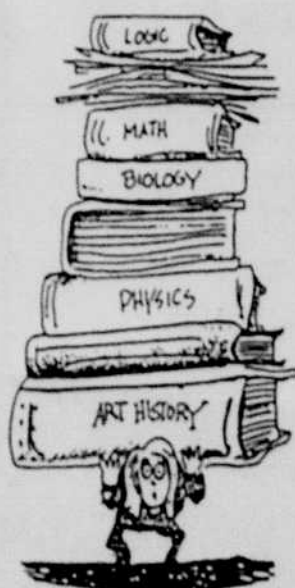
- A 19-year-old man was arrested Jan. 6 for unlawful possession of a controlled substance, theft in the second degree and four outstanding warrants on the 1500 block of Moss Street. According to police reports, OPS officers observed two men stealing bicycle parts and notified Eugene police. When police arrived, they discovered methamphetamine on one subject.

- A male student reported his ATM card stolen and \$700-750 in cash removed from his bank account Jan. 6 on the 1700 block of Alder Street. According to police reports, the ATM card had been stolen from the victim's mailbox over winter break.

- A 38-year-old man was arrested Jan. 6 for carrying a concealed weapon and for being a fugitive from justice on the 1300 block of High Street.

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-Lyllye Parker, UO graduate, Golda Parker Wickham Scholar and Centurion Award Recipient

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You must attend one of the following informational meetings:

Tuesday	Jan. 10 7 p.m.	Gold Room (Carson Hall)
Wednesday	Jan. 11 7 p.m.	Riley Hall (11th & Patterson)
Thursday	Jan. 12 3 p.m.	Ben Linder Room (EMU)
Tuesday	Jan. 17 7 p.m.	Ramey Room (Hamilton Caf.)

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