

■ COMMENTARY

Strike won't stop education

John Moseley

If the University's members of the Oregon Public Employees Union go on strike, will classes be called off? Will campus security disappear? Will students be called in to replace striking workers in laboratories, offices and residence hall kitchens?

The answers are: no, no and no.

A strike, if and when it happens, will certainly have an effect on the University. Picket lines will be established around some buildings and some jobs will be left undone.

But your education will continue.

It is important to remember the announced strike is not against the University and certainly not against University students. It is a wage strike by a very large, statewide union against the state government. Negotiations are being held with the Department of Administrative Services and the governor. The University is not involved in the negotiations and has no authority to accept or deny the union's demands.

A fraction of the OPEU membership works at the University, and only a portion of campus employees are OPEU members. A strike would involve about 1,100 full- and part-time employees on this campus, out of a total of 3,000 faculty and staff and more than 5,000 student employees and graduate teaching fellows. According to state law, no one other than OPEU members — not faculty, not GTFs, not administrators and not members of other unions — can join in the strike. Every non-OPEU staff person is required by law to cross picket lines and work.

You have a right to your education, and we plan

to continue it as smoothly as possible during a strike. As President Frohnmayer put it in a recent letter to all faculty, "It is our duty, despite any strike, to educate our students." That means classes will be held.

Other central campus services will be maintained as well. Certain services are deemed "essential" by the state, which means they must be carried out despite any strike. At the University these include having classes, housing and feeding dormitory residents and maintaining heat and ventilation. Campus security will be staffed, and you'll be happy to know parking regulations will remain in effect.

This is not to say we won't see any effects. The EMU Child Care and Development Centers will probably have to close, for instance, because of government regulations that require the staff be certified, and the certified staff belongs to the union. The satellite food services provided by EMU Food Service, such as the kiosks in Willamette Hall and the library, will likely close, with only those food services in the EMU continued. Testing services in the Counseling Center will be curtailed.

The University respects the right of its union employees to have a legal strike, and everyone on campus — faculty, staff and administrators — is looking forward to a fair settlement that reflects good public policy. But while the strike is going on, your education is still our first priority.

If you have any questions about the proposed strike or its effects, please contact me by e-mail at provost@oregon.uoregon.edu. I'll try to see you get an answer as quickly as possible.

John Moseley is the provost and vice president for academic affairs at the University.

■ LETTERS

Misogynists

Local talk show host Danuta recently broadcast the address of a GOP legislator from North Carolina, who had declared that true rape victims couldn't have gotten pregnant because during a violent attack the woman's juices don't properly flow. Danuta invited her listeners to write their outrage to the legislator.

Misogynist outlooks are not unique to the South. Citizen lobbyists in Oregon discovered that during Pro-Choice Lobby Day April 12 in Salem, when citizens appealed to Republican

representative Charles Starr not to support the parental notification bill. This bill requires physicians not to provide abortions to Oregon teen girls requesting them unless parents are first notified. It was pointed out to Starr many of these girls come from unstable homes where domestic abuse is common. Reporting a pregnancy would exacerbate the physical/emotional abuse in these homes. Starr's reply? "Domestic abuse is just because women aren't following the roles God sets out for them." (i.e., be only stay-at-home wives and moth-

ers). Unbelievably, he also added "most all of our social problems are due to all these abortions going on."

As a Republican I find "leaders" like Starr utterly embarrassing. If our party doesn't wake up soon and refuse to knuckle under to the extreme dogma of the far right crowd, our proud GOP initials will instead become known as the Goofy Old Poops. In some circles, coast-to-coast, apparently it already has. With anachronisms like Starr, who could argue otherwise?

Carol Berg
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