

## Colleges deserve more state funds

It's almost official. Tuition at the University will most likely rise later this year, a reaction to higher education's shrinking budget.

The Oregon Senate passed a higher education budget Thursday, which would cut about \$55 million from the Oregon State System of Higher Education's \$615 to \$620 million budget for 1995-97. Legislators also added back \$28 million for a number of other higher education expenses, including funding salaries of faculty members. The House is expected to pass the budget later this week and send it to Gov. John Kitzhaber's desk.

The bottom line is that students can probably expect to pay 4 percent more for tuition over the next two years — 4 percent which few can afford to pay. Many students are already stretched to the limit of what they can pay for tuition, but tuition continues to increase every year. One can almost see the students packing their bags and leaving Oregon, heading for less-costly sources of a college education.

There may still be hope, as some of the extra money expected to be in the state's general fund may be allocated to higher education, thereby easing the increase in tuition.

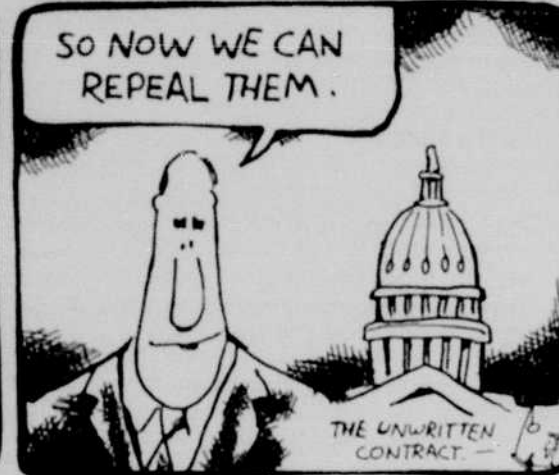
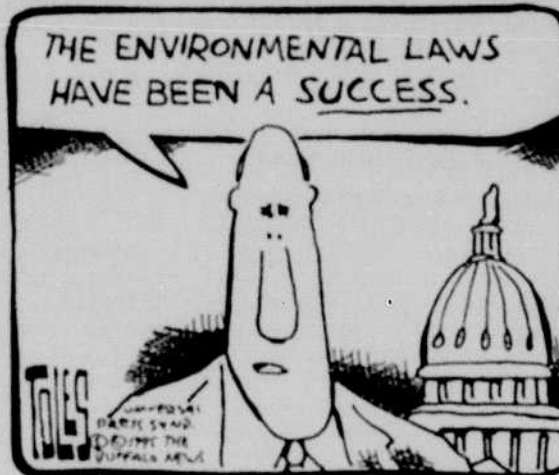
The budget reductions could have been more severe. Hopefully, more of the remaining funds, known as "add-back" funds, can be applied to higher education. Any extra money could be added to the higher education budget toward the end of the legislative session, once the extent of the unused funds becomes better known.

Budget crunches are increasingly commonplace in Oregon and higher education is regularly feeling the pinch. Cuts to higher education and subsequent tuition increases are forcing students to leave Oregon, reducing revenues to the University even further.

But while it is true that the cuts could have been worse and the tuition increase higher, higher education deserves better treatment in the Oregon Legislature. As long as legislators decide that higher education is not a budgetary priority for Oregon, students will decide that Oregon isn't a priority for them and leave the state. Students are not walking bank accounts capable of paying any given amount stated by legislators. When tuition increases to a certain level, students will not be able to pay.

Legislators should increase higher education's budget with as many add-back funds as possible. If the state has any hope of retaining students in its public colleges and universities, it should strive to keep tuition at the lowest level possible.

But more importantly, legislators must recognize that higher education is not the first place to look when cutting money from the state budget. Higher education and the lives of Oregonians will suffer if the Legislature's unfortunate habit continues.



### OPINION

## Image of Bright shines on many



ANNE MOSER-KORNFELD

She was a woman of words and a woman who had an impact on people, even if it was the first time someone had met her.

On April 30, Sue Bright, a University student and a journalist, died after a sudden fight with pancreatic cancer. She was 71 years old. Friends of Bright gathered together Friday to remember her and to share the love they felt toward her.

I met Bright last spring. She was taking an exercise class to help her start the day. After the class, she'd go back to her room and write.

She asked me about my classes, what I was studying and what I planned to do after I graduated. She was ever-wanting to know who someone was and what that person was doing.

Her death was a shock because of how full of life and sure of herself she was. Bright had so much to give right up until the time she died.

Of all the people I've met at the University, she represented someone who went after what she most wanted to do with her life in spite of setbacks. Her death brought home how true it is that life and death aren't fair.

When Bright moved into McClure Hall in 1988 at the age of 64, she decorated the wall of her dorm room with a mural of hand-painted Rainbow trout heading in one direction, leaving one fish out of the crowd and headed in the opposite direction. This fish, Bright told her friends, represented who she was. Bright didn't pay attention to what everyone else said or

did and went off in her own direction.

Theresa Henderson met Bright five years ago when Henderson worked as a resident advisor. Nothing got in the way of Bright experiencing life, Henderson said. Everything she did she took delight in.

She even had a fiendish delight for life. Last year when Bright believed new lighting in the hall of her dorm was too strong, she arranged with a friend to mute the lights with colored plastic-wrap. She was so happy to be beating the system.

She graduated from Eugene High School in 1940 and entered the University to study journalism. In 1943, she joined the Navy and taught celestial navigation to pilots as part of their ground school training.

After raising two sons and working for the public schools in Laguna Beach, Calif., she returned to the University to pursue her first love of writing.

A woman who gave new meaning to the term non-traditional student, she never felt out of place. McClure Hall was Bright's home — there wasn't any place better. Friends would stop by her dorm room; she'd listen to their problems and serve them tea using a beautiful tea set she had for decades.

She deliberately wanted to live with people younger than herself. She made friends quickly and lived with people who became her extended family. She would try things other people wouldn't dare.

Bright was easy to connect with. It seemed she was farther along the road than everyone else. Few people lived up to principles she held sacred.

She was guided by the ideal that people ought to be trusted. During the time she lived in the dorm, Bright always kept her room unlocked. She kept her beloved Volkswagen bug unlocked and kept the keys in

her car.

In 1991, she graduated from the School of Journalism and Communication with a degree in news-editorial and won the Eric W. Allen Jr. award for opinion writing. Karl Nestvold, former associate dean for the journalism school, said she always plunged ahead with her studies. Ever the journalist, Bright had a tendency of knowing who, where and when. Bright was known for her ability to go at something with feeling and great academic strength. She didn't duck a challenge.

Following her graduation, she wrote scathing editorials to the weekly paper in Yachats. If she couldn't fight about a cause dear to her, she'd write about it.

She continued studying creative-writing and followed-up her interest in family histories at the University.

She delighted in living and in reminding others that life went on all around them. Her favorite color was orange. She grew geraniums outside her room and friends named a horse chestnut tree in front of her room, "Sue's tree."

Shortly before she died, Bright said her only regret was she will not be here longer to have more regrets. What her heart told her to do, she did with great dignity.

Always maintaining her sense of focus, a friend remembered the time she sent him a postcard of a group of old ladies with her picture superimposed on it with the saying "Old Ladies Home—Your Room is Ready." She reminded others of the continuity of life and how to be graceful under fire.

Bright touched so many people's lives. She left people with the impression they were only scratching the surface in the short time they knew her.

Memory has to be stronger than death.

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