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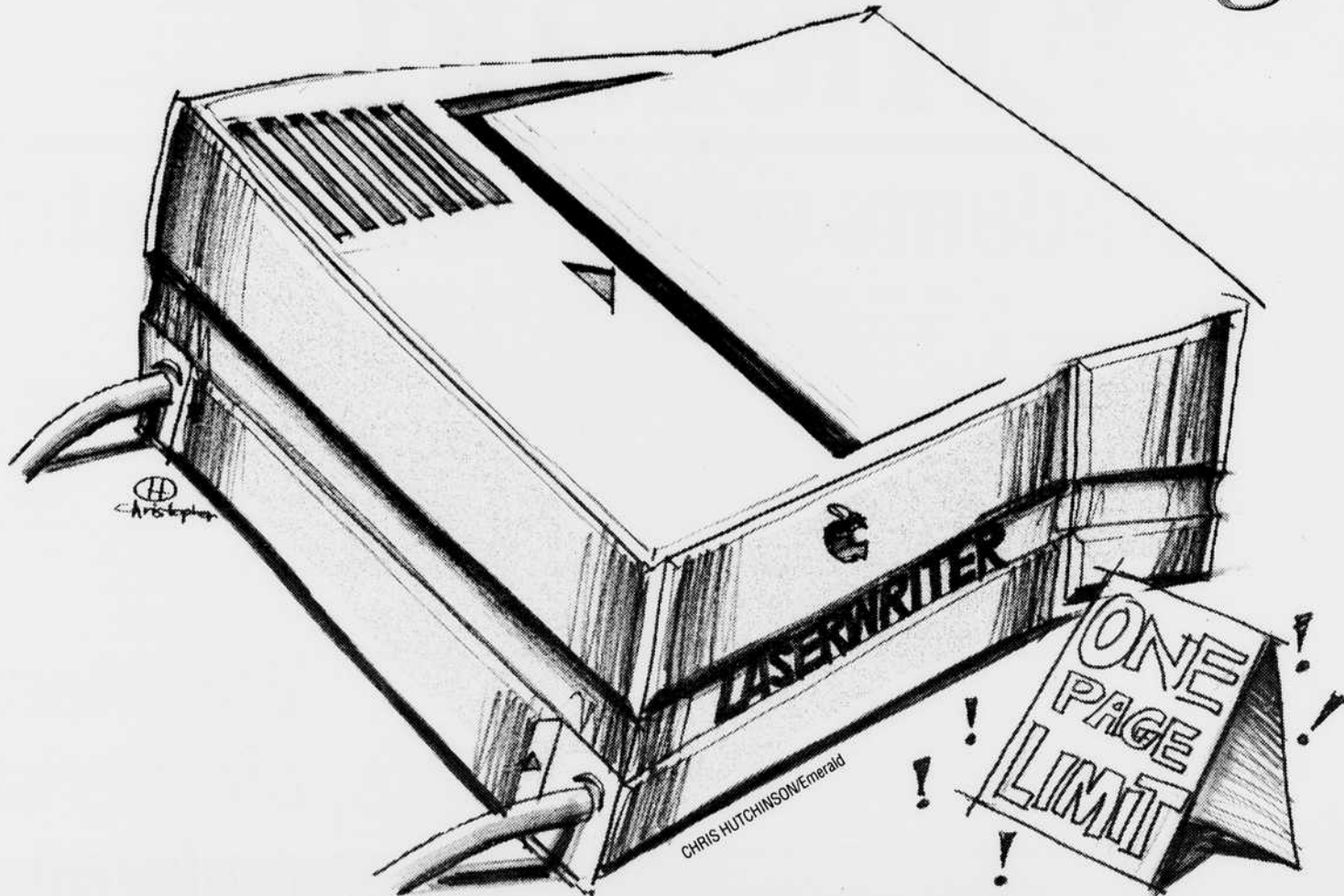
NEWSROOM: (541) 346-5511
E-MAIL: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
ON-LINE EDITION: darkwing.uoregon.edu/~ode

ADDRESS: Oregon Daily Emerald
 P.O. BOX 3159
 Eugene, Oregon 97403

PERSPECTIVES

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
 Sarah Kickler
EDITORIAL EDITOR
 Mike Schmierbach
NIGHT EDITORS
 Holly Sanders
 Sarah Kickler

The Price of Printing



If fully implemented, a printing fee would ignore the academic and financial needs of students

For being one of the "most wired" universities in the nation, this school is certainly taking an interesting approach to computer use on campus. First there were the infamous mailings warning students to limit their on-line time. Next was the decision to change the login procedures without informing students. Now we have the ongoing chaos surrounding the decision to charge 10 cents per printed page at University libraries. Originally, this charge was going to apply to all computing facilities on campus, including the computer labs as well as the library facilities. However, the scope of the fee was narrowed at a meeting Thursday. We certainly understand the con-

cerns the University has about the cost of wasteful printing. Students who print instruction manuals to computer games or the full text to novels are certainly taking unfair advantage of the system. However, we also believe that a large portion of the printing being done by students is justified. Not only do many students have no access to a computer or printer other than at University facilities, but many professors demand that students print large numbers of pages. Obviously, classes that require large amounts of writing, all of it typed, require students to print many pages. Equally significant are classes that, in the interest of being "modern," place a large number of materials exclusively on the Web. Most students need a hard copy of materials such as paper topics and schedules. If students have to pay to

print these materials, the already high cost of their class has gone up even further. This raises an important question about fairness. The students who are forced to print documents are often the ones who can least afford it — after all, many of these students are the ones who can't afford computers in the first place. For those students most in need of aid, scholarships can help cover the cost of tuition, housing and fees. None of this money, however, can be applied to hidden costs that are still a necessary part of class. Printing fees could become part of that cost. Thankfully, the University has decided printing will remain free in the computer labs — for now. This should give students who have to print materials an opportunity to do so without being unfairly charged. Unfortunately, school officials may

change their minds after the end of the term and implement the fee for all computer facilities. While this would reduce waste, it would also harm those students who cannot afford even more expensive classes. Other options have been suggested. The ASUO has proposed placing a limit on the number of pages students can print. Another possible change would be to block printing from the Web, allowing students to print class papers but not wasteful documents. Neither of these represent the ideal solution, but they are worth thinking about. Unlike past decisions affecting students, the University needs to work with those affected by the fee to decide the best way to solve financial problems while still addressing student needs. This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

AN EMERALD EDITORIAL

Thumbs



TO THE NETHERLANDS: Already one of the most permissive societies in the world, the Dutch have now taken a step toward taking advantage of their liberal culture. A new government proposal would require prostitutes working in brothels to pay taxes. Not including pornography, the Dutch sex industry rakes in \$500 million a year; now the government could help pay for the social costs.



TO CONGRESS: Ordinarily, we love to see workers awarded pay increases. When that increase is being awarded to an incompetent legislative body whose policies have helped slash pay for millions, we waiver from our ordinary position. Members of Congress already make about \$130,000 — far more than the average citizen they claim to serve and understand.

TO LOG EXPORTS: A recently proposed bill could damage a ban on the exportation of raw logs, making it easier to ship trees directly from Northwest forests overseas. The supply of lumber is already shrinking due to forest mismanagement and corporate greed, leading to a premature shortage of timber jobs. Sending logs overseas would only increase environmentally harmful logging while further decreasing the number of remaining mill jobs in the Northwest.

DRAWING BOARD

