

Fires in the Gorge

Crews have the brush fires around Interstate 84 that have consumed 1,000 acres of grass about 60 percent contained

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Offseason Report

Angelina Wolvert will be one of three sophomores in the low post for the women's basketball team this year

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TODAY

The World Masters Games athletics will continue at Hayward Field

WEATHER

Today
Partly cloudy
High 85. Low 57.
Wednesday
Sunny
High 93. Low 58.

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ASUO Senate gets DDS rolling again — for now

The senate exhausted all of its \$5,000 in summer funds at Monday night's meeting

By Leanne Nelms
Associate Editor

The ASUO Student Senate voted 6-0 Monday evening to approve a budget freeing the remainder of the Designated Driver Shuttle budget. Next stop: the Constitution Court.

In the weeks since the last senate meeting, tensions between the ASUO Executive and DDS appear to have escalated, but the senate's authority extended only to issues regarding the group's budget directly. After twenty minutes of debate, including lengthy statements by both DDS director Brandon Smith and ASUO Vice President Morgan Cowling, the senate restricted further debate to senators only. "I think we should keep debate centered on the budget, not the administrative things swirling around this," said Sen. Selena Brewington during the meeting.

The senate's decision transfers \$23,788 to DDS, bringing the group's total budget to \$50,000—the amount of the ballot measure approved by students during the spring elections.

Prior to the final vote, Smith had asked the senate to postpone a decision on his group's budget. He said he was primarily concerned about the basis of authority for the executive's intervention and the senate's jurisdiction in matters pertaining to ballot measure funds. Smith said planned to bring his concerns before the Constitution Court during its next session on Aug. 20.

"I have a brief ready to go. Theoretically, any decision made here could be overturned by the Con Court," Smith said during the meeting.

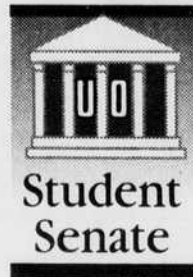
The issues surrounding the situation are complex, but much of the disagreement

stems from the insistence of the executive that DDS adopt an itemized budget for its ballot measure funding. Historically, this is a departure from previous cases where voter-approved money was allocated as a lump sum, said Smith.

Cowling said she feels she is acting in the best interests of University students. "It's our job to make sure programs are accountable and responsible," she said. "We felt that there needed to be process. Some decision had to be made to get the program up and running."

Moving to an itemized budget also opens details of planned spending to scrutiny by the senate. One issue the senators were concerned about during debate was DDS' shift

Turn to SENATE, Page 3



Sprinkles on top



LAURA GOSS/Emerald

A sunflower at the University's urban farm soaks up sun and water in Monday's nice weather.

New tests aim to measure learning more accurately

State officials plan to give tests with varying difficulty levels to students in the same grade level

The Associated Press

PORTLAND — Oregon soon will become the first state to give students in the same grade different standardized tests to help determine their achievement level.

The different tests — easy, average and hard — are being praised by Oregon officials. Even skeptics agree that, done right, it could give a more accurate reading of students' proficiency.

But others say parents should be concerned.

The state tests have become a centerpiece of efforts to raise academic standards for all Oregon students. Benchmarks are set for each grade level. Since 1991, each student has been tested in grades three, five, eight and 10.

Students who function far above or below the average for their grade will benefit the most from the new approach, proponents say. A one-test-fits-all model subjects such students to too many questions that are beyond their skill level, and may not even stretch far enough from grade-level skills to detect the student's true achievement level.

Without an accurate picture of achievement, the proponents say, it's more difficult for teachers to tailor instruction to fit the student's needs.

The choice of tests will follow weighing a pupil's previous test scores. And teachers can make recommendations based on their knowledge of how well the student performs in class.

But some test experts caution that there are pitfalls in using differentiated tests to measure students against a uniform benchmark.

Tests questions must be developed carefully to fairly grade students on the same grading scale, said Stanley Rabinowitz, co-director of testing for West-Ed, a federally funded regional laboratory specializing in testing and academic standards.

In addition, he cited a philosophical issue: Whether Oregon, having determined which skills every student in a particular grade should master, is right to then give some students tests that primarily measure skills not at the benchmark level.

But officials creating the tests say they are confident the tests will be fair to all 150,000 Oregon students assessed each year and will give teachers more reliable information about what each student has mastered and what each needs.

"I don't see any aspect of these tests that is so unique that we haven't addressed the concerns many times over," said Ron Houser, Oregon's associate superintendent for assessment and evaluation. "By more tightly focusing in the student's achievement range, you actually vastly improve the reliability of the measurement."