

# OUS

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stances; achieving cost-effectiveness appropriate to institutional missions; and enhancing employability of graduates.

The University of Oregon is tackling these issues by holding discussions among faculty, students and staff to determine how to improve the University.

"Clearly, discussion that involves so many talented people on campus will lead to positive outcomes," Dyke said.

The University's goals to meet the performance measures by 2005 include increasing the emphasis on the freshman experience to increase retention and graduation rates. The school also wants to create ethnically and culturally diverse communities through financial aid and recruitment and expand opportunities for high-achieving and non-traditional students.

To reach these goals, the University has set guidelines. These include meeting the rate of 80 percent of graduates who were employed a year after they graduated in 1994-95, maintaining the 77 percent of students satisfied with the University in 1995 and having 82 percent of freshmen continue to their second year at the University. The number peaked at 83 percent in 1989 and has since dropped, reaching 77 percent in 1994.

OUS is also measuring universities' success based on student enrollment numbers. In the past, the University of Oregon had to meet its projected enrollment within 350 students. Although under the new system the State Board of Higher Education has general enrollment expectations, the universities don't have to meet any sort of enrollment goal.

The obvious consequence of not bringing in a steady number of students, however, is that the schools won't raise enough money.

"If they don't get students, then that can affect revenue," OUS senior policy associate Nancy Goldschmidt said. "Campuses have to be very serious about their recruitment."

With the budget reform, each university president has more control over salary increases, budgets, programs and student fees, which OUS officials say will make each school more accountable.

"By tying funding directly to students, it will make all the institutions more sensitive to the needs of students," Provost John Moseley said. "... But in the old budget model, we were not being fairly funded."

Dyke said the University of Oregon has been subsidizing other state universities for as much as several million dollars a year in the former budget model. But in the new model, the University would receive almost \$69 million

as opposed to the \$49 million it received for the 1997-98 school year, according to OUS figures.

Goldschmidt said OUS's budget system wasn't changed because universities were poorly managing their money. Instead, she said, "I think we're seeing a greater demand for state agencies to be more accurate."

If schools mismanage their money, OUS won't bail them out. But the University already has safeguards in place, Dyke said. The president, business affairs coordinators, vice presidents and deans are all responsible for some part of the University's cash flow.

"All the checks and balances are out there; no one can operate in isolation," Dyke said.

OUS is drafting a report card that will measure the universities' success as a combined unit to ensure the schools are accountable on enrollment and student goals.

If a university falls short, the state board will evaluate the school and take necessary action. But the board has no specific consequences for the universities.

While OUS is rewarding universities with money, OUS officials say the real emphasis is on student satisfaction, not financial rewards.

"We just want to demonstrate (that taxpayers) are making a good investment because we think they are," Goldschmidt said.

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