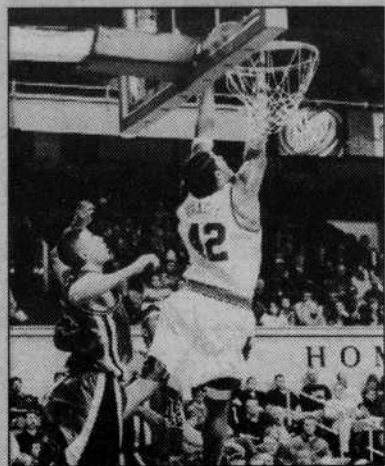


Oregon Daily Emerald

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Ducks to begin Pac-10 play

Both the men's and women's basketball teams encounter their first Pac-10 competition of the season Saturday at Oregon State. **Section B**

The Flash

Japanese student group sponsoring cultural event

Traditional Japanese cultural activities will be demonstrated during the Japan Night 2000 celebration Sunday in the EMU Ballroom.

Organizers of the event seek to present Japanese culture to students and even to help Japanese students learn more about their own culture.

The famous Japanese lion dance called the Shishima will be featured. **Page 4A**

Students have option of taking University courses on-line

Taking education to another level, many students are learning by taking classes on-line through the University's Distance Education program.

Web classes can make it easier for students away from the University to continue their education. **Page 5A**

Supreme Court extends stay on adoption record release

SALEM (AP) — The Oregon Supreme Court on Thursday extended a stay blocking access to adoption records pending appeal of a lower court ruling.

Supreme Court spokesman Jim Nass said the stay is indefinite. A lawyer for anonymous birth mothers who challenged a new voter-passed access law said he filed an appeal Thursday from the state Court of Appeals ruling.

The state's top court now will decide whether to review the appeals court decision.

Rough canyon landing just one possibility in Mars failure

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — The Mars Polar Lander probably touched down in an area that includes a canyon and crater named the Big Hole, but there is no evidence that they caused the probe's failure, NASA scientists said Thursday.

Officials discounted reports that the spacecraft was destroyed when it tumbled down a steep slope after touching down Dec. 3. The lander was on a 90-day mission to study the Martian atmosphere and search for underground ice near the planet's south pole.

WEATHER

Today

Saturday

MOSTLY CLOUDY
high 49, low 43

RAIN
high 50, low 38

Drug offenses to halt student aid

Going into effect July 1, a new rule could disqualify some students from financial aid, depending on the severity of the drug crime

By Jessica Blanchard
Oregon Daily Emerald

A recent rule enacted by the U.S. Department of Education could disqualify students with prior drug convictions from receiving federal financial aid for the upcoming school year.

The new rule, which has already met opposition from some University students, will go into effect July 1. The bill has met controversy nationwide since Congress passed it

last year as part of a 1998 bill that amended the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Students applying for federal aid will use a worksheet to answer whether they have ever been convicted of an illegal drug offense. Eligibility will be based on the number and severity of the drug offenses.

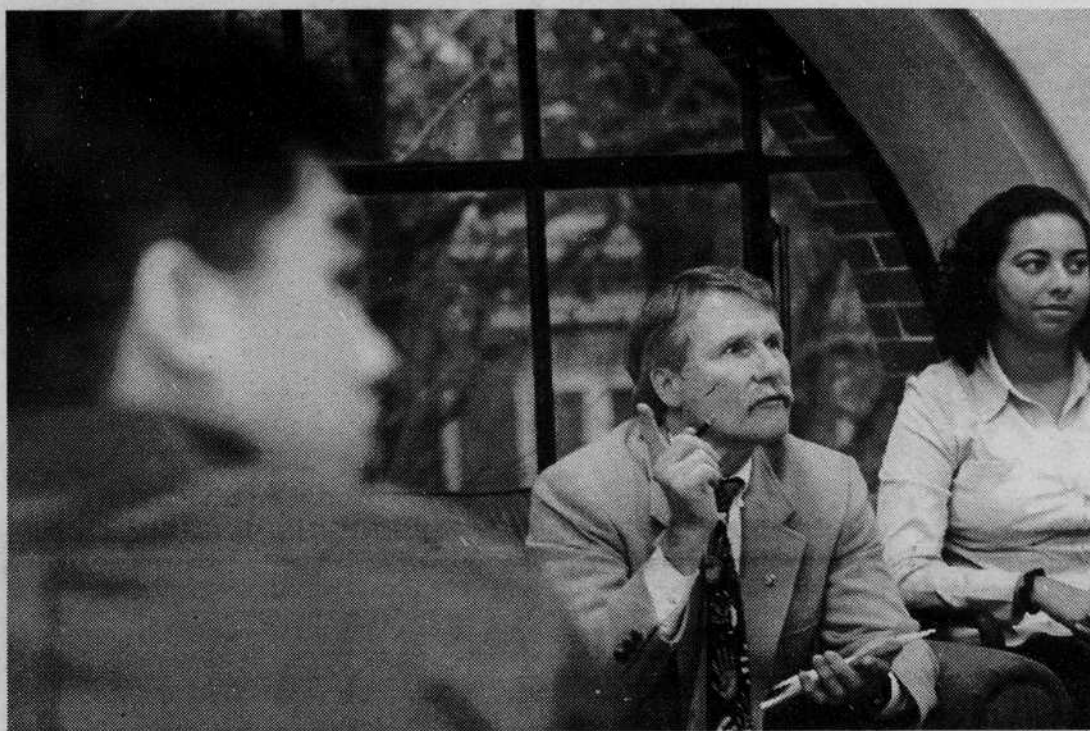
Some have argued that people convicted of possession or sale of illegal drugs should not be reward-

ed with federal financial aid money. Others said it was unfair to punish offenders twice, first with jail time or fines for their conviction, and then again by denying them aid when they tried to better their lives through education.

University students had mixed reactions to the bill. Some, like sophomore general studies major Emily Hake, said they could see

Turn to **Financial aid**, page 5A

Voice of the students



Scott Barnett Emerald

ASUO President Wylie Chen (left) participated in a meeting with Gov. Kitzhaber to discuss an initiative that they said could drastically cut the State's higher education budget.

Kitzhaber to allot money to child care

The governor answered questions regarding an initiative that may cut higher education funding

By Felicity Ayles
Oregon Daily Emerald

CORVALLIS — Gov. Kitzhaber took a step toward allocating money to assist student parents on Thursday by agreeing to include the federally funded Student Block Grant for child care in next year's state budget. In turn, the Oregon Student Association will be able to devote more time to encouraging college

students to register and vote.

The OSA used Thursday's meeting with Kitzhaber and Secretary of State Bill Bradbury at Oregon State University as an opportunity to ask questions and update the governor on the Student Vote 2000 program and the association's child care funding efforts as well as address a new tax initiative proposed by Oregon Taxpayers United leader Bill Size-

more. According to the OSA, the initiative could mean large cuts in the state's higher education budget.

ASUO President Wylie Chen presented the progress of Student Vote 2000, a state-wide campaign to get students to not just register, but to vote. Both Kitzhaber and Bradbury agreed that voting rates among people aged 18 to 34 are too low.

Turn to **Kitzhaber**, page 6A

ASUO seeking sign language recognition

Students at some universities can count American Sign Language classes toward their foreign language requirements; some students wish for the same at this university

By Edward Yuen
Oregon Daily Emerald

Students may soon be able to fulfill the University's language requirement without saying a word at all.

Later this term, the ASUO will present a proposal to the University Senate to include American Sign Language as an option to fulfill the foreign language requirement, ASUO President Wylie Chen said.

The proposal was created by Sarah Cohen, a sophomore journalism major, and one of about 80 students in the beginning and intermediate-level sign language classes this term.

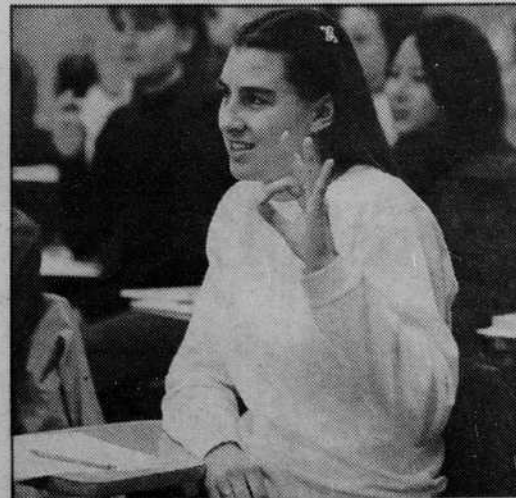
Cohen said she wanted to

take American Sign Language for her foreign language requirement, but a counselor from the Office of Academic Advising and Student Affairs told her the University does not accept sign language for that purpose.

Theresa Quinn, an academic advisor from the Office of Academic Advising and Student Affairs, said a language must have a cultural history and be associated with written literature to be recognized by the University.

The University currently accepts most Asian, European and Hebrew languages as foreign languages.

Turn to **Language**, page 6A



Azle Malinao-Alvarez Emerald

Freshman Katie Dutton practices her ABC's in sign language during her language class. Dutton is focusing her studies in pre-nursing.