

## Programs financing

## PFC budget hearings leave executive dissatisfied

■ ASUO President Wylie Chen is disappointed that an executive coordinator position will not be funded

By Simone Ripke  
Oregon Daily Emerald

After weeks of Programs Finance Committee hearings and high-flying emotions, the ASUO Executive is frustrated with the outcome of its budget hearings.

The ASUO Executive received a 2.01-percent increase, which mostly covered mandated increases and did not allow for reestablishing the position of an executive coordinator.

ASUO President Wylie Chen said he and Vice President Mitra Anoushiravani had hoped to reestablish the position, which had helped 13 previous ASUO executives conquer administrative and bureaucratic red tape.

Chen said this past year, he and Anoushiravani have spent too much time on the kind of bureaucratic work that was previously done by the executive coordinator.

"We were not elected to be administrators and bureaucrats," Chen said. "We are elected to advocate for students."

Chen said the position of the executive coordinator is crucial to retain and increase the ac-

countability of the ASUO, and in his four years in the ASUO he has seen the improvement the position makes not only for the executive, but for the entire ASUO.

"I have seen this position make huge differences," Chen said.



He said PFC members and student senators failed to understand that this position would not only benefit the ASUO, but all ASUO programs.

"This position isn't about the executive," Chen said. "If the executive isn't good, then it's going to affect every other program."

But Chen said he understands that PFC members and student senators, who have never been president or vice president, went by their own experience with student government and ruled that the position was not needed.

"They can't fully understand the magnitude of what a position like this could do," Chen said. "They have no idea what comes across our desks."

He said that although he and Anoushiravani would not have personally benefited from the position during the rest of their term, he had hoped to make the

ASUO better for the next executive.

Anoushiravani said the position would have enabled the ASUO Executive to get research and information from someone who was paid by them, rather than other departments of the University.

"I think [the PFC and senate] are making a mistake," she said.

She said she feels that not all PFC and senate members made an effort to read the ASUO Executive's budget proposal and appeal or ask questions that might have helped clarify issues. Anoushiravani said she was frustrated with the PFC's inconsistency in giving reasons for denying the position. She also said she feels the outcome of the budget hearing would have been different had it taken place earlier in the process.

Project Saferide had proposed an 8-percent budget increase for the next fiscal year and received a 5.6-percent increase, leaving coordinators looking for fund-raising opportunities.

Sarah Cohn, a senior political science major and co-director for Project Saferide, which is run through the ASUO Women's Center, said the program received increases for payroll and van maintenance which were the most crucial, but was cut in oth-

er line items it had hoped to increase.

"We got cut in some places where we did not necessarily want to get cut," Cohn said.

Those areas include expenses for printing and duplication, the program's main tool to spread the word. However, Cohn said she felt the hearing was fair and is confident Project Saferide will be able to make up for the difference through extra fund-raising activities.

The Student Senate is another group which did not receive the increase it had requested. The Student Senate's budget for the next fiscal year was decreased by 2.95 percent.

Student Sen. Jennifer Greenough said the senate had hoped to increase its budget, mainly to increase the stipends senators receive. Although the PFC did not approve of increasing the stipends, Greenough said she does not expect the PFC's decision to have much impact on next year's senate.

"I really don't think the people who are on senate do it for the money," she said.

But Sen. Spencer Hamlin is less optimistic.

"I think it screws over low-income students and their opportunity to serve on senate," Hamlin said.

Senators currently receive \$70 a month, and Hamlin said he

## More money

The following groups received large budget increases:

**The Multicultural Center**, with a 124-percent increase, from \$31,405 to \$70,349

**OUTLAWS**, with a 37.5-percent increase, from \$1,816 to \$2,498

**Programs and Assessments**, with a 30.487-percent increase, from \$53,594 to \$69,933

**Westmoreland Tenants' Council**, with a 48.786-percent increase, from \$1,236 to \$1,839

SOURCE: Programs Finance Committee

thinks a modest increase to \$100 would have helped enable low-income students to run for senate. He also said the PFC's decision not to increase the stipends made him wonder how valuable PFC members consider the Student Senate.

In addition, Hamlin said it has been difficult retaining senate members in the past few months.

"We have had a major problem keeping a full senate," he said.

Keeping the stipend at the current level will make keeping next year's senate complete a challenge, Hamlin said.

## Committee bases its decisions on three top priorities

■ Some groups, including the ASUO Executive, believe there were discrepancies, but the PFC takes defense

By Eric Pfeiffer  
Oregon Daily Emerald

Increased fiscal responsibility or an attack on student's cultural prosperity? This is the primary debate surrounding a sweeping wave of change brought forth by this year's Programs Finance Committee.

Groups such as the International Students Association have seen significant cuts to their budgets, and, specifically in this case, the ISA was denied its request for a program coordinator position.

"I don't understand how they can expect high-quality programs

when our budget is being drastically cut, and they are not willing to compensate our efforts," Ying-Che Chen, office manager for the ISA, said.

ASUO President Wylie Chen believes the budget cuts are going to result in negative consequences for a large number of programs and University students. "These cuts are going to

have huge effects on student programs," Chen said.

But members of the PFC continue to defend their position.

"We base our decisions on three priorities: How a group spent its budget the year before, what requests they are making and the benchmark," PFC mem-

ber Emily Sedgwick said.

Although the PFC uses this set of priorities in to judge the validity and necessity of a group's request, members of the ISA do not feel their group's needs were taken into full consideration.

"They are only looking at the numbers, not the issues behind them," Ying-Che Chen said.

Members of the PFC are also frustrated because they believe programs don't understand the limitations in the process of making budget changes.

"We gave [the ISA] the International media resource coordinator position, but we can't always fulfill every group's requests" said PFC member Helen Stocklin-Enright.

Also, Sedgwick pointed out that the PFC did approve several increases for groups, including the ISA, that went behind their

own 0-percent benchmark. "We gave them a 6-percent increase, while most groups had their budgets cut," Sedgwick said.

Sedgwick argues that the benchmark is only one of several factors that the PFC considers throughout the budgeting process. "The benchmark is always in the back of our minds; we use it as a guidance," she said.

Aside from the budget cuts themselves, members of the ISA have other problems with how the PFC has run this year's budget hearings.

"The process felt very awkward. We still don't understand why we were denied," Alberto DeAlbuquerque, co-director of the ISA said.

He said he also feels that too much attention is given to paperwork, instead of individual re-

## 0-percent benchmark

In an attempt to meet its proposed 0-percent increase, the PFC:

**Gave budget increases to 37 groups**

**Gave budget decreases to 57 groups**

**Funded six new student groups, including: the Arts Administration Student Forum, the Chess Club, the Oregon Future Lawyers Association, the Pre-Dental Club, the Pre-Veterinary Club, the Student parents Association**

Source: Programs Finance Committee

quests. "I think they rely too much on first impressions. We gave them the budget numbers they wanted, but they need to

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## PFC

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DDS has been running seven nights a week, using two vans on busy nights. With the cut, however, Wise said the service will not be able to run Sunday through Tuesday and there will only be one van running on Wednesdays and Thursdays and two on Fridays and Saturdays.

Wise said DDS will have to let employees go. He said PFC members said some of the positions, such as navigators, are not necessary and others are overpaid.

Rice said the PFC thought DDS provides a similar service to Saferide, which is mostly operated by volunteers. And although the PFC understands that there is a difference between the patrons both services deal with, there should be an alternative to DDS's current payroll expenses, such as stipends or paying drivers per

shift, Rice said.

Wise pointed out that the position of the navigators is crucial to listen to the radio, navigate the way, go and get the patrons from their party and control drunk passengers who distract the driver. Incidents where passengers have tried to spray DDS drivers with the fire extinguisher in the vans have proved that navigators are essential to protect the drivers and the safety of the ride, Wise said.

"I could not in good conscience send a single person to get a carload of belligerent drunks," he said. "We had to really argue to save that position."

However, cuts in the amount and quality of service will be inevitable, Wise said.

Wise said employees deserve adequate compensation because of the hours they work and the people they deal with.

The Student Bar Association's budget was also decreased by 30

percent. Paul Wagner, a third-year law student and president of the Student Bar Association said he feels that PFC members did not even listen to the presentation about the group.

"The whole thing has just been a complete sham," Wagner said.

He said the Student Bar Association requested a 2-percent increase to cover increases in office supplies. Now, with a 30-percent decrease, the group will have to find other ways to cover basic expenses, Wagner said.

"We are going to have to cut back quite a bit," Wagner said.

He said he feels that being heard by the PFC so late in the process — especially after the 121-percent increase the MCC received — left little choice for the PFC to do anything but make major cuts.

"Everyone after [the MCC] suffered," he said.

He said he thinks the outcome of the hearing would have been

different had they presented their budget at the beginning of the hearing process.

"It just seems like [the PFC is] locked now, because they committed to a 0-percent benchmark," he said.

The 0-percent benchmark, approved by the Student Senate last term, was the PFC's goal to have no increase from last year to this year's budgets.

"We as a committee knew what our benchmark was," Rice said. Nevertheless, the PFC granted an overall increase of 5 percent for unavoidable, mandated increases.

Emily Sedgwick, vice chairwoman of the PFC, said the committee analyzed all groups' budgets on the same criteria and made an effort to be as impartial as humans can possibly be.

"I would say that we are not computers. We don't spit out numbers with complete impartiality, but we do try," she said.

Land Air Water, which received

the 2-percent budget increase it requested, has shared costs for speakers and conferences in the past with the SBA. Beth Dahl, a third-year law student and the treasurer for LAW, said that despite getting its budget increase, her group will still be affected by the SBA's budget cut.

"That will probably hurt us next year," Dahl said.

Although the Coalition for Environmental Racism did not get a budget cut, it had asked for a 9.8-percent increase and received a 0-percent increase. Matthew Peckham, a junior double-majoring in environmental and international studies and a co-director for CAER, said the group would have used the increase for speaker fees and other expenses.

"We could have used that without a doubt," Peckham said.

He said he was new to the procedure this year and hopes to be better prepared for next year's hearing.