

Mexican university protest facts

Number of persons detained on Feb. 1 and Feb. 6 during the intervention of the Federal Preventative Police (a militarized national police force) on the campuses of the National Autonomous University of Mexico: 998

Number of persons freed since: 656

Number of students arrested for "flagrant crimes": 227

Number of students and professors arrested under outstanding warrants: 37

Number of students and professors facing criminal charges: 264

Total number of political prisoners from the UNAM: 342

Students with outstanding warrants for their arrest, who could be detained at any moment: 395

SOURCE: Mexican Attorney General's Office

UNAM protest

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ty Survival Center showed support Friday by posing with duct tape over their mouths in the EMU courtyard.

"We're doing this as an act of solidarity with the student strikers in Mexico who were arrested this week," Survival Center member Willie Thompson said. "Before the strike, tuition was virtually free. A \$150-a-year tuition hike would limit access to higher education for a large number of students."

Higher education in Mexico is currently free to all and is seen as a constitutional right, not a privilege. UNAM is the largest university in North America with nearly 250,000 students. Of the roughly 1,000 student protesters, 632 were arrested and face charges of damaging federal property.

Thompson, a junior history and sociology major, said he sees student debt and corporate influence at the University as similar to the problems at UNAM.

"Corporate influence, however subtle, changes the focus of higher education from purely educational to more business oriented," Thompson said. "Also, student debt is ridiculously high if it takes almost 20 years to pay off."

Survival Center members blame the strike not just on the proposed tuition raise, but on the external forces of world-wide financial organizations like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

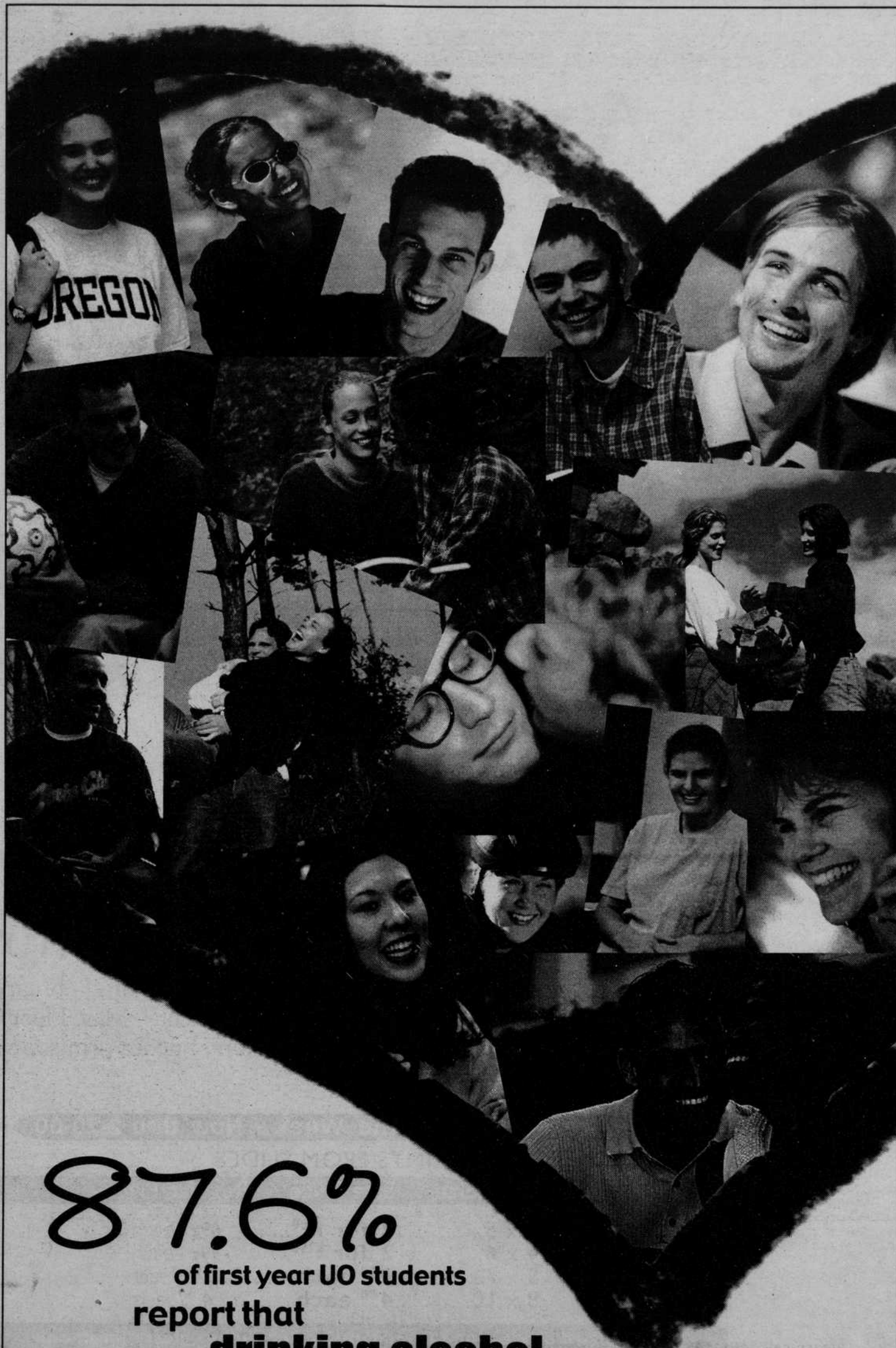
"The IMF and World Bank-imposed regulations are out of reach," Survival Center member Laura Close said. "It's so hard to access the mechanism of change."

The student strikers claim the IMF and the World Bank are influencing the Mexican government to convert from a socialist country to having a more free-market system with fewer government subsidies.

Mexican officials maintained the mass-arrest was necessary to restore order on the campus, which was shut down for more than 9 months as a result of the strike.

"A democratic society cannot allow the kidnapping of the national university," Mexican Interior Secretary Diodoro Carrasoco said in a statement released to the international press following the arrest. "The university campus is not alien to the rule of law, nor is it acceptable to turn it into a territory of impunity."

Students who wish to help the movement can sign statements of support at the Survival Center office in Suite 3 of the EMU.



87.6%

of first year UO students

report that

drinking alcohol

does

NOT

make them feel

sexier.

Data taken from the 1998 CORE Survey

2000
Office of Student Life