

Senate approves EMU budget

■ Senators only pass the budget after a student activities coordinator position is removed

By Jeremy Lang
Oregon Daily Emerald

After two failed attempts in past two weeks, the ASUO Student Senate passed the EMU's budget for the 2000-01 year at Wednesday night's meeting.

The new budget of more than \$2.5 million, a 4.24 percent increase from this year, passed by an 11 to 4 vote — but without a major position EMU Board members had adamantly argued to implement. This revised version passed by the senate Wednesday night did not include a staff director position for the Student Activities Resource Center. The staff director would help students who want to host an event using EMU facilities.

The proposed position encountered controversy when the

senate first heard it two weeks ago. Many senators openly voiced concerns about a proposed decrease in student salaries to pay for the new staff position.

According to ASUO rules, the senate could only approve or deny the budget; it couldn't vote to amend it, although many senators at that meeting said they would approve the entire budget if the SARO position was removed.

Last week, the EMU Board presented the senate with a compromise: approve the budget with the SARO position at half time. It still wasn't enough of a change to win a majority for a number of reasons. Sen. Peter Watts said he thought the position's responsibilities, which weren't completely formed in a job description, should be done by students.

The majority of the dissenters, however, simply didn't want to see incidental fee money taken away from students for a staff position.

Frustrations on the part of both EMU Board members and senators became apparent at last week's meeting when EMU Board member Dan Reid threatened to force a stalemate between the senate and board and bring the exact same budget back to this week's meeting.

Although the new budget without the position passed quickly and easily, Reid and ASUO Vice President Mitra Anoushiravani, who also serves on the board,

continued to express their disappointment with the senate.

"When the SARO doesn't exist next year, it's your fault," Reid told the senate.

Anoushiravani accused the senate of not doing enough research on the budget before making a decision at the last two meetings.

But at Wednesday night's meeting, many senators said they felt their fellow senators were doing their job well and didn't deserve Reid's harsh criticism.

"As a clarification of my personal opinion, everybody is doing their job," Senate President Jessica Timpany said.

Before the budget debate, the senate approved two special funding requests by the Asian/Pacific American Student Union for \$400 and \$4000 to reimburse expenses for a conference and the fee to bring speaker Kip Fulbeck to the University.

Fulbeck used stand-up comedy during the presentation and touched on topics such as interracial dating and icons of race and sex within the United States.

The senate is left with about \$1000 of surplus fee money to allocate for the rest of winter term.

The Student Senate is the legislative branch of the ASUO and handles financial issues regarding student programs. The Senate meets at 7 p.m. every Wednesday night in the EMU Board Room, third floor. All students can attend these meetings.

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