

Oregonians deem college costly yet essential

■ A survey reveals that most people wish higher education were more widely available

By Brooke Ross
Oregon Daily Emerald

Most Oregonians believe that while a university education is too costly, it is necessary to land a good job and maintain a good quality of life in the state, according to a recently released Oregon University System survey.

The survey, conducted by the Portland-based firm of Davis and Hibbitts, Inc., was based on a statewide poll of 600 registered voters. The results showed that 45 percent of those polled think tuition is too high for public state schools.

Yet even though those polled said higher education was too expensive, more than 80 percent said Oregon's universities and colleges compete with the best in the nation. University faculty and students had mixed reactions to the survey results.

Van Kolpin, an economics professor and department head, said he didn't think tuition was too expensive in general, but said he under-

stands it is expensive for some students.

"I definitely don't think tuition's too high, but at the same time, I know it's hard for some students to pay it," he said.

Kolpin said tuition at the University is more affordable compared to other schools, but if it were lower, more students could probably pursue a college degree.

"I paid my own way through school myself when tuition was a lot lower, and it wasn't easy," he said.

Monica Hernandez, a sophomore economics major, is currently paying her own way through college. Hernandez said tuition is too high. She said she depends on financial aid loans and her work study job to pay for her education because her parents are not in a position to support her financially.

"I don't know what other universities charge, but if tuition was lower, it would make it a lot easier on everyone," she said.

Hernandez said the thought of having to pay back student loans one day has left her worried about her future financial situation, a fear shared by 12 percent of those polled.

She said paying back her loans will be a challenge, unless she can land a well-paying job after she graduates. She said her degree will likely make that possible.

Hernandez is not alone in placing her hopes on her degree. Of those polled, 78 percent believe that in five years, it will be more important than it is now to have a degree in order to secure a well-paying job.

The survey also found that 90 percent of polled Oregonians believe that making higher education more widely available is key to maintaining the state's quality of life.

Martha Pitts, University director of admissions, agreed. She said the quality of life in Eugene definitely depends on the success of the University.

Pitts said the University contributes more than \$100 million a year to Oregon's economy, and University employees alone generate more than \$9 million in state income taxes.

"For every \$1 that the U of O gets from Oregon taxpayers, the University raises \$5 from other sources," she said.

According to the OUS survey,

What 600 Oregon registered voters had to say:

Are our public universities doing a better job than five years ago?

2001	34% better	10% worse	37% same
1999	23% better	10% worse	43% same

Do you think tuition at Oregon's public universities is too high?

2001	45% too high	36% about right	3% too low
1999	51% too high	31% about right	3% too low

Will a college education be more or less important in five years?

2001	78% more	3% less	16% as important
1999	67% more	5% less	26% as important

How do you view future economic conditions in Oregon?

2001	30% better	21% worse	45% same
1999	31% better	18% worse	45% same

SOURCE: Davis and Hibbitts Inc.

about 10 percent more people are familiar with the University than they were when the last survey was conducted in 1999, but University opinions about the reason for this increased recognition differ.

Esther La Pointe, a sophomore exercise and movement science major, said the University's increased popularity has more to do with media events than anything the University has done specifically in terms of academics.

"I think the whole Phil Knight situation put us in the media more," she said.

However, Pitts said the University's has intensified recruitment efforts and the establishment of more scholarships have increased recognition at the state level.

"I think these efforts have garnered a lot of attention around the state, even with people who don't have school-age children," she said.

Gunfire causes school cancellation, rerouting of buses

■ A Eugene resident is arrested and charged with reckless endangerment

By Darren Freeman
Oregon Daily Emerald

Police stopped traffic along four blocks on West 18th Avenue Tuesday morning after receiving reports of gunfire.

The shots were reported at 7:30 a.m., and the Eugene Police Department blocked off 18th Avenue

between Monroe and Friendly streets, notified residents to stay indoors and suggested that administrators at the nearby O'Hara Catholic School keep students away from windows.

After more shots were fired while

officers approached the scene, an EPD SWAT team was called to respond, according to police reports.

Police arrested Douglas Monty Worley, 57, without conflict at 8:30 a.m. He is charged with reckless endangerment and unlawful use of a weapon. Police confiscated several guns from Worley's apartment, including a shotgun, two rifles and three handguns.

The EPD does not know the motive for the shooting, but officers learned that Worley was dealing with personal problems and suspected that he had been drinking, according to police reports.

The EPD used its first-in-the-nation Community Emergency Notification System to rapidly call 498

area residences and warn people to stay indoors.

O'Hara Catholic School officials evacuated the school's 88 elementary students and canceled classes for the day. Before an arrest was made, students were led out of the school's 16th Avenue entrance and to a nearby church. Parents were called to take the children home.

As many as seven Lane Transit District buses were rerouted during the police action, causing some University students to be late to class. But buses were back on route as soon as the arrest was made.

"It didn't cause us much disruption at all," LTD marketing manager Ed Bergeron said. "We were able to get around it."

SWEET TALK



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UNIVERSITY of OREGON BOOKSTORE

Calendar

Wednesday, Feb. 7

Career Education Expo: "Human and Social Services Career Paths." Noon-1 p.m. River Rooms, EMU. Free.

Center for the Study of Women in Society presents Mary Wood, English: "This Puzzling Case: Narratives of Schizophrenia." Noon-1 p.m. 330 Hendricks Hall. Free.

Russian Film Series: "The Second Circle," Aleksandr Sokurov's study, in Russian with English subtitles, of family relationships and mortality. 6:30 p.m., 115 Pacific Hall. Free.

Meeting: Information session about Querétaro, Mexico. 4 p.m., 214 Friendly Hall. Free.

Black History Month

The Black Student Union will host the following events:

Today: Black Expressions Exhibit in the Multicultural Center. The exhibit will include a photo and art display.

Feb. 16: Black Heritage Ball at the Red Lion Hotel. The event starts at 10 p.m., and the theme will be "Harlem Nights: A Black Diamond Affair."

Feb. 20: Celebrating African-American Achievement Night in the EMU Ballroom. The event, starting at 7 p.m., will honor prominent African-Americans in Oregon.

Two events have yet to be scheduled: a poetry night and Taste of Blackness, a meal featuring soul food.

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