

Legislature denies colleges extra funds

■ A shortfall in revenues forced legislators to refuse community colleges money for increased enrollment

By Andrew Adams
Oregon Daily Emerald

Faced with lower state revenue projections, the state Legislature's Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education was forced to not grant state community colleges an additional \$45 million they had sought for enrollment growth.

This is just one example how the state's March revenue estimate, which came in \$108 million less than expected, is causing turmoil in Salem, as legislators wrangle over where the scant fiscal resources can be allocated. If May's revenue pro-

jections come in lower than the March projections, the situation will become even more dire, and any budget cuts are likely to be deeper.

Rep. Robert Ackerman, D-Eugene, who serves on the Lane County Community College Board, said he was not that disappointed with the subcommittee's action because he knew it wasn't specifically directed at community colleges. He said it was just a sign of the bleak budget times, which he expected will make things even more difficult.

Rep. Tootie Smith, R-Molalla, said not passing the budget was not easy.

"It was one of the most painful things I've had to do," she said.

Smith said she is a big supporter of community colleges, and she would

work hard to find the funding.

"I'm not going to make any promises, but it is one of my priorities," she said.

Community colleges had received the \$45 million for enrollment growth in the original budget proposed by Gov. John Kitzhaber, but because of the revenue estimates, it does not appear likely that there will be additional funding available for community colleges.

Sen. Cliff Trow, D-Corvallis, said the committee decided not to approve the budget based on the advice of the Ways and Means Committee co-chair, Sen. Len Hannon, R-Ashland, and the Legislative Fiscal Office.

He said there still could be funds available in other budgets that could be allocated for community colleges, and added that the alloca-

tion won't come at the expense of other education budgets. Trow said there could still be room for both four-year institutions and community colleges to receive more funds.

"I don't think the two are mutually exclusive," he said.

Rep. Kurt Schrader, D-Canby, served on the Emergency Request board when community colleges came before it last year to ask for additional funding for increased enrollment. He said it is an unusual situation in that community college enrollment has continued to outpace expectations. He said he would be "going through the budget with a fine-tooth comb" to secure the \$45 million for community colleges.

If those funds do become available, Schrader said community colleges have priority in having them added to their budget.

Conference to shed light on campus diversity

■ The weekend conference will explore diversity with discussions on race and discrimination

By Hank Hager
Oregon Daily Emerald

Disabilities, diversity, education and environmental racism are just a few of the many issues of concern on campus that will be discussed during the "Politics of Identity: Learning to Listen" conference, which begins today.

More than 200 concerned citizens and faculty are expected to attend the conference at the William W. Knight Law Center. The various topics will be analyzed through panel discussions, conference organizer Lorraine Brundige said.

"The main focus is to bring together diverse communities from the city of Eugene, the University and [Lane Community College], with some collaboration with [Oregon State University], in order to address the political and experimental issues surrounding identity in an ever-increasing diverse population," Brundige said. "The

main topics center on issues of race, racism and discrimination."

Speakers from the University include Scott Pratt, an assistant philosophy professor, Mia Tuan, an assistant sociology professor, and Mark Tracy, the assistant dean of student life.

"Diversity questions on the University of Oregon campus have been an important issue over the last few years," Pratt said. He said his discussion, "All Men are White," will center on the issues of "whiteness."

When asked what "whiteness" in his speech referred to, Pratt said, "That is the question."

Phil Ferguson, a University associate professor of education and community support, said his discussion, "Disability and Education," will focus on disabilities, which are often not grouped with diversity.

"It is important for all elements of diversity to come together and share their experiences," he said.

Cheyney Ryan, a University philosophy professor, said diversity is directly related to the community.

"A principal focus of the conference is diversity as a project of community, hence as something which requires

the capacity to listen to one another," he said. "This seems like an easy thing, but in fact it is very difficult."

Associate Professor of international studies Rob Proudfoot will deliver the keynote speech, "Shattering the Colonial Mind: Reclaiming and Remembering Sacred Landscape of Self, Spirit and Community."

Lani Roberts, a philosophy professor at Oregon State, will end the conference Saturday night with a keynote address.

Roberts said her speech, "Social Construction of Race: All the Little Children of the World," will "discuss the concept that race is not a biological but social construction."

She said race follows a sort of social hierarchy, which is hard to dismantle.

"It is fundamentally immoral the way the human community divides itself," she said. "It makes no sense to me why human beings are so cruel to one another."

Roberts said most people who are high on the social ladder are unaware there is a division. She said the purpose of the conference is to reach out to those who are oblivious

to this separation.

Brundige said she chose Proudfoot and Roberts to speak because they received high recommendations from students, faculty and administrators at their respective schools.

"These two individuals have gone beyond the bounds of academic and administrative duties in their effort to create a more diverse environment at the University of Oregon and Oregon State University," she said.

Assistant philosophy Professor John Lysaker, who will be co-facilitating Pratt's panel on "All Men are White," said he will attend not only to educate others, but to learn more.

"Diversity has clearly been a central term in a number of discussions of what the University should be," he said. "It would be important to discuss what diversity really means."

Brundige said there is a need "to address the importance of changing social dynamics taking place in Oregon, and our inability to deal with these changes with the intent to foster solutions, whether in the form of less racism, curriculum needs or the much-needed addition of faculty of color to this campus."

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