

Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
 P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
 E-mail: odc@oregon.uoregon.edu
 Online Edition:
 www.dailyemerald.com

COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:
 Andrew Adams
 Associate Editors:
 Jeremy Lang
 Peter Hockaday

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Larger OUS budget is a good omen for Oregon

Better higher education funding good for all

The latest news from Salem concerning the budget for the Oregon University System has been the best there's been in this otherwise bleak session.

From a starting point of nearly \$100 million below what our seven public universities figured they would need for the next funding period, we have now arrived at the \$792 million that is still below what was originally sought by the OUS, but is a great improvement from where Governor John Kitzhaber started us.

Between those two points the co-chairs of the Legislature's Joint Ways and Means Committee offered their own budgets that further muddied the waters.

These past few months, which witnessed this "yo-yo" of a budget, have been at times most distressing to those in higher education. And not only have administrators and professors been keeping a wary eye on legislators, but student leaders have also kept their fingers on the budgetary pulse in the hopes of defeating a tuition increase that at times was feared to be upwards of 10 percent.

Like the fear of a drastically reduced overall budget, that fear has also failed to materialize in light of the stabilizing efforts of the Education Subcommittee that last week approved the \$792 million budget as well as only a 4 percent tuition hike for this next year and a 3 percent increase to follow.

This is an encouraging sign, as it shows our lawmakers actually had the gumption to put some support behind higher education during a session in which state funds were hard to come by and the Department of Transportation, the state police and the Department of Justice were all lobbying to preserve their budget requests in full.

It would be easy for anyone to argue that those on campus have a self-centered view of the state budget and don't take into account the necessity of other services that had to compete for funding. While to some extent this is true, one also has to understand the grave importance of higher education to Oregon. As this state continues to make the painful transition from a sawmill to computer-chip economy, it needs qualified university graduates who have a devoted interest in the betterment of their home state. Leaving the OUS scrambling to make ends meet will just make this that much more difficult.

Every institution in Oregon from the University of Oregon to Oregon State University's fledgling Bend campus needs the full support of Oregon's Legislature if we want to remain competitive in the national and international market.

Tainted goods should be returned

No one can discount the value of donations. Generous gifts have remade our Knight Library and also established a formidable law school here at the University. But when gifts are received that were obtained

through ill-gotten means, then it is time for this institution to take the high road and return any such funds.

The Portland-based investment firm Capital Consultants, headed by University alumnus Jeffrey Grayson, collapsed under federal scrutiny last September. It would be later discovered that Grayson appears to have used \$355 million in funds taken from his clients and union pension accounts for various purposes, including hunting trips for clients and charitable donations. The University received \$800,000 from Grayson and then renamed the old law school building in his honor in part because of that donation and the pledge to add \$1.5 million more.

Thomas Lennon, the receiver appointed by the U.S. District Court to liquidate Grayson's firm, has made it clear that he believes the University should return those funds to Capital Consultants' private portfolio so the courts can further deal with this tangle of financial deception.

Despite Grayson's charitable involvement with the University, which included serving in some of its largest fundraising efforts, University administrators should initiate an effort to ensure that any funds that have any taint of corruption on them not contribute to its educational mission. Instead, they have maintained a defense that the University has not been explicitly asked to return any funds and will not even "speculate about what would happen," as University General Counsel Melinda Grier said, until it receives such a letter.

Our University should seek to solve this problem of its own accord and not because it is told to do so.

Recognize the value of signing

Education is an ever-changing mission because of our ever-changing society. The standards and requirements set by this University and any other institution of higher education should reflect that.

Therefore, it makes good sense that the University should support a bid to extend the perimeters of its foreign language requirement to include sign language. Granted, there are more people fluent in Spanish and French than sign language, but that does not diminish the value of learning sign language. The culture of deafness is just as legitimate as that of any Spanish or French culture and the University should recognize this by letting students complete their bachelor of arts degree with two years of sign language.

Coordinating one's words to one's actions should be just as challenging as the complexities of French verb tenses, and unlocking the doors to the world of the deaf has the same merits as delving into the Spanish culture.

Western Oregon University already offers signing as a means to fulfill a language requirement, and this University should follow that example.

This editorial represents the views of the Emerald's editor in chief and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Oregon Daily Emerald.

EMU officials unwilling to collaborate

GUEST COMMENTARY

Linda Dievendorf

The Cultural Forum is an experiential, student-based learning environment that I inherited and have continued to foster for the past seventeen years. The students teach me what they need to learn and I guide and assist their learning process. My attempts for a similar collaborative relationship with EMU Director Dusty Miller and EMU Director of Student Activities Gregg Lobisser have been without success.

I believe their inability to communicate their goals and their inflexibility in understanding the philosophy and operation of the Cultural Forum led to their decision to terminate my contract. It would do well to more fully examine the motives behind Dusty and Gregg's decision and whether this decision best serves the University community.

It has been my honor and privilege to work with some of the

brightest, most creative, resourceful and gifted students that have come through the University of Oregon. I have dedicated my energy, enthusiasm, talent and the greatest part of my life for almost two decades to student development and leadership in the Cultural Forum and the University. The decision to terminate my contract is a misuse and abuse of power, authority and position and is fundamentally wrong.

There have been numerous opportunities over the last two years to work through differences and for Dusty and Gregg to consult with me and rely on my expertise and insight in making decisions that affect my program. I believe their refusal is an inability to embrace cooperation and collaboration and the desire to exercise control at any cost. And the cost is great. Their approach to managing breeds fear of engaging in meaningful dialogue and resolution because to do so results in accusations of misconduct, censure and termination. The choice to manage authoritatively, patronizingly and pater-

nally erodes trust and diminishes true participation in community. Unfortunately, theirs is a prevailing approach to student leaders and other program people in the EMU.

Refusing to engage the knowledge and resources of the student activities and program staff is disrespectful, unnecessarily inefficient, a waste of human resources and creates division. Attempts to control students, student programs and their resources disempowers everyone and teaches nothing.

The University administration has an opportunity now to take a bold step and commit to inclusion — inclusion of the visions of students, staff, faculty and administrators in deciding a positive future for the University and creating an environment where differences are honored and celebrated. It is possible. The Cultural Forum students and staff have been creating and generating a shared vision for more than twenty years.

Linda Dievendorf is the program coordinator for the University of Oregon Cultural Forum.

Letters to the editor

Technological progress aids espionage organizations

As people are certainly becoming aware, enormous innovations are occurring in technology. There truly is something of a technological revolution occurring in the country and the world.

However, what I suspect people do not fully realize is that the same is true with regard to technological innovation useful for espionage purposes. It is my view that world espionage organizations now have technological capabilities that allow them to demonstrate more power in influencing the affairs of societies than ever before in history.

All the secret satellites regular-

ly being sent up into space likely allow world espionage organizations increased powers to control societies. I suspect many of the technologies present on these satellites would shock people with regard to how powerful they are in influencing events on earth.

One technology I believe is currently present is a technology called "mind control technology." I believe this technology is now developed to such a degree that the Central Intelligence Agency and other world espionage organizations can influence the thought processes in peoples' minds. Consequently, I suspect these organizations can dramatically influence the outcomes of elections in supposedly free democratic societies.

I feel the public should be made more aware of these possibilities. It seems that the United States'

news-providing industries have been unusually silent with regard to reporting on the state-of-the-art technological capabilities of espionage organizations. I also suspect it is no longer safe to watch television or listen to the radio without risking being unknowingly influenced in views and attitudes.

Cordell Schubert
 Danville, Ind.

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