

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

To save money, OSU needs to put focus on strengths

Projected job and academic cuts at Oregon State University — the result of an estimated \$19 million budget shortfall — are unfortunate. OSU is suffering from the effects of an ailing economy and rising costs, and now the university will likely let those effects trickle down to students and faculty as they attempt to remedy the situation.

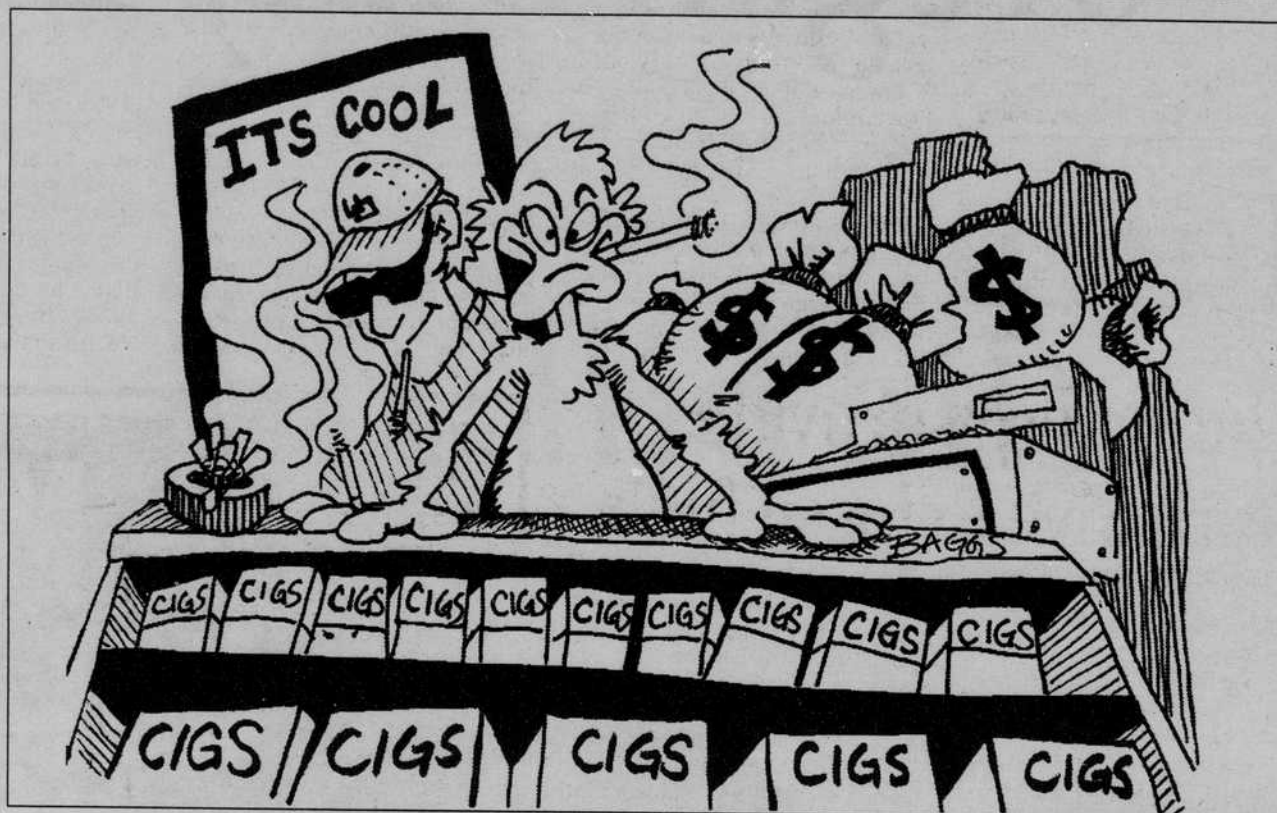
To get through these difficult financial times, OSU should focus on maintaining their most successful departments, such as agriculture and engineering, instead of funding smaller liberal arts departments that are forced to compete with the University of Oregon. In turn, our university should focus its limited resources on maintaining and improving our liberal arts programs so that both schools are not forced to compete with each other for enrollment or statewide recognition.

If the state of Oregon wants the two universities to have the resources to compete academically, legislators need to be more vigilant about appropriating funds to the Oregon University System. It is not possible to keep smaller departments and big-name specialty schools afloat in the slowing economy if taxpayers are unwilling to pony up enough for all academic departments.

Another thought: Perhaps OSU should rethink its stake in its Cascades Campus, the Eastern Oregon branch plan. If the school is being forced to cut jobs and departments at the main campus, it doesn't make fiscal sense to continue with plans for an expansion in Bend at this time. The Oregon University System also might need to reconsider which university is presently better poised to expand on the other side of the Cascades if OSU is unwilling to forgo its hard-won branch campus. The Oregon University System should advise administrators in Corvallis to put off the plans for another year, or at least until the ailing economy begins to recover.

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Steve Baggs Emerald

University hypocrisy is not essential

The University traditionally prides itself on its nationally recognized image as one of the most progressive schools in the nation. At least, when it's convenient. The effects of alcohol use are highly publicized on campus, and the University contributes funds to services such as health workshops for those with alcohol-related problems, Designated Driver Shuttle and activities such as the recent "Party House," which was set up to show students the negative side of drinking.



Rebecca Newell
Columnist

When it comes to nicotine, the University is a hypocrite, actually making money off selling students an addictive drug. The educational entity whose main concern is supposed to be for our well-being and success obviously prefers the \$103,686 it made last year from tobacco sales to the scary fact it's the only Pacific-10 Conference school that sells tobacco on-

campus. It's not as if the University doesn't realize that tobacco is responsible for more suffering and death than all other illegal and legal substances combined, or that it is the No. 1 cause of premature death in the United States (according to biology professor V. Pat Lombardi). The University is even aware that smoking is the utmost risky health behavior for students, according to the results of a 1994 University Health Center Survey.

So why is the University spending money to corroborate the fact smoking can kill and that students are at a high risk, or setting up programs such as Smoking Cessation through the Peer Health Education Program, when packs of smokes will continue to be sold at the EMU's Erb Essentials Store?

Obviously, the peace of mind that would come with knowing the University isn't directly contributing to the pollution of its students' lungs just isn't worth giving up the income it's making from Joe Camel's favorite "death stick." With 7.5 percent of total EMU food service sales (and a third of Erb Essentials sales) coming from tobacco products, maybe we should rename the little store "Herb Essentials."

EMU Food Services Director John

Costello claims that if the store got rid of tobacco products, they could also lose corollary food sales from people buying cigarettes. Maybe John doesn't understand that nicotine is an appetite suppressant, and that students who didn't have easy access to a cigarette might buy some munchies to keep their mouths busy.

Maybe students will just make the trek to 7-11 if they're craving a little nicotine buzz before class — though it's highly doubtful they'll hoof the extra blocks during a ten-minute break between classes. I'm not naive enough to suggest that the University ceasing to sell tobacco is going to cause students everywhere to drop the habit. However, it's pretty clear to me that it's entirely unethical for the University to be profiting from tobacco sales and supporting tobacco companies.

Oregon State University doesn't sell tobacco products on school grounds, and they aren't griping over the money they aren't making. Of course, Corvallis also went smoke-free years before Eugene did. Maybe we should re-evaluate just how health-conscious Eugene really is.

Rebecca Newell is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald. Reach her at rebeccanewell@dailyemerald.com.

Advocate truth about worldwide territorial conquest

In "Columbus Day needs to serve as a reminder" (ODE, 10/08), the Emerald editorial board wrote that "everyone needs to be taught the truth about our country's origin, no matter how difficult the conversation may be." The idea was that Columbus Day is one of those examples where we tend to glorify something that wasn't entirely pretty.

Agreed, but if real educational progress in this context is to occur, we need to do more than just show the consequences of how one group of conquistadors affected any given pre-existing culture or cultures.

From a knowledge standpoint, the problem with using dates like 1492 is that it makes us inclined to

ignore what was going on in affected places before these times.

An implied suggestion concurrently emerges when we overdo this: that this (enter date here) is when real "history" begins in certain regions. This creates a fundamentally flawed presentation that may be convenient if one's goal is to create a simplistic dichotomy of victims and aggressors, but rarely if ever does it advance the discussion in truly relevant terms.

The fact of the matter is that conquest is not a European invention, which this kind of arbitrary dating tends to imply. For centuries, if not millennia, prior to the arrival of Columbus, the same phenomenon was occurring in the Americas, as it was in Africa, where the practice

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Mark Grant

of slavery — which continues today — is thousands of years old. In this context all "civilizations" are equally responsible for what may be regarded as imperialistic crimes against humanity. It makes absolutely no sense to select one society over all others when engaging in such a discussion.

The modern tendency in this regard is that one should only bash Europe and the United States while ignoring the similar histories of all other empires and tribes. There's really no valid moral logic

to this kind of politically correct approach. When taken too far, the practice amounts to pseudo-scholarship, not because of what is called to our attention but because of what we are subtly encouraged to ignore.

How ironic that this double standard is often imposed upon the student body, even in America, by so many of her own educators. Considering these educators' knowledge of the truer picture of human history, one wonders what they hope to accomplish in encouraging such a biased fixation against these "white, male-dominated" societies. (Of course, it may be that many of these teachers really don't have a clue about the bigger scenario, i.e., maybe they never

actually thought about what life in North America was like before 1492, for example.)

Personally, I would change the editorial's suggestion, by suggesting that, "Everyone, in all nations, need to be taught the truth about territorial conquest as an ancient and worldwide phenomenon."

This isn't to encourage moral equivocation but to promote the kind of relevant discussion that I think the Emerald is advocating. This is a serious subject and one that we should all take a good hard look at, but in doing so, let's approach the whole matter seriously — and honestly.

Mark Grant, Class of '85, graduated with an international studies degree.