

PFC budgeting closes

The Program Finance Committee presents its budget to the ASUO Student Senate on Wednesday

Jennifer Bear
Campus/Federal Politics Reporter

The long, complex process of doling out the dough to more than 120 student groups and University programs has finally come to a close, and the members of the ASUO Programs Finance Committee can now put up their feet and indulge in a little rest and relaxation.

Well, almost.

One final task remains unfinished — PFC must present its budget to the ASUO Student Senate at its final meeting of the term on Wednesday. Originally, the committee was slated to appear before senate on Feb. 19, but PFC asked for a one-week extension so it could hold recall hearings for the Emerald and the Career Center. Then last week, a technical problem prevented PFC from being able to approve the minutes for a number of its previous meetings, and the committee once again had to postpone presenting its budget until next week.

After working long hours and laboring about budget allocations, this year's PFC members say they have proved their commitment to the positions. PFC Programs Appointee Joy Nair said the current committee is unique because no members have quit — a rarity for

PFC — and she added that within the past few years, there has never been a full committee of seven throughout the whole process.

"I've never seen that happen, and I've been here for four years," Nair said.

PFC also has distinguished itself from last year's committee by doling out a larger number of high-percentage increases and decreases than was given for 2002-03. This year, six groups were given increases of 40 percent or more, while last year only three groups received such substantial increases. For 2002-03, only one group received a decrease of 40 percent or more, while this year PFC gave six groups decreases of at least 40 percent.

The Native American Law Student Association received the largest percent budget increase for any group over the two years when PFC gave the group a 230.33 percent increase for 2003-04. The Asian Pacific American Law Students Association received the largest increase last year, 97.28 percent, but still did not come close to this year's NALSA budget boost. PFC Chairwoman Kate Shull said the committee decided to increase funding to the ethnic law group because it had raised thousands of dollars to bring the Navajo Supreme Court to campus this year and had proven it was fiscally responsible.

Additionally, this year PFC appeared to be more generous be-

cause it zero-funded fewer groups. Last year 10 groups were zero-funded, while only six groups this year stopped receiving funds. Nair said fewer groups were zero-funded this year because PFC members worked to connect with every group to determine if participation in the program had disappeared before deciding to remove funding. She added groups have done a good job of spending their allocated budgets and ensuring transition between leadership positions from one year to the next.

Austin Shaw-Phillips, co-director for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer Alliance, said this year's PFC was thoughtful and considerate, a major change from how past committees have behaved toward student groups.

"Our experience with PFC this year was surprisingly positive," he said. "I've seen the committee be really rude and condescending in the past."

LGBTQA's other co-director, Kristina Armenakis, also said PFC was more professional and easier to work with this year. She added committee members' relations with one another were more cordial this year, while last year's members regularly argued among themselves.

"We were just really amazed at how nice they were," Armenakis said.

Contact the senior news reporter at jenniferbear@dailymerald.com.

Legislators fuel gas alternative

The H2 GROW Act will fund the development of vehicles that run on hydrogen fuel

Ali Shaughnessy
Environment/Science/Technology Reporter

With the slow depletion of fossil fuels, some say the need for sustainable energy sources is ever growing.

On Feb. 11, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and Rep. Christopher Cox, R-Calif., unveiled new legislation called the H2 GROW Act, which stands for Hydrogen Transportation Wins Over Growing Reliance on Oil and seeks to make hydrogen-powered vehicles marketable alternatives for consumers within the next 10 years.

"Senator Wyden believes America can do more," Wyden's spokeswoman Carol Guthrie said. "The key now is to make it more affordable for average Americans."

With raising gas prices and the possibility of an oil shortage, hydrogen-fueled vehicles offer a non-mainstream alternative.

Wyden and Cox are taking an approach not previously seen in similar environmental legislation. They plan to use federal funding to get hydrogen-

fueled vehicles on the road, produce hydrogen fuel and create the fueling infrastructure. Past legislation has focused only on funding research and development of hydrogen systems, which are designed with environmental concerns in mind. A hydrogen system's primary byproduct is water vapor, and it does not produce carbon monoxide or the other poisonous fumes characteristic of conventional gas-powered engines.

General Motors, Toyota and the Natural Resources Defense Council are all strong supporters of the proposed act.

Daniel Lashof, a representative of NRDC, said it was his opinion that hydrogen-fueled vehicles were an up-and-coming technology.

"I think (hydrogen-fueled vehicles) are very promising ... there's a lot of public interest in clean air," Lashof said.

Toyota has designed vehicles with fuel systems composed of four 5,000-psi hydrogen fuel tanks. Hydrogen gas is fed into the fuel-cell stack where it is combined with oxygen, creating a chemical produced by the fuel cell which is then used to power an electric motor.

Martha Voss, a representative from Toyota, said she was optimistic for the act, especially because of all the companies working together.

"Nobody can do it on their own," she said.

H2 GROW implements a mix of tax incentives and tax breaks to dramatically improve the market and infrastructure for hydrogen fuel and the vehicles it powers.

Consumers who purchase a hydrogen-powered vehicle will receive a maximum tax credit of 25 percent of the sale price, with a cap of \$50,000, according to the act. The credit will steadily decrease each year, until it becomes a five percent tax credit with a \$10,000 cap in 2012.

Companies that manufacture and sell hydrogen refueling equipment, clean refueling properties or purchase hydrogen fuel cells intended to be expanded for vehicle refueling will also receive tax incentives.

Wyden is pushing the act with the hope that America will embrace hydrogen-fueled vehicles by 2012.

Contact the reporter at alishaughnessy@dailymerald.com.



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Garden shed at Hill House, by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Helensburgh, Scotland

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Totals after Week 3:

Each school's lbs. per resident:

- Bowling Green: 16.1 lbs.
- UO: 15.2 lbs.
- Harvard: 14.7 lbs.
- Miami: 13.9 lbs.
- Ohio Univ.: 9 lbs.
- Western Michigan: 6.7 lbs.
- Ohio State: 2.2 lbs.
- Wash. Univ. St. Louis: 1.4 lbs.

UO residence halls and dining centers recycled 15,926 lbs. of materials.

Factoid:

"Producing glass from virgin materials requires 30 percent more energy than producing it from crushed, used glass."

Source: www.epa.gov

The President's Office & the U of O Senate present

U of O Task Force on Athletics - Open Forum

Wednesday, March 5
4:00pm to 5:30pm
150 Columbia

Members of the Task Force on Athletics invite you to an open campus forum to discuss current issues regarding intercollegiate athletics. The panel particularly invites your questions, comments and views on the compatibility of intercollegiate athletics with the UO academic mission and the national athletics "arms race." How are we doing at the U of O on these issues and how do they affect us all? Let your voice be heard.

Panelists from the U of O Task Force on Athletics

Suzanne Clark, Professor of English, Co-Chair of Athletics Task Force

James Earl, Professor of English

Jim O'Fallon, Professor of Law, Faculty Athletic Representative

Martin Smith, Head Men's Track Coach

Margie Paris, Professor of Law, Co-Chair and Forum Moderator

Interested faculty, staff and students are encouraged to participate in this forum.

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To view the recently released Task Force statement on U of O Student-Athlete Welfare, go to <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~vpadmin/taskforce1.html> or call 346-3003 to request a copy.