

# COMMENTARY

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## UO deadline for FAFSA form doesn't cash in

Guest commentary

Unbeknownst to most University students, the University has a rather deceptive financial aid policy concerning the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

As many students know, filling out a FAFSA before March 1 gives a student priority when federal funds are disbursed. At the beginning of each year, many students rush to obtain all the necessary information that is needed to fill out the FAFSA so that they can receive priority by sending in their FAFSA before March 1. As it turns out, this might not do them any good.

I was recently informed by a financial aid counselor that I had not received priority. When I told him that I had filled out my FAFSA before March 1, he informed me that the University does not use the date that a person fills out and sends in the FAFSA. Rather, they use the date on which the federal processor returns the verified FAFSA to the University.

Thus my completed FAFSA was filled out and sent in on Feb. 18 but was not returned to the University until the first week in March because of lag time with the federal processor. So, I am being punished, as it were, for something over which I have no control whatsoever.

The University makes it sound like the deadline for sending in a FAFSA is March 1, but that won't do you any good with the system in place now. Realistically, one would have to send in their FAFSA by the end of the second week in February, at the latest, in order to receive priority. Does this seem unfair to anyone else?

Either the University should change their policy, or they should let students know that March 1 isn't really the deadline. So, if you didn't receive priority funding and thought that you should have, now you know why.

If you think this policy is unfair or deceptive, contact the Office of Financial Aid and let them know.

Diego Rail is a sophomore chemistry major.

## Opinions can't be blamed for suicides

Guest commentary

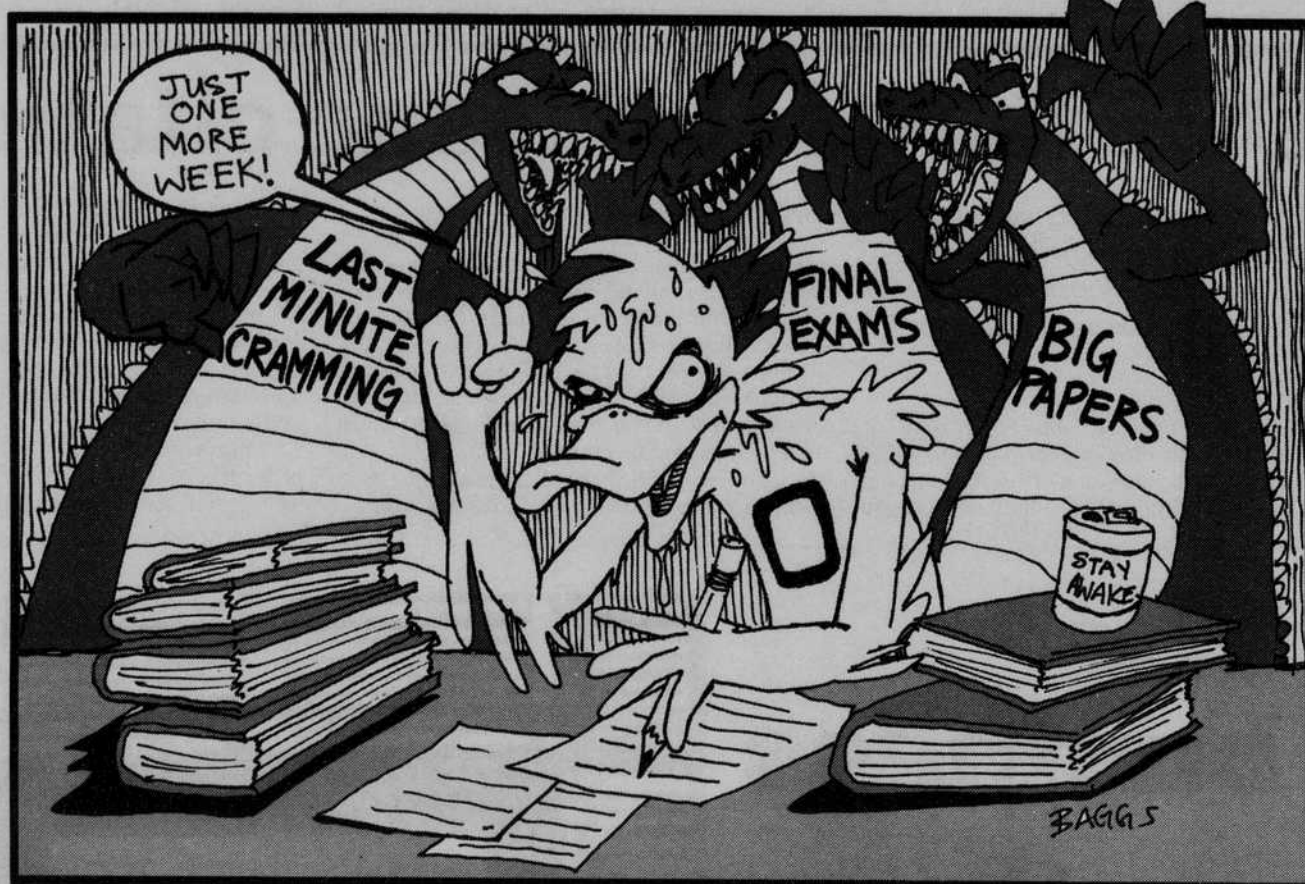
I do not hate homosexuals. However, I am homophobic — and proud of it! Vincent Martorano has received a lot of criticism for his May 9 Emerald article, "Homosexual men should hide their disgusting acts." He has been called homophobic, judgmental and intolerant, and even implicated in the suicides of homosexuals. Such an idea is ridiculous, so get off Martorano's back!

As I already stated, I am proudly homophobic. I cannot stand seeing homosexual couples holding hands — that makes me homophobic. I find homosexuality unnatural — that makes me homophobic. I do not support the "I'm persecuted" mentality that the homosexual community holds — that makes me homophobic.

I support Martorano's views that homosexuals should stay in the closet — that makes me homophobic. I do not support gay pride parades, and I resent the stealing and political use of innocent childhood symbols (i.e., the rainbow) — that makes me homophobic. More power to the homosexual community, but I wholeheartedly disagree with the community about their sexual orientation — that makes me homophobic.

I, like Martorano, am not calling for or condoning violence against the homosexual community. I am just expressing my views. I agree that homosexuals should stay in the closet. I was, however, happy to sit on my opinions, keeping my mouth shut until recent articles in the Emerald. After the implied accusation that Martorano and people that think like him are somewhat responsible for anyone's suicide, I decided I have been quiet for far too long.

Kudos to Martorano for having the nerve to voice his opinions on the "we accept 'all' views (as long as they agree with our views)" liberal campus. Kudos to the Emerald for printing Martorano's debate piece. This has truly been an interesting debate. However, there is no way to blame a heterosexual person, simply expressing their beliefs and opinions, for anyone's suicide.



Steve Baggs Emerald

## Letters to the editor

### Part-time employees should fight for low insurance costs

Attention, persons working less than 40 hours per week for the University. The PEBB Board is considering options for 2004 insurance. At this point there is no talk of a subsidy, and the prices that carry Regence Part-Time Plan have risen. Further, whether PEBB will receive any increase in funding at all is in question.

We must testify, write and e-mail PEBB to make sure there is coverage for part-timers that is affordable. Otherwise, we will be paying \$170 per employee to \$270 per employee and family or a 50 percent salary scale. PEBB suggested a catastrophic plan — this would be a deductible of \$4,000 to \$12,000 — basically, no insurance.

It only costs full-time people \$2.22 per month to help equalize our policies. Any subsidy would help people have some kind of coverage. All classified employees have the right to benefits. Faculty should be behind this as well, as there are many part-time faculty at the University. Speak up and speak out!

Access PEBB at PEBB@state.or.us. Speak up and be heard or we will lose. Support all of your employees; especially those departments with funding for only

part-time employees. Quality suffers if your workers have no health coverage because they can't afford it.

Connie Berglund  
 University Health Center

### Health care loan could mitigate health care costs

I attended the GTFF rally in front of Johnson Hall on May 21. They want a better health care plan. This would be expensive in these bad economic times.

I think I have a better idea. I think that the University should set up a special loan fund to cover increased health care benefits. This is because, while the current income of graduate teaching fellows is low, statistics show that their future income will be, on average, very high.

For example, while high school graduates make about \$23,000 per year, four-year college graduates make about \$41,000, and those with an advanced professional degree make about \$80,000.

The loan might be repaid by a progressive "tax" on future income (or wealth) with a high deductible.

This looks like a good investment because if the students maintain their health, their earning potential would be higher. I think that University funds should go to low-income workers rather than to potentially rich folks.

Maybe some GTFFs in business, economics, math and statistics could come up with a concrete proposal along these lines.

Dan Weiner  
 Eugene

### 'Love-In' degraded into meat market

I saw the poster that advertised the May 28 "Love-In," and I wanted to go. Get some sugar, maybe meet someone special, find a summer romance or at least get some validation of my queer identity.

At 11:30 a.m., I am there. I see these people, none of whom I am acquainted with. They are sitting on the cold cement. It looks like they are waiting. For a bus, maybe. To take them somewhere where something is actually going on.

Immediately in my mind, there is the whole "meat market" thing going on: "Well, that guy is sexy, but he won't really be attracted to me, he can certainly do better, probably has a boyfriend and a girlfriend; how about that guy there, he would be happy to get some attention, I bet, but then, I'm not really attracted to him, am I?"

I was invited to sit with them, there on the cold cement, but I declined and walked away.

Marvin Hampton  
 senior  
 anthropology

## Online poll

Each week, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit [www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com) to vote.

**Last week:** Have you experienced harassment on the University of Oregon campus?

**Results:** 141 total votes

Yes, because of my sexual orientation — 9.2 percent, or 13 votes

Yes, because of my ethnicity — 11.3 percent, or 16 votes

Yes, because of my gender — 9.2 percent, or 13 votes

Yes, because of my age — 3.5 percent, or 5 votes

Yes, other — 12.8 percent, or 18 votes

No — 43.3 percent, or 61 votes

Leave me alone! — 10.6 percent, or 15 votes

**This week:** What was the most important campus story this year?

**Choices:** University Assembly's anti-war resolution; Luke Ridnour leaving early for NBA Draft; Local glass blowers arrested by federal agents; Campus-area riot fall term; Conflict over KUGN programming and contract; University's reversal of "O" logo policy