

NEWS BRIEF

**PFC benchmark could secure a \$76,761 increase in spending for 2004-05**

Student groups could get a little more money next year if the ASUO Student Senate approves a benchmark that the ASUO Programs Finance Committee set last week. The benchmark would secure a 1.6 percent increase in spending for the 2004-05 fiscal year.

The proposed benchmark increase is far less than the 16.1 percent increase that was approved for the 2003-04 fiscal year because of fewer state-mandated increases this year, PFC Chairman Adrian Gilmore said.

Last year, the state of Oregon mandated increases totaling \$62,230 for items such as minimum wage increases. This year, the mandated increases total just \$18,523.

Overall, the PFC benchmark calls for a \$76,761 increase in spending, which would result in a \$4,908,830 total budget.

"What we do is we go through line by line and approve each item in the budget," Gilmore said. "It's basically to give an estimate of what the budget should be for next year."

Student groups can apply to the committee for funding increases, at which point PFC determines whether the increase is warranted.

"Based on the evidence presented (by student groups) at the (PFC) hearing, we decide if that number would be appropriate or if there's another number that might be appropriate," Gilmore said.

Gilmore said the intention of the benchmark is to create a boundary for PFC allocations. If PFC allocations exceed the benchmark by less than seven percent, they must go to the Student Senate for approval. If the allocations exceed the benchmark by more than seven percent, however, the matter is referred to the ballot for students to decide.

The 2004-05 benchmark includes \$900 in start-up funding for new student groups. The new groups that have sought funding are the Association of School Psychology Students, Art History, Family Law and Practice and U-Lindy, a swing dance group.

— Chuck Slothower

# UO professor earns national position

Alec Murphy is now the president of a geography organization that boasts nearly 8,000 members

By Jared Paben  
News Reporter

As a child, Alec Murphy liked to plan trips by poring over maps and atlases. On plane flights he insisted on riding in the window seat where he could study the patterns made by the landscape.

He was fascinated with the world. Murphy has been a geography professor at the University for 16 years and has risen through the ranks of the geography world to take the presidency of the Association of American Geographers, a national organization comprised of close to 8,000 geography professionals and students from 62 countries.

"He's a real leader on campus as well as in the national arena," said Murphy's colleague Cathy Whitlock, who recently finished two years as president of the American Quaternary Association, a national organization for the study of the environment throughout the last two million years.

"He's a very important voice on providing a geographical perspective on current events that are happening both nationally and internationally."

As president of the Association of American Geographers, Murphy has many hats to wear, he explained.

He attends regional meetings, which take him around the United States every week, and delivers keynote ad-

resses, which he said give him some influence over what people in the geography world are thinking about.

In addition to personal prestige, Murphy said there are other benefits to sitting in the "hot seat."

"It's also a chance to enhance the visibility of the University of Oregon and our department here," he said. "I think we're already a visible and well-known department. The fact that I can go around the country not only as president of the AAG but as a professor of geography at the University of Oregon I think enhances the standing of our program."

Murphy was elected as vice president of AAG in 2002-03 before ascending to the presidency this year.

He first joined AAG as a graduate student at the University of Chicago,

where his focus was and still is political and cultural geography with an emphasis on Europe. He said that was one of the reasons he was noticed by the geography world.

"Doing a lot of things having to do with the geopolitical changes unfolding in the wake of European integration and the collapse of the post-World War II order, I was able to develop a body of scholarship that was somewhat recognized," he explained.

He also drew attention through his instrumental work in lobbying the College Board of New York to add geography to the list of Advanced Placement classes in U.S. high schools.

"Doing things of that sort I suppose gradually increases your

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# Guster performs at packed Eugene venue

The eclectic Boston band played its mellow brand of rock to a full McDonald Theatre on Thursday

By Carl Sundberg  
Pulse Columnist

Boston-based group Guster brought its soulful and catchy music to the McDonald Theatre for the first time on Thursday. Despite it being Guster's first Eugene performance, the McDonald was a packed house of ecstatic fans.

The highly entertaining Trachtenburg Family Slideshow Players kicked off the show. They called themselves an "indie-vaudeville conceptual art-rock pop band," and, yes, they are an actual family. Member Jason Trachtenburg switched between guitar and keyboards and sang the songs, with wife Tina operating the slideshow projector. Their young daughter, Piña, kept the songs together on drums. This performance was a one-of-a-kind experience because every song was based on images found at yard sales, which were projected on the screen behind them.

After the Trachtenburg Family completed their set, the house lights went down again and the mostly

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Mark McCambridge Photographer

Guster performed for the first time in Eugene at the McDonald Theatre on Thursday. The Trachtenburg Family Slideshow Players opened.

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