

Monday, December 8, 2003

EDITORIAL

GED program is important to community, needs funding

Bad news came last week in the world of higher education. The University High School Equivalency Program, which helps migrant and seasonal farm workers obtain General Educational Development certificates, is being threatened with a loss of federal funding that would result in the program's elimination.

The program, which is funded through the U.S. Department of Education, is important to the University and the 22 residential and 15 community students it supports. It provides high school dropouts and migrant workers with assistance so they can obtain GEDs and move on to a better life.

But a lack of funding at the federal level could result in eight of the 59 programs around the nation being cut.

We find it troubling that the federal government would fail to scrounge up the extra five million it would take to fully fund the program at a time when the military is gaining monumental increases in its budget. A U.S. House-Senate Conference Committee proposed \$19 million for equivalency programs, according to University officials, which is a mere five million less than the amount that would guarantee full funding. The figure, however, is also \$6 million more than what President George W. Bush recommended.

Clearly this program is important for many reasons.

First, it allows people to join the workforce for higher wages and a better way of living. Even though they are receiving money from the federal government to do so, their eventual employment will prove to be a wise long-term investment for the economy.

Second, as HEP Recruiter Armando Bravo told the Emerald, the program is beneficial not only for enrolled individuals, but for society at large, because it enrolls students who are in danger of falling into correctional or welfare systems. He added that the program will help these people become more productive members of society.

Last, the program has demonstrated its success in the past and, if fully funded, will continue to be a accomplished program in the future. HEP Director Emilio Hernandez Jr. told the Emerald that the program has an 82 to 89 percent success rate based on students who obtain their GEDs and move into a workforce outside of agricultural work, and he said he has even seen students become doctors and attorneys.

We urge students to contact their federal legislators over the break and voice their concerns about the future of this threatened program.

EDITORIAL POLICY

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Brad Schmidt Editor in Chief	Aimee Rudin Freelance Editor
Jan Tobias Montry Managing Editor	Ayisha Yahya News Editor
Travis Willse Editorial Editor	



Eric Layton Illustration

West is to blame for Iran's problems

The recent invasion of Iraq has clearly indicated that the colonial powers have been ashamed of their past of colonizing the Middle East, rather than shamelessly, and has aggressively opened a new chapter in re-colonizing Iraq, which has a history of struggle against colonization in the region.

It becomes more and more clear that the invasion of Iraq was not because of weapons of mass destruction (as they weren't found), but rather that it was

GUEST COMMENTARY

mainly fought for oil, and the United States' intolerance for an independent regime. Contrary to its Iraq policy, the United States has supposed or brought to power all corrupt, brutal, dictatorial regimes in the region, including the mullahs in Iran, as well as other corrupt regimes around the world. In 1953, the CIA overthrew the popular elected government of Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh in Iran, and brought back to power the corrupt puppet regime of the shah, who had fled the country. The

United States supported him until he was overthrown in 1979 by the Iranian people.

The change of regime in Iran to rule by the mullahs did not bring independence or democracy to Iran. Under these mullahs, Iran became more repressive, more corrupt, poorer and one of the world's worst violators of human rights. Today, more than 53 percent of Iranians live below the poverty level; approximately 20 million of the country's 70 million residents are drug addicts. There is no need to explain the condition of women in Iran, and the results of poverty there have included high prostitution rates and huge unemployment. Millions of Iranians have left the country since the mullahs took power to avoid execution, torture or living with humiliation.

Since mullahs came to power in Iran, there has been a lot of speculation about the role of Western countries — including the United States — toward Iran, such as secretly wheeling and dealing with the mullahs, regardless of their gross human rights violations. Clearly, many people portray Iran as a revolutionary country to

hide the mullah's actions and the nature of their policies.

Iran, like other repressive, corrupt, brutal regimes in the region and around the world, has only survived because of the Western influence — including America's — that wants the mullahs to be in power through trade or other means of support.

Iran not only has not opposed these colonial policies; rather, they need a lot of support from the West to survive, as a result of lack of support from their own people. As a recent poll showed, less than 5 percent of the Iranian population is interested in voting.

Before Iran's showcase of its nuclear power, Bush, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, Condoleezza Rice — and most lately, Richard Armitage — didn't show interest in any change of policy toward Iran.

The CIA coup in Iran in 1979 — which has eluded the world for 25 years — truly brought the mullahs to power as one of the most repressive, brutal regimes in the world.

Cyrus Cohen lives in Eugene.

ONLINE POLL

Each week, the Emerald publishes the results of the previous week's poll and the coming week's poll question.

Visit <http://www.dailyemerald.com> to vote.

Last question: Do you think cheating is a serious problem?

Results: 38 votes

- Yes, I work hard for my grades, and others should have to do the same: 44.7 percent or 17 votes
- Yes, cheating shows a lack of integrity: 34.2 percent or 13 votes
- No, students should do whatever it takes to get a good grade: 13.2 percent or 5 votes
- No, it doesn't matter if students cheat: 7.9 percent or 3 votes

This week: What was the biggest story of fall term?

Choices: "ASUO VP pleads innocent to assault charge;" five-part series on cheating; "Oregon shocks No. 3 Michigan;" "Howe Field selected as location for new arena;" "Business school enters new era with Lillis;" "DPS: Officer committed misconduct;" other.