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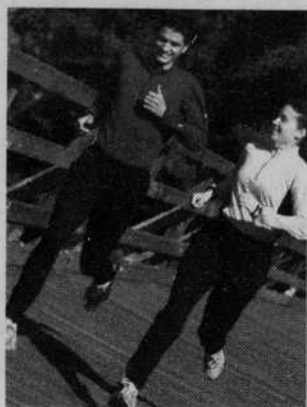
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DROP

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body, tuition hikes and raised requirements for guaranteed admission.

"It's starting to have an impact," he said, adding that students have consequently asked more about alternative schools.

Smith said students also seem concerned about possible cuts to courses, as many see their older siblings taking longer to graduate.

"It's getting more and more competitive to get that class that you need," he said.

South Eugene senior Kai Davis, who has already been accepted by the University, said he plans to follow in his father's footsteps and become a Duck.

"My only real concern was which school would let me work with different subjects," he said, adding that if the University doesn't fulfill his needs, he plans to transfer to a different school.

Sheldon High School counselor Tia Dubé said she thinks the same number

of students are applying to the University as last year, but many more are also applying to private schools.

"I really do feel like it's either U of O, or if they go out of state, it might as well be a private school," she said.

She said if students do decide to apply to other Oregon University System schools, it's usually for programs the University doesn't offer.

Coos Bay's Marshfield High School senior Nina Lee said her biggest concern was rising tuition.

"I planned to go to U of O, but now I'm going to Lane Community College instead," she said, adding that she will eventually transfer to the University.

Smith said many students seem more interested in attending community colleges for their first or second years of school because of University tuition increases.

"Every time it costs more we've had more students asking about Lane Community College," he said.

Junction City High School counselor Cheryl Duman said students tend to worry most about tuition.

"They're more concerned about the

financial aspect versus classes cut," she said.

Guaranteed admission standards are also a concern for some students.

"They're worried because it's been so competitive," Duman added.

On the other hand, Fern Ridge's Elmira High School counselor Eric Wright said he believes raised GPA standards are not too much to ask of students, especially considering grade inflation in American schools.

"I think asking students to achieve a 3.25 GPA in high school is a more than reasonable request to show readiness to succeed at a university of the University of Oregon's caliber," he said.

Wright added that compared to out-of-state tuition rates, the University offers a "great deal." With its proximity for local students, its honors college, and its research and athletics notoriety, the University has a lot to offer students, Wright said.

"I think kids are still feeling U of O is very accessible," he said.

Contact the higher education/student life/student affairs reporter at chelseaduncan@dailymerald.com.

REPORT

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"These numbers on the human and financial costs of STDs in youth should be a wake-up call for the nation," said Joan Cates, lead investigator of the report. "We're not using the tools already available to fight these infections, and we're letting down our youth because of it."

She added that the purpose of the project was to "provide clarity and consensus about the scope and impact of STDs in U.S. adolescents and young adults ages 15 to 24."

The report stated that the United States has the highest rate of STDs of any industrialized nation, with 18.9 million new cases of STDs diagnosed in the year 2000 among all age groups. Half of those belonged to youth aged 15 to 24.

The study also found that pregnant women can pass an STD on to a fetus or to an infant. Immune systems of infants are still developing, so the infections could be life threatening.

According to the report, females contract most STDs more easily than men because of the anatomy of the female reproductive tract.

University Health Center Nurse Practitioner Colleen Jones said that females may also show fewer symptoms than men once an STD has been contracted. One example she gave is that up to 80 percent of women show no symptoms of chlamydia, while only 65 percent of men show no symptoms.

The report claimed that one reason the rate of STDs among young adults is growing is that more of them are sexually active.

The report stated that nearly half of U.S. high school students have sex and about 14 percent of them have had four or more partners. It also claimed that almost all young people will have had sex by the age of 25, which makes up a quarter of the country's sexually active population.

YOUTH AND STDs: QUICK FACTS

- Nearly half of all new STD cases occur among youth ages 15-24.
- Half of new HIV infections occur among youth ages 15-24.
- One out of two sexually active youth will acquire an STD by the age of 25.
- The United States has the highest STD rate of any industrialized country.
- Most STDs are more easily acquired by females than by males because of the anatomy of the female reproductive tract.
- The lifetime medical costs of STDs acquired by youth aged 15-24 in the year 2000 will be at least \$6.5 billion.

SOURCE: "Our Voices, Our Lives, Our Futures: Youth and Sexually Transmitted Diseases," by the School of Journalism and Mass Communication of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Jones said it is vital to test for STDs once young people begin having sex.

"One reason certain STDs are so prevalent is most people don't know they have them," she said.

One of the more common STDs among young adults is genital herpes. The report stated that 640,000 new cases of genital herpes were reported in the year 2000 among those aged 15-24.

Jones agreed, adding that one of the growing forms of herpes is the oral/genital form. She said this number is growing because more people are choosing to engage in oral sex rather than intercourse.

Herpes is easier to catch than other STDs because most people don't have any symptoms or have very subtle symptoms, Jones said.

"People shouldn't just look for painful sores," she said. "They should look for tingling and intense itching in one spot."

She added that there is a greater chance that herpes will be noticed if people are educated on the symptoms of herpes.

Another prevalent STD among young adults is the human papilloma virus. The report stated that over 4.5 million new cases of HPV were reported in 2000.

HPV is especially troublesome because it is difficult to test and many people don't know what it is, Jones said.

She added that both herpes and HPV can be transmitted through skin-to-skin contact during intercourse, so a male condom won't always be enough to

prevent transmitting the disease. Many people do not realize that, she said.

"If you keep your excretions to yourself and you keep genital skin away from another person's genital skin, you can have great sex," Jones said. "You can have mutually satisfying sexual activity and have the risk be minimized."

She said another problem that people deal with is they aren't getting tested for the right STDs or they aren't getting tested after engaging in high-risk behavior, such as unprotected sex.

She added that clear partner communication is vital to curb the spread of STDs.

"In our population here at the University, not everybody that needs to be tested is coming in," Jones said. "Come in and talk to a provider. We'll review the options for testing, and some of it's going to be based on their risk factors."

She added that when women go to the health center for their yearly pap smear, they are automatically tested for chlamydia. However, there is no routine for men to come in and get tested, so they must take the initiative, she said.

Cates agreed, adding that communication is vital.

"At the most basic level, we are not communicating well enough to make a difference," Cates said. "We need a comprehensive national dialogue on the issue."

Contact the crime/health/safety reporter at lisacatto@dailymerald.com.

Today's crossword solution

A	F	F	A	I	R	A	C	T	L	E	A
L	I	A	B	L	E	F	R	O	A	L	G
O	R	I	E	L	S	F	E	I	S	T	I
N	E	R	D	I	R	R	E	L	E	V	A
E	D	S	I	D	E	A	L	L	I	S	T
E	N	E	M	Y	T	E	A				
F	R	O	S	T	I	S	A	A	C	M	A
L	A	N	T	E	R	N	L	I	T	T	E
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A	V	E	C	H	A	R	T				
S	T	A	R	E	M	O	A	N	S	B	I
N	O	N	S	E	N	S	E	T	A	R	E
I	N	N	U	E	N	D	O	M	O	U	S
P	E	A	S	A	I	M	I	N	N	I	N
E	R	S	E	P	A	Y	C	E	A	S	E

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