

University students take a hand at government

ASUO has more power – and a larger budget – than some might expect from a student organization

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FREELANCE REPORTER

In high school, student governments often have little power over legislative and fiscal issues affecting students.

At the collegiate level, however, things are a bit different.

The student government at the University, collectively known as the Associated Students of the University of Oregon, is responsible for, among other duties, allocating millions of dollars in student fees to student groups and organizations on campus.

"We can fund the organizations that make changes that we want to be made and also just provide the services that we think we want to provide," ASUO President Adam Petkun said.

There are three main branches of the ASUO — the Executive, the Student Senate and the Constitution Court.

As president, Petkun is a member of the Executive. With ASUO Vice President Mena Ravassipour, Petkun oversees a staff of fifteen students working to "play out the student vision for how we want the campus to be run," he said.

"The purpose of ASUO Executive government is both to represent students to the University and community [and to] help organize them to make changes that they see fit to be made," Petkun said.

Unlike high school, where each class elects its own representatives, the student government at the University is set up much like the U.S. government, wherein a system of checks and balances keeps the pow-

er in the hands of the many, rather than the few, Petkun said.

Stressing that the branches of student government interact regularly, "At the same time we do respect the separation of powers, so we try not to intrude," Petkun said.

The 18 members of the Student Senate are elected and must approve the Executive's Constitution Court appointees. Nine of the Senators are academic senators, elected by students in their respective departments and colleges, and nine are finance senators, elected at large by the student body. The ASUO president has the power to veto Senate decisions, but the Senate can override an Executive veto with a two-thirds majority vote.

Rules regarding ASUO conduct are documented in the so-called "Green Tape Notebook," which includes the ASUO Constitution. The Notebook outlines all of the ASUO's duties, policies and rules.

The Constitution Court has the authority to rule on the

constitutionality of any ASUO issue. Two of the Court's five justices must be second or third-year law students.

The Programs Finance Committee — which includes three finance senators, two members elected at-large by the student body, one appointed by the ASUO president and one appointed by the ASUO Programs Council — allocates the incidental fee to student groups.

Similarly, the Athletic Department Finance Committee — like the PFC, made up of both elected and appointed officials — distributes the portion of the incidental fee allocated to the department by the Senate.

The EMU Board does the same with the EMU's portion of the fee.

All final budget allocations must be approved by the Student Senate.

The 2004-05 ADFC budget has been set at \$1,369,845, the EMU budget at \$3,566,089 and the PFC budget at \$4,889,672.

Petkun said one of the ASUO's

biggest problems in the past has been making students aware of its existence and developing students' interest in government involvement.

"The ASUO has certainly always been working on amazing things, but people don't always know about them," Petkun said.

That's where ASUO Public Relations Director Nathan Strauss comes in.

Strauss manages the public face of the ASUO, working to ensure all students understand the importance of ASUO and are aware of all the opportunities available for involvement.

Appointed by the Executive, Strauss said he does the majority of his work for that branch because it does more in the way of student advocacy through public campaigns and lobbying than the Senate and Constitution Court, but is available as a resource for all of ASUO.

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Eugene, UO offer students jobs

The Career Center can help connect students with job openings

KATE WEBSTER
FREELANCE REPORTER

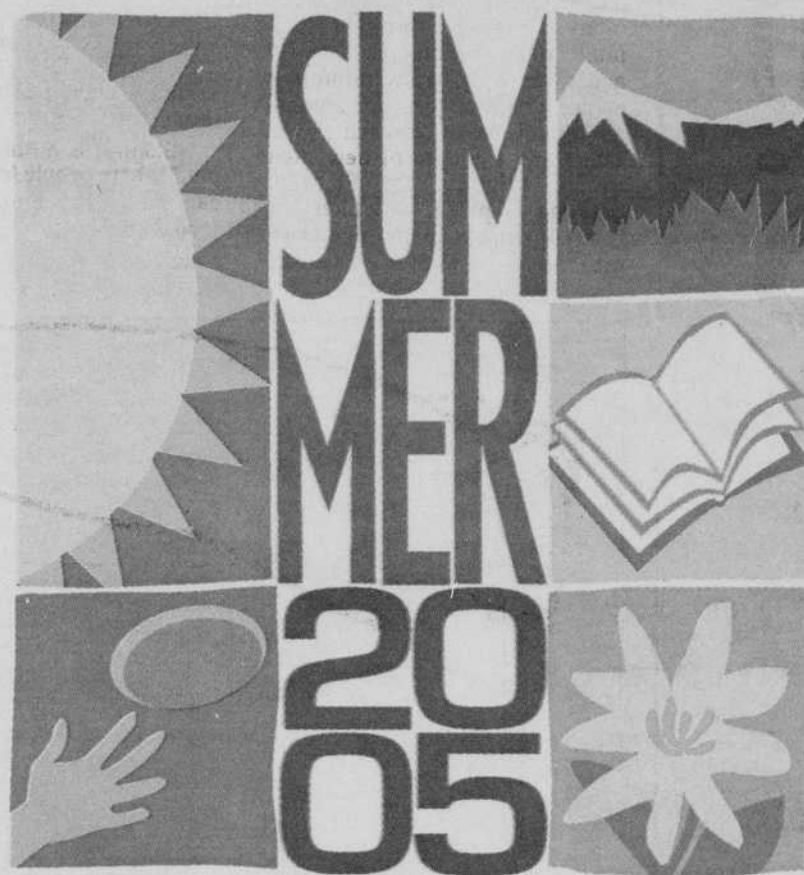
Whether students are trying to get some weekly beer money, pay rent or gain experience in a particular field, the University and Eugene communities offer a wide range of job opportunities.

A main outlet in the community for job searches is the University Career Center. Every term, the Career Center sponsors the Career Fair, which brings University employers and Eugene businesses together to recruit University students for jobs and internships.

Students can access the Career Center Web site to get further information, schedules for the fair and Campus Interview Program. By signing onto the Web site and registering with the Career Center, students automatically have access to information on local

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