

State budget leaves housing and tuition prices in limbo

In light of a possible tuition cap, the state's board of education will wait before setting 2005-06 fees

BY ADAM CHERRY
NEWS REPORTER

Students will have to wait until July to find out the cost of attending the University next year. The State Board of Higher Education decided Friday to defer its vote on the 2005-06 academic year Fee Book, despite a commitment to students to address the issue during the academic year.

The decision was made in anticipation of a limit being placed on tuition by the state legislature, which has discussed measures to buy down tuition increases with state appropriations, according to an Oregon University System press release. If a limit is approved at the statehouse, final tuition rates could be lower than the provisional rates presented in the Fee Book, which match the 7 percent average system-wide increase proposed by Governor Ted Kulongoski in the state budget he recommended to the legislature.

University students would benefit slightly less on raw tuition costs from the 7 percent cap than students of some other OUS institutions if the Fee Book were passed as is. University resident undergraduates would pay \$1,530 per term next academic year for tuition if they took 15 credits — 8 percent higher than in the current academic year. However, because of slower increases in mandatory fees, those students would pay only about 7 percent more overall. Nonresidents would pay about 3 percent more and graduates 6-7 percent more in total tuition and mandatory fees.

The Fee Book also sets levels for

program resource fees and room and board rates, many of which will also see increases.

Housing has proposed a rate increase of about 4.5 percent for the "standard package," which consists of a standard double room and standard 80-point meal plan. Next year's students would pay \$7,209, up from this year's charge of \$6,894.

The increase is slightly smaller than last year's increase of approximately 4.8 percent.

Nevertheless, the rate wouldn't apply to all of the rooms currently classified as "standard." The addition of four new room classifications would recognize the additional amenities offered in some complexes, like Carson Hall, and assess rate increases accordingly. A double that included a sink, for instance, would cost \$7,547 with a standard meal plan.

Allen Gidley, director of business affairs for housing, said the point of the new rate schedule is to better match price to the level of service and size of the room.

"The purpose was to better account for and make amenable the differences and service (students receive)," Gidley said, adding that generating more revenue was not part of housing's reasoning.

"We don't expect it to generate any huge amount of different revenue," he said. "Our standard room is, by far and away, the vast majority of the rooms we have available for students."

Housing will also offer a new meal plan, a "Mini Package," with which

students would receive 65 meal points. The relatively lower cost of that plan nearly compensates for the rate increase in the standard package. Room and board would cost only \$6,922, \$28 less than the current cost of a standard double.

The smaller meal package will help accommodate students who just don't eat as much, said Gidley. Some residents complained about having leftover points they would have to "cash out" at the end of the week.

Because of substantial variation between housing plans at the different OUS campuses, it is difficult to compare room and board rates across the system. According to the comparison chart printed in the Fee Book, however, the University's rates figure at the top. Even the proposed price for housing's 13-meal mini plan next year is more expensive than all but one of the plans that the deluxe option is compared against on the chart.

The University's Law School, College of Allied Arts and Architecture and Honors College will all face substantial increases in programmatic resource fees next year if the Fee Book is passed. Resource fees are per-term charges assessed to students based on their enrollment in a particular major or college.

The Oregon Student Association has criticized the charges, calling them back-door tuition increases, but college administrators say that they'll have trouble operating without the extra revenue.

"They really are part and parcel of how we pay for the law school's program," Margaret Paris, law professor and associate dean for academic affairs, said. "What the tuition provides in this program is not nearly enough

BUDGET, page 8A

Shasta deaths cause authorities, campus to revisit concerns

With only a few safety officers covering Shasta Lake, personal accountability is a necessity for partiers

BY MORIAH BALINGIT
NEWS REPORTER

Four days. Five thousand people. Thirty houseboats. Five to 10 kegs of beer per houseboat.

This is what the 14 deputies of the Shasta County Sheriff's Boating Safety Unit have to contend with during Memorial Day Weekend on Slaughterhouse Island at Shasta Lake, a popular destination for college-aged partiers, especially fraternity and sorority members.

"I had every employee I had working on the weekend," Sgt. Mark Liljegrin, the head of the Boating Safety Unit, said. "And we have only nine boats on the water."

About 30,000 people come to the lake during its biggest weekend of the year. Liljegrin said with his staff stretched so thin, he can't monitor every college student on the island. Some infractions, such as Minor in Possession, typically go unenforced because deputies are dealing with more critical situations.

"I've got 14 people to take care of 30,000 people. We're not going to baby-sit them on the island," he said. "Personal accountability has got to come in somewhere."

This year, Shasta Lake has seen an unusual number of deaths. Last month, an Oregon State University student committed suicide on the island during weekend festivities, and last weekend, University student Joel Meyer drowned after falling and hitting his

head on a boat railing.

Though he wishes he could, Liljegrin can't prevent every death that could potentially occur on the lake.

He said even one death is unacceptable. "I take it very personally when someone doesn't come home from the lake."

In addition to the two deaths, Liljegrin said he handled numerous calls for medical emergencies, dealing with injuries of varying severity. One student was hospitalized with alcohol poisoning.

"There were probably 40 to 50 medical assists for a variety of minor to major injuries," he said. He estimated that alcohol was involved with the vast majority of the injuries. "It's generally because they're unstable on their feet."

The University has long sponsored efforts to try and make the event safer for Shasta Lake party-goers. This year, the Intrafraternity and Panhellenic Council co-sponsored a program to educate students about the dangers of partying at Shasta Lake in an effort to reduce the risk of injuries or a tragedy occurring.

"We talked about water safety, alcohol awareness, being careful with the sun, sexual awareness and stuff like that," Intrafraternity President Brian Robertson said. "If they're going to go down there, we want to make sure they're educated as best as possible."

Robertson said the program drew at least one person from each fraternity

SHASTA, page 5A

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