

Students' Voices... Alarming attitude in ASG about spending

The attitude around this institution concerning the recent controversy on ASG spending seems to be an alarming 'let it go' response. "Don't you guys have anything better to do" and so on. Let's get to the root of the matter and stop being sidetracked by allegations and conspiracies. Most of us have to pay for one third our tuition at this college. The taxpayers in this community have to pay for the other two-thirds. In case this is unclear let me be more direct: These are our families that are working to pay

for this college, which includes all ASG spending. It is a widely know fact that ASG members do not pay tuition, that exception is supposed to be in exchange for representation of the student body and the community. Therefore, ASG and administration should do all possible to serve and protect the community, as well as the students at this college, lest they are in violation of the contract they hold in the community. If any members of the community or of the college desire to see for

themselves any information regarding tax-money, then they have that legal right without interrogation or harassment. Myself and a number of other students have requested information relating to ASG spending and have either been harassed or denied access outright. Why? All the 'troublemaking' we have done is asked for itemized receipts for a few expenditures that we felt may have needed more explanation. Look them up for yourself and maybe you would understand. This is not the

college's money, or ASG's money, but our families' money. If you took fifty dollars from my family with the agreement to use that money for a good cause, am I a 'troublemaker' for inquiring where the money went? Many students and members of the Administration seem to confuse this issue with the controversy about Student President Jennifer Rankin in the fall. The issues are connected but should not be taken as the same. Jennifer made a brave attempt to have ASG held accountable and she was kicked out, and now ASG will still

not be held accountable for the money. To get a comparatively small amount of money to help with childcare for my 2-year-old daughter I have to account for every penny with diligence. Is ASG above this level of accountability? The community is paying for the majority of our education so we as students owe the community the best return for their faith in us. Staying quiet and ignoring the law does not constitute a fair exchange.
Luke Precourt Student

Freedom of Speech: How far are we free to speak?

If Dr. Epstein's purpose was to stir people up, he couldn't have done a better job than he has in the last few weeks. This local controversy follows on the heels of a similar national one involving Atlanta Braves pitcher, John Rocker. In a recent issue of Sports Illustrated, Rocker made several inflammatory remarks. In response, a national backlash of criticism erupted. Much like what is happening now at CCC, many individuals have come forward to condemn John Rocker for his prejudiced remarks. When confronted with the aftermath of his, and Dr. Epstein's, remarks I have to wonder, do we have the right to say any-

thing we want? The First Amendment states that, "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or the press," While this is open to interpretation, the general consensus is that we have the right to express ourselves without having to fear legal recourse, within reason. Legal precedents have established some limitations. We can't engage in slander or libel, we can't harass or threaten people, we can't yell "I've got a gun" in the airport, and even Dr. Epstein says, "You can't yell fire in a crowded theatre." But Dr. Epstein

never said he hated homosexuals, or advocated physical violence against them. What about the things we say that don't directly affect anyone? Should these things be regulated? How do we decide what is acceptable or unacceptable? What is offensive to me might not be to anyone else. When we propose to avoid anything that is offensive to anyone, we quickly sink into a morass of political correctness. Profanity is offensive to many people, yet we don't try to regulate it. Robyn E. Blummer in the January 4, 1998, edition of the St. Petersburg Times says, "...you can't have it both ways. Either you embrace a free society and tolerate objectionable song lyrics, bomb recipes, racially offensive remarks and nude photos, or you enact laws against offensive materials and invite the routine arrest of writers, artists, photogra-

phers, philosophers, musicians, scientists and professors." I think the next step, after regulating what a person says, is regulating what they think. Do we even want a world where everyone thinks or says the same things? While were holding candlelight vigils for tolerance of a person's way of life, can't we have one for tolerance of their way of thinking? Does Dr. Epstein's position as a college professor change the issue? Well he didn't renounce his right to the First Amendment when he took his job. Besides, part of what we learn at college is how to analyze what we are taught, and make our own decisions about it. To imply that Dr. Epstein has the power to influence people so strongly with a single statement flatters him, and insults those who would be influenced. I feel this issue has become yet

another platform to debate the morality of homosexuality. Voices on both sides make reasonable points, but in the end we all have our own opinions. I'm not defending Dr. Epstein's opinion; I have my own. I am defending his right to express it however, regardless of his position. A landmark First Amendment case, Cohen v. California, questioned the right of the defendant to wear a jacket saying "F___ the Draft." Supreme Court Justice John M. Harlan said, during the case, "The First Amendment exists precisely to protect the most offensive and controversial speech from government suppression. The best way to counter obnoxious speech is with more speech. Persuasion, not coercion, is the solution."
Steve Nielsen Student

Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or the press.
Bill of Rights
1st Amendment

Letters to the Editor...

Headline misrepresents views

My letter regarding Dr. Donald Epstein's classroom behavior was recently printed in The Clackamas Print under the headline, "Epstein in the same company with Hitler." I would like to make it clear that I did not write that headline, nor does it express my point of view. I would not say that ANY Jewish person was "in the same company with Hitler." I do stand firmly behind my statement in the letter that, "Dr. Epstein

placed himself in horrific company when he said that gays are 'better off dead.' It's strange and unsettling to realize that this Jewish man and Adolph Hitler would have shared a belief in common." I thank the Print for its evenhanded reporting on the comments of this instructor and for the attention it has focused on the matter.
Patricia K. Lichen Student

Education on the value of life

To Shelbi Wescott, feature editor, I was particularly moved by the article you wrote about Brian (Trapp Tribute in last week's Print). While I had seen him over the years around the campus I didn't have the privilege of getting to know him. Your thoughtful article brought him to life for me. I want to thank you for your efforts to cement in my mind how much we all will miss him and his

special nature. Too often the disabled are marginalized (especially those with mental challenges). You have helped to educate us all as to the value of all human beings. I think you have the talent to build on. Human interest stories demand a unique sensitivity and you appear to have that quality. Thanks again.
David Campbell Counselor

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