

Oregon's unemployment rate rises to 8.0 percent for January; normal cuts more severe than usual

NICK BARRON
Business Manager

Oregon's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continued to climb in January to 8 percent, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

The increase, up from the revised 7.8 percent figure for December 2001, marks the 13th consecutive month the state's unemployment rate has risen. Oregon's unemployment rate fell to a low of 4.7 percent in December 2000, then started nosing up in January 2001 to 4.9 percent.

The last time the state's unemployment rate reached the 8 percent mark was January 1993, when it crested at 8.1 percent. This is the second-highest number of unemployed individuals ever, with March 1983 holding the record with 173,300 Oregonians unemployed.

In January of this year, 161,300 Oregonians were unemployed, compared with 104,800 last January.

As for the nation, its unemployment rate slid from 5.8 percent in December to 5.6 percent in January.

Each quarter, Oregon's Department of Administration Services issues a preliminary forecast for employment figures. While the report for the current quarter has yet to be issued, David Cooke, employment economist for Oregon, believes the report will not give unemployed Oregonians much hope.

"The report will call for employment to essentially remain the same for the rest of this quarter and the next, with a growth of about 1.0 percent in the second and third quarters," said Cooke.

All major industries in Oregon slashed jobs in January, the worst-hit industry being transportation equipment, which lost 3,300 jobs. While it is true that most industries are forced to cut jobs the first three months of the year, January's cuts were more severe than usual.

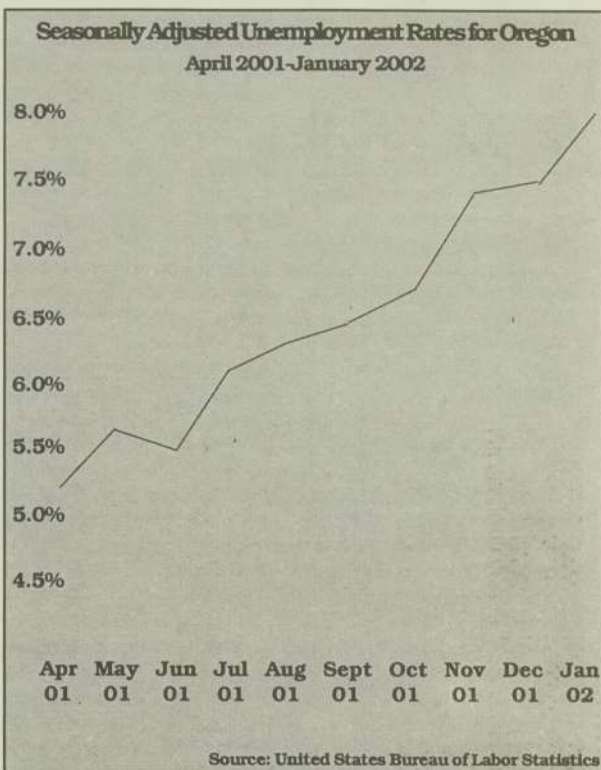
The lumber and wood products industry lost 1,200 jobs in January for a number of reasons. Low

prices, less demand for non-residential construction and logging restrictions on federal forests are some of the grounds for the dismissal of employees.

Due to the national recession and a shift to foreign production, the machinery industry let go of 2,900 jobs last month. The metal industry, both primary and fabricated, has dropped a combined total of 3,000 jobs, mostly because of energy problems and a lack of demand for capital goods and transportation equipment.

Along with the release of its January 2002 unemployment figures, the employment department announced its revised unemployment numbers for previous years. Each January, the department typically releases revised figures for the two prior years. The new numbers show that the overall employment level was stronger than originally indicated in late 2000 and the majority of 2001.

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Clackamas enrollment up 14.7 percent over same period in 2001

FRANK JORDAN
News Editor

Enrollment for fall term 2001 has increased 14.7 percent over the same period last year, according to figures released by Clackamas Community College last week.

With the economy in a downturn and unemployment running at 8 percent in the state of Oregon, more people are turning to the college to enhance current job skills, or steer people in a direction away from current job paths.

Short-term training program headcounts are up an astounding 127 percent over the same period in 2001, while community education and advanced college credit

students are up 25 and 40 percent, respectively.

"We are at a point in the economy where more people are

know that we are seeing more and more unemployed people who really desire to continue their educations, and now, more than ever,

Arts-Oregon Transfer degrees (AAOT) have seen their enrollment figures fall by 1.5 percent from the same period last year, but this

cludes full-time, part-time and non-credit students. Through the fourth week of winter term 2002, total enrollment has increased 8.3 percent over the winter term of 2001.

Full-time equivalency (FTE) for the college in the 2000-01 school year increased by 14.1 percent from the 1999-2000 school year. FTE is what the college uses to track how much money the college is taking in from tuition every year. Through the fourth week of winter term 2002, FTE has increased 11.4 percent over the same period in winter term 2001.

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"We are at a point in the economy where more people are seeking to improve their quality of life, and education certainly follows that course...and now, more than ever, community college...is still the most affordable option for them."

Mark Fallon
Counselor, Oregon Employment Division

seeking to improve their quality of life, and education certainly follows that course," according to Mark Fallon, counselor with the Oregon Employment Division. "I

community college is not only willing to help people with short-term training, but it is still the most affordable option for them."

Students seeking Associate of

is the only category that has seen a decrease.

Total headcount in 2001 reached 13,052 students, an 8.7 percent increase from 2000. That total in-

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