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**SATURDAY, AUGUST 4**  
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6:00 pm Meet and Greet  
**SUNDAY, AUGUST 5**  
11:30 am Brunch  
1:00 pm Site Tour  
(open to those who've attended orientation)

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**news** BY ALAN PITTMAN

## UO Baseball

Professors cry foul at athletics decision

**W**hile UO officials and sports boosters are calling adding baseball a home run, some professors at the university are crying foul over runaway athletic spending, donor control of the UO and sexist cheerleading.

"These changes will be in the best interest of the future of the university," said UO President Dave Frohnmayer of the baseball plan.

But UO English Prof. Jim Earl said the change will do little but hurt the true academic mission of the university. "A lot of people get rich off these things, but not us. We just get poorer and poorer," he said. While the athletic department, TV and other media make millions off UO athletics, UO's academics has struggled with declining funding, he said.

**'We have now sold the university to our donors.'**

—UO ART HISTORY PROFESSOR RICHARD SUNDT

Earl points to NCAA statistics showing baseball players have low graduation rates. With constant games pulling them out of class, "baseball players can't possibly succeed in college," he said.

Earl was one of 92 UO faculty members to sign a letter to Frohnmayer in January decrying "the university's preoccupation with athletics at the expense of academics."

Baseball will add at least \$1 million a year and a \$5-\$10 million new stadium to the UO's already big athletic spending plans. These include a \$200 million new basketball arena, \$2 million buy-out of the former athletic director, \$4 million learning center for athletes, and a \$2.5 million running track remodel.

UO Art History Prof. Richard Sundt called the UO "foolish" to add the expensive baseball stadium on top of the basketball arena. Sundt said he doubts baseball will make enough money to support itself and will instead require subsidies from the university. "The fiscal impact is not as rosy and is much more complex than is indicated," he said.

While the UO is spending lavishly on athletics, academics is in the poor house, according to Sundt. "Students in music have to practice in bathrooms," he said. In the art department, "I turned a closet into an office."

While UO officials claim the athletic department is breaking even or actually helping to fund academics, Earl said that just isn't true.

"We sold off our grad student housing to build an arena," Earl said of the recent sale of Westmoreland to finance land purchases for the basketball arena. "That's just such a horrible perversion of morals that we should be ashamed of ourselves."

Earl says it's "absurd" for the athletic department to claim that their food and tuition payments for athletes are returns to the University. Earl said the athletic department takes up slots that would have been otherwise filled by more academically qualified students and pays in-state tuition rates for out-of-state students. "The athletic department gets a big break from the university financially."

There are hints the UO may also seek baseball subsidies from Eugene taxpayers or School District 4J. An *Oregonian* sports-writer suggested last month a partnership involving 4J's Civic Stadium, the city, and the Emeralds minor league team.

A *Register-Guard* editorial suggested a new baseball stadium "along" the river. UO students, professors and local environmentalists have long opposed such Riverfront Research Park development and a riverside arena would likely require city council approval.

Sundt blasted the UO for ignoring the faculty in making the baseball decision. "We have now sold the university to our donors," Sundt said. "The integrity of this institution is at stake."

Sundt said the decision, "intentionally" made when students and faculty were gone, clearly violated UO rules requiring consultation with a professorial committee before making big athletic changes.

"They gave that committee literally a 30 second warning," said Earl of a last-minute email. Earl said the UO is now governed by a "business model" of attracting big athletic booster donations. "Those are the people that call the shots."

Frohnmayer "can't do anything to irritate our major donor," Nike's Phil Knight, said Earl, citing decisions on athletic staffing and leaving the Workers Rights Consortium. "It's totally ludicrous."

Earl said the UO made the "absurd" choice of competitive women's cheerleading to save money on Title IX requirements to balance men's baseball. "Women's crew takes money," he said. "Clearly, they're just doing it on the cheap."

The University of Maryland, the only other school to use cheerleading to satisfy federal gender equity requirements, "roiled" women's sports advocates who accused the university of a cheap, divisive end-run around the civil rights statute, the *New York Times* reported.

Sundt said cheerleading is a bad fit for a university otherwise opposed to the "objectification of women as a commodity." At the UO, "the whole notion of ourselves is not degrading women."

Earl said he doesn't have much hope in convincing the UO to put academics before athletics. "Just standing up and saying so gets you cat calls from four corners."

Instead, he and other professors are pursuing a successful strategy of pushing for rule changes from the NCAA. UO professors are leaders in the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics, involving 55 universities' faculty senates pushing for reform. "You can do nothing here," Earl said. "We have to get at the local people from above."

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