



ERB MEMORIAL UNION

UNIVERSITY OF OREGON
EUGENE, OREGON 97403

OFFICE OF DIRECTOR

March 17, 1970

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert D. Clark, President

FROM: Richard Reynolds, Director, Erb Memorial Union

SUBJECT: Comments on Senator Hatfield's Letter of February 23 Regarding Conditions in the Erb Memorial Union

As you know, the Union serves this campus as both a service center and as a facility within which students may organize and promote the various activities which grow from student government. Likewise, the Union is the home of special programs sponsored by academic departments and student organizations. In addition, students and faculty alike find the Union to be a logical gathering place for between class breaks and evening socializing. The Union is financed from self-generated revenues and student fees; building from non-tax student building fees.

Within this context, the professional staff of the Union advise student activities and operate the building facilities with the aid of certain student/faculty Boards. It is generally felt by members of the academic community that both the staff and responsible student committees are doing their best to assure the members of this University Community viable and pleasant environment.

There does exist, however, as Mr. Fischer points out, certain evidence of social ills not unlike those experienced today by society at large. Although the University does have criteria for selecting students and criteria for dismissing students, these are not only broad and general in nature, but are designed for maximizing the educational opportunities for all people. Into our student body, therefore, arrive certain individuals who may not be socialized to a white, middle class society. They are as foreign to our way of dealing with life's problems and inter-personal relationships as are students from foreign lands. I refer here, quite clearly, to minority students who are attracted and brought to this campus by our various minority programs.

The University, and especially the Union, has become the focal point of the informal acculturation of these students. Indeed, there results a friction, a source of confrontation, and an uneasiness about such a situation. Many of the problem-solving devices and other modes of behavior learned in the urban ghetto are brought with these students to the University campus. One of the informal aspects of their education here is to learn of alternatives



MEMBER OF ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE UNIONS-INTERNATIONAL

to these devices. Likewise, the combination and interaction of the elements of ethnic and racial pride, cultural backgrounds, the cultural shock of being suddenly thrown in with white middle class Americans and rubbing elbows with American affluence, all tend to aggravate the situation. These people may seem boisterous, or even crude by our standards, and they have, upon rare occasion, introduced violence to this campus.

There is another side, however, to the situation. This campus, not unlike other campuses in the country, has noted with satisfaction, the successful completion of academic programs undertaken by disadvantaged students. We are now graduating students who began here with the Upward Bound Program several years ago, and who are now filling important positions as responsible members of our society. Although some either voluntarily dropped out of the program, or were dropped by the University from the program, we feel that the majority have been influenced in a positive way by their associations here.

If visitors are made uncomfortable by the attitudes being displayed by these students on our campus, we are regretful. However, as disagreeable as some of this human interaction may be, it seems, at this time, to be a predictable outgrowth of the only known means of meeting the educational needs of these persons.

We also have on this campus a strong contingency of students commonly referred to as "hippies." These students, apparently attracted to this campus in greater abundance than our sister institutions because of our liberal arts programs, are not unlike other rebellious youth across the country. While choosing to illustrate their dissatisfaction with the economic and social values of their elders by adopting bizarre clothing and hair styles, these students are among our brighter students and come from above average economically blessed families. Their questioning of the rules by which our society's institutions function is as discomforting to many as are their clothing and personal appearance habits to others.

I would imagine that it is the presence of these two large "minority groups" to which Mr. Fischer refers in his letter. Let it be said that this institution has gone on record as looking with disfavor upon any actions by groups or individuals which are deemed unlawful or disruptive to the educational process. The administrative staff and the faculty at large are dedicated to seeing that this institution functions in an orderly way. Within the framework of these two large minority groups, as with all members of the University Community, we will continue to have prosecuted in Civil and student courts any offenders to civil law and University policies which we detect. Likewise, mere boisterousness and bizarre physical appearance, if not disruptive to the educational process, are not enough to call for disciplinary or court action. I know you appreciate the necessity of utilizing due process and in preserving the rights of our students.

13
Memo to President Clark
March 17, 1970
Page 3

We have taken special precautions to make arrangements with the courts in Eugene that as a provision of the probation from the courts, non-students known to frequent the University premises are being successfully forbidden, as a condition of their probation, from returning to this campus. We have chosen this legal means of controlling non-student dissidence in preference to arbitrary and capricious administrative edicts.

Today's University campus is unlike any this country has experienced heretofore. Although it is in many ways an uncomfortable environment, we feel that by the utilization of common sense, the laws of the land, and the judicious consent of the majority, that the educational process and society itself will be the benefactors of the times. We continue to appreciate Senator Hatfield's supportive efforts in Washington on behalf of education and hope that this rather lengthy response to his inquiry will be helpful.

Black Studies 70. *Dr. Duneau* *Sold*
In response
2-28
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February 24, 1969

Afro-American Studies Department
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon

Dear Sirs:

We are seeking information concerning programs offered in Afro-American Studies. We are especially interested in the following items:

Do you offer a degree in this program?

If so, what kind of degree is offered?

Is this a separate department?

If not, how are the degrees granted?

We would appreciate this and any other information concerning the organization, administration and scope of such a program.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dorothy W. Robinson
Dorothy W. Robinson
Librarian