From:	salem_update-bounces@lists.oregonstate.edu on behalf of Mills, Jock
To:	CAS DeanStaff; CAS Unit Leaders; Salem Update Listserv
Subject:	[Salem Update] A review of the 2009 legislative session --appropriations for higher education
Date:	Thursday, July 09, 2009 1:34:38 PM
Attachments:	prioritiesreview.doc ATT11858414.txt

Following each legislative session we evaluate our efforts based on the legislative priorities we established at the beginning of the session. The attached document includes the legislative priorities we developed for the session, followed by a brief description of how we did, highlighted in yellow.

<<prioritiesreview.doc>>

The 2009 legislative session presented difficult challenges for higher education. A significant decline in state revenues resulted in budget reductions not only for the 2009-11 biennium, but also $46 million in reductions for the last several months of the 2007-09 biennium.

The budget writing process was even more opaque than in previous sessions. It was frequently unclear what was "in" and what was "out." In the final week of the session legislators turned down an opportunity to leverage $9 million designated for deferred maintenance at OSU into a $23 million federally funded project at the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport. In the final hours of the session they added an additional $11.5 million reduction to the Oregon University System (OUS) and $1.8 million in reductions to the OSU Statewide Public Service Programs -- Extension, Agriculture Experiment Station, and Forest Research Laboratory. In the coming weeks and months OUS will need to distribute the budget reductions among the campuses. This is likely to be a contentious process that will directly affect student access and affordability.

It may be comforting to consider that following the February revenue forecast legislators had asked state agencies, including OUS, to submit budgets that incorporated reductions of 30% and greater. Given the double threat of continued declines in state revenues and the possible rejection by voters of some $730 million in tax increases approved by the legislature, Oregon's higher education system may eventually face reductions of that magnitude when the legislature convenes in February 2010.

Over the coming months we will be working to address these potential challenges. Given the speed at which the 2010 session is likely to be conducted, it is quite likely that the process will be just as hectic and mysterious as it was in the closing weeks of the 2009 session.

If you have questions, or suggestions for how we can improve our effectiveness in Salem, and in providing you with useful information about the legislative process and how OSU is engaged in it, I would be delighted to hear them.

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