

OUR VIEW

Surplus Senate funds illustrate excessive fee

It's not often we grumble about a budget surplus, but when it's our money being held hostage, we start complaining.

Before we explain why the Student Governance Fee vexes us so, let's make something clear. We reviewed the senate budget appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and we can't help but be pleasantly surprised that we found only a handful of allocations with which we disagreed.

We're glad to see the Bike Co-op

on track to receive funds and that senate has committed to support environmentally conscious and practical initiatives (such as providing free recycling bins to students). Senate

has continued its tradition of budgeting funds for Educator of the Year and for an assortment of scholarships. It even created a new committee to address student concerns about the budget, headed up by senator senior Greg Wisa.

The Budget Review Committee has been discussing ways to reduce the amount of rollover funds in the senate budget. Herein lies the problem.

Senate consistently does not spend nearly as much as what it takes in via the Student Governance Fee, which is assessed each year to the tune of \$4 per student. Senate gets its normal yearly income from this tax of more than \$22,000, but — as in the case of 2006-07 — it doesn't actually spend the money it appropriates.

When we compare the actual money spent last year by senate with the amount that was budgeted, we find a bit of a disparity. A looming \$11,000 disparity — the rollover fund amounted to \$11,890.02 of unspent student money as of early October 2007.

Although it might seem like a good thing that senate is flush with cash to fund student projects, senate can't seem to unload the surplus. It has more than \$10,000 left in its account from year to year. Even senate treasurer sophomore

Philip Gilmor says it's common for senate to have money left over.

Gilmor should be commended for preparing an accurate and detailed budget for this fiscal year. But his response to the Index's question about the rollover fund (see story, page 1) is somewhat misleading.

He said that if it weren't for the rollover fund, some projects might have to be cut from the senate budget. But the discrepancy surfaces again in a comparison of spending and budgeting.

Last year, senate proposed a budget of \$450 to promote AIDS Awareness Week. They only spent \$280.28. It also proposed a

\$300 trip to Washington, D.C., which only cost \$102.51. Gilmor recently made the savvy suggestion that senate cancel its office phone — saving hundreds of student dollars that were in the budget.

There are plenty more examples of over-budgeting costs. Overall, senate budgeted more than \$31,000 but spent only \$22,541. This year, Gilmor has planned to spend \$32,495, but can senate really expect to spend anywhere near that amount?

Finally, senate didn't even budget \$1,845 worth of student money this year (it didn't budget \$3,261 last year). That's about 450 students worth of fees that aren't even appropriated for use this year, much less actually going to be used.

In 2006, senate started the year out with a surplus of \$11,981. This year, it began with \$11,890. The rollover fund is an invitation for misuse, such as the allocation of funds to vague proposals by student organizations such as College Republicans for a voter drive or a yet-to-be-determined speaker (\$100 in this year's budget) or to Phi Sigma Pi for a yet-to-be-announced event (also \$100). It's time to stop pork barreling to deal with the surplus, and it's time to start cutting our fees.

It's time to stop pork barreling to deal with the surplus, and it's time to start cutting our fees.

CORRECTIONS

- A TruLife feature titled "Around the 'Ville'" on page 9 of the Oct. 11 Index misspelled the name of and mischaracterized an upcoming art show in the University Art Gallery. The show is titled "Ephemera" and is a showing of contemporary art, not modern art.
- An article titled "Panel will address academic freedom" on page 3 of the Oct. 11 Index misspelled the name of a professor in a pull quotation. The professor's name is David Robinson, not David Robinsons.
- An article titled "New center to expand ideas for local businesses" on page 8 of the Oct. 4 Index misspelled the name of the dean for planning and institutional development. The dean's name is Michael McManis, not McMannis.
- An article titled "Truman runners sweat through race" on page 1 of the Oct. 11 Index incorrectly stated the start location of the Chicago Marathon. The Chicago Marathon begins on Columbus Drive in Millennium Park, north of Grant Park.
- An article titled "All eyes on ... Ashley Tomten" on page 10 of the Oct. 11 Index was incorrect. Ashley Tomten is not a member of the University Swingers.



Letters to the Editor

Professor speaks out against discriminatory University policy

Earlier this week an Index reporter working on a very short deadline called me to ask about how the University's non-discrimination policy impacts my life. I wasn't able to call her back. Issues like discriminatory non-discrimination sometimes need more time to be understood in all their complexity.

First of all, no employee's husband or wife gets free health benefits as far as I know. What married employees get is the opportunity to buy their husbands or wives into the health plan.

Unmarried employees, whether they are heterosexual or not, cannot buy their partners into the health plan. I would have thought allowing more young, healthy people to buy into the plan at the prices Unicare charges would be a good thing. Not so in the land of discriminatory non-discrimination.

Married employees' husbands and wives also get a substantial discount on University tuition. Unmarried employees, whether they are heterosexual or not, do not. Those tuition discounts always have seemed a good thing to me — a way to encourage educational parity in academic couples and to compensate for the low wages many valued employees receive. But I guess educational parity is for married couples. Sort of makes you wonder why Bill Clinton thought he had to sign a Defense of Marriage Act, doesn't it? Not on Missouri's account.

My life partner gets certain benefits, it's true: like the opportunity to buy Sodexo Bonus Bucks and a plastic card that allows her membership in a whole new identity category: Designated Guest. Never have I considered introducing her at a family function in this way. All of this would be laughable if it didn't hurt and hadn't hurt for many years.

It really doesn't surprise me that our gender equity officer would say that she hasn't noticed problems with the discriminatory non-discrimination policy. Maybe she never went to any meetings of the recent search committee in the business department whose candidate turned down Truman's job offer because no domestic partnership benefits were included in the offer.

Maybe she should get her head out of the cloud of white, heterosexual privilege it resides in. Discriminatory policies hurt non-traditional families economically and disrupt the learning community that unmarried-yet-partnered employees get out of bed every morning and help construct.

Monica Barron
Professor of English

Allowing athletes to register early is "ridiculous" proposition

The idea that athletes should be able to register early is ridiculous.

I cannot play sports because of an injury I suffered playing sports. Therefore, I work hard academically to make up for what I can't show on the field. I also am involved in organizations on campus. I have an 18-hour schedule on top of these organizations, and I still have to register at a regular time.

I see this as a slap in the face to those of us who work hard academically but do not play sports. We have just as many scheduling conflicts as athletes and oftentimes work harder to take more classes so that we can register sooner. I had to get many overrides last year to take classes I am required to take. Letting the athletes register first would make these things even more difficult.

If they want to register sooner, athletes should take more classes during the summer or other breaks. Playing sports is a choice that one has to make, and if one chooses to play sports, one must accept the scheduling conflicts that come with it. Athletes know when practice is and when games are out of town, so why not just plan their schedules around that? Many professors are understanding about games, too.

Letting the athletes register first is only another step on the road to making the athlete more important than the scholar. Once this happens, Truman can't claim to focus on academics. It just will blend in with the other colleges that put athletes first so the college spends more time in the limelight.

Sarah Freeze
Junior

Early registration for athletes is argumentative slippery slope

As a Truman student, I strongly oppose the proposed early registration for student athletes.

One of the stated advantages to the proposed policy is that, because student athletes must juggle out-of-town games and practices with class schedules, early registration would allow students to manage their schedules. Student athletes are not the only students who must juggle a busy schedule and make choices about how their time is best spent. If a student wants to be involved in an organization, he or she must be able to accept and handle time management constraints.

Ideally, all students could take every class they needed and be in every organization they wanted without worry of conflict. However, the world is not perfect, and Truman cannot cater to a special group of students. If Truman allows student athletes to register early because of scheduling conflicts, students who are in the theatre department should be allowed to as well because they have many long rehearsals and performances that encompass entire weeks.

Also, any students in a music ensemble should be allowed to register early because they have daily rehearsals, outside practice times, evening concerts and out-of-town tours during the school year. Any student who has a job should be able to choose classes early to best accommodate a work schedule. Perhaps if some students' optimum learning time is in the afternoon, they should be allowed to register early to ensure they have no morning classes. Logic like this leads to the reasoning that everyone should be allowed to register early for some reason or another.

Finally, I would like to mention that the reason students come to Truman is for the academics. We should not arrange our schedule to accommodate extra-curricular activities but rather arrange our extra-curricular activities around our educational experience.

Kelsey Kline
Junior

Students should be concerned about contemporary causes

Sure, there are millions without health care, children dying every three seconds in Africa and a \$9-trillion national debt, but I really see the need to show our displeasure for the cruel decisions of a 15th century historical figure. It seems completely relevant to the issues and problems facing the student body and the state of Missouri. In seriousness, I doubt that our Student Senate, or our state government for that matter, has nothing better to do than bicker about the historical and current

implications of Christopher Columbus.

Perhaps senate would be better suited to deal with things actually related to the student body's activities and position in the school, and our state and national governments better suited to deal with issues that actually can be changed and improved now.

As an alternative to proposing a single unilateral damnation of Columbus Day, perhaps a petition in which individual students could speak for themselves is more appropriate. With a petition, no student will feel that senate has voiced an opinion that he himself does not share, and those who feel strongly about the subject can sign. That then can be submitted to our state government and would reflect the true feelings of the student body.

Finally, if senate or the state government were to find the time and will to draft some kind of sanction, I think it would be most productive to draft one that is relevant to current events. This might include something like the current genocide in Darfur, the Chinese occupation of Tibet or the suppression of human rights in Myanmar. In other words, we should condemn a situation in which the outcome actually might be changed.

We can draft as many resolutions as we like about the horrible events of the past, but it will not change the fact that there is nothing we can do about them. What we can do is work on the problems we have now (poverty, disease, human rights and international cooperation) so that maybe in another 500 years, there won't be calls for resolutions to condemn what we have done.

Sean Cooksey
Freshman

Minimum wage laws hurt poor workers, overlook true effects

It feels good to get a raise, even if it's from the government. I could thank it for a job well done, but I'd be overlooking all the negative effects of a minimum wage. I think the minimum wage helps some people make more money, but it hurts others who might need it a little more than suburban, middle-class kids like me do.

In Sarah Smith's article written about minimum wage in the Oct. 11 issue of the Index, sophomore Jordan Gribble said people need more money. Although I appreciate her concern for the poor, I think people like her overlook the true effect of the mandatory wage increase. When Seymour Patterson, professor of economics, said that a minimum wage creates a gap between supply and demand for labor, he was exactly right, but when he said that without the minimum wage there would be a lot more families worse off, he couldn't have been more wrong.

Although it is true that minimum wage helps families that can find work make a better living, it is also true that, like Patterson said, there are fewer jobs as a result. After thinking about the families that are worse off because of minimum wage and the rich kids who benefit, I wonder if the government got this one wrong. When I got my paycheck this summer, I felt good thinking about all the things I could buy that I didn't really need. Then I thought about the families that were poor, not because they didn't try hard to get a job, but because there weren't any available because of the minimum wage. Now that I know who the minimum wage really hurts, I won't feel so good next time I get a raise that I don't deserve.

Justin Logan
Sophomore

INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

Staff

Managing Editor
Jessie Gasch

Editor in Chief
Nathan Becker

Opinions Editor
Daniel Glossenger

News Editor
Julie Williams

Features Editor
Laura Prather

Sports Editor
Joe Barker

Assistant News Editors
Chris Boning
Diane Poelker

Assistant Features Editor
Jessica Rapp

Assistant Sports Editor
Blake Toppmeyer

News Staff
Bonnie Birdsell
Mariah Bohanon
John Fleming
Julia Hansen
Shelby Higginbotham
Jean Kaul
Sarah Smith

Features Staff
Jennifer Calandra
Franklin Cline
Mark Couch
Kara Savage
Abbey Snyder
Valerie Spencer
Jonathan Stutte

Sports Staff
Brent Foster
Kyle Magee
Jack Nicholl
Shawn Shinneman
Ryan Turner
Ben Yarnell

Online Editor
Kai Schaller

Photo Editor
Jackson Groves

Copy Chief
Megan Klcio

Design Chief
Nick Wilsey

Assistant Photo Editor
Jason Williams

Copy Editors
Bradley Bartlett
Alex Boles
Matt Butler

Designers
Dylan Herx
Erin Eisenbath
Andrea Bailey

Photographers
Mark Hardy
Phil Jarrett
Adam Kabins
Rachel Tharp
Chris Waller

Copy Editors
Amanda Jackson
Kelsey Landhuis
Zoe Martin
Megan Mills
Sadye Scott-Hainchek
Kelly Shute
Nate Sullivan

Advertising Manager
Chris Vernaci

Advertising Staff
Adam Arredondo
Katie Nevins
Jessi Bays
Christen Gates
Arielle Morris
Kelley Hulse
Tina May
Leah Bowring

Business Manager and Collections Agent
Ryan Saffer

Assistant Advertising Manager
Ashley Hancock

Distribution
Aaron Ely
Kyle Oesch

Adviser
Don Krause

Letters Policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 500 words except at the discretion of the Editorial Board. All letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, signed by at least one individual and include a phone number for verification. The Index does not publish anonymous letters to the editor. Letters to the editor also may be submitted by e-mail at index@truman.edu or on our Web site at www.trumanindex.com. Include the words "letter to the editor" in the subject line of the e-mail. No individual may submit more than one letter a week.

Editorial Policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, additional copies cost \$.50 each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. The Index is a designated public forum, and content of the Index is the responsibility of the Index staff. The editor in chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Editorial Board through a majority vote. The Editorial Board consists of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor, copy chief and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor in chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

Advertising Policy

For up-to-date information on current rates or to inquire about the availability of classified ads in the Index, contact our advertising department at 660-785-4319. Our fax number is 660-785-7601, or you can e-mail us at indexads@truman.edu.