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## Graduate School Loans

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## Graduate School Loans Testimonials

Annie W., Miami FL

Nearing graduation, I did not want to deal with the stress of my private student loans, especially because I didn't even have a job yet, Graduate School Loans was able to process my application and hold until graduation I didn't have to worry about several payments right out of school.

## PRESIDENT BUSH THREATENS TO VETO APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION, LABOR, AND HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

- NIHIT AURORA

The U.S. House of Representatives recently voted to approve a 2008 spending bill for the Departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services. This bill proposes increasing the maximum Pell Grant by \$390. Additionally, it includes an increase of \$2 billion for the No Child Left Behind Act and proposes increasing funding by more than \$227 million for a variety of programs addressing issues such as employment, job training, and worker protection.

However, President Bush has threatened to veto the bill in its current form. According to a White House statement of administration policy, the bill calls for around \$11 billion more in spending than the president proposed. If approved, the bill would increase discretionary spending for fiscal year 2008 by 9% and increase the budget deficit by 10%. The president has also threatened to veto any appropriations bill that provides more funding than he proposed.

President Bush has proposed a plan aimed at balancing the budget by 2012. In the

administration's view, this can be achieved by restraining spending instead of increasing taxes. To be able to reach this goal, his administration proposes spending no more than \$933 billion in 2008.

The White House has stated that the 2008 appropriations bill departs from a "fiscally responsible path." However, Rep. David Obey (D-WI), who chaired the Appropriations Committee, said the bill represented a "disciplined set of investments." In Obey's opinion, the president wants to prevent these appropriations so that funding for the Iraq War and tax breaks for affluent Americans can continue. He added that the appropriations were designed to benefit working families.

President Bush's threat to veto the appropriations bill has already started to raise questions regarding whether his threat is justified. Critics have voiced doubts that the president's actions are truly motivated by a desire to restore fiscal discipline.

## FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CLERY ACT COSTS BOARD OF REGENTS PRESIDENT HIS JOB AT EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

- SURAJIT SEN SHARMA

Failure to comply with the Clery Act in the wake of 22-year-old Laura Dickinson's murder recently cost John A. Fallon his post as president of the board of regents at Eastern Michigan University.

On Friday, December 15, 2006, Laura Dickinson was found dead in her room on campus, lying face up on the floor, naked from the waist down, with her legs spread and a pillow over her face. Her keys were missing. However, on Saturday, December 16, 2006, John A. Fallon, as president of the board of regents of the university, approved and published a statement on the university's website that read, "At this point, there is no

reason to suspect foul play."

The following week, an initial DPS incident draft report (IDR) on the event reached the student affairs office. Several student affairs administrators found and read the IDR--which graphically described the circumstances under which Dickinson's body was found--and brought it to the attention of Vice President of Student Affairs Jim Vick. Vick ordered immediate shredding of the IDR and did not inform Fallon of its destruction. The IDR never reached the university's general counsel or any other administrator, and the school's website

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continued to state, "At this point, there is no reason to suspect foul play."

An independent investigation prepared by Butzel Long, PC, reported, "In fact, a conscious decision appears to have been made by Mr. Vick and/or Chief Hall to label the ongoing investigation a 'death' investigation rather than a 'homicide investigation.' Furthermore, Mr. Fallon did not seek additional information from anyone other than Mr. Vick."

On February 23, 2006, EMU student Orange Taylor III was

arrested and charged with the rape and murder of Dickinson. The university community was taken unawares and was outraged by the fact that the "death" of one of the school's students was actually a "murder" of which they had remained uninformed.

On Sunday, July 15, the board of regents of Eastern Michigan University unanimously voted for the removal of John A. Fallon from his post as board president and terminated his contract. Jim Vick, vice president of student affairs, and Cindy Hall, director of the university's department of public safety, have tendered their resignations.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

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### **TEXAS' "B ON TIME" LOAN PROGRAM FALLS SHORT OF FUNDING**

Created to encourage students to graduate on time, Texas' "B On Time" interest-free loan program will fall short of funding this year. The program spent \$49 million on loans last year and helped 12,800 students. This year, the amount allocated has been reduced to \$41 million, enough for only 9,900 students. Additionally, 650 students who took out "B On Time" loans last year will not get them renewed this year. Financial aid officers are trying to create alternative financial aid packages for these students, but they will not be as helpful as the "B On Time" assistance they previously received. Students participating in the program who maintain "B" grade point averages and graduate on time may have their loans forgiven.

### **WEST VIRGINIA NAMED AMONG TOP SPENDERS ON COLLEGE GRANTS**

In a National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs survey, West Virginia came in fourth (after South Carolina, Vermont, and Georgia) in terms of how much tax

income it spends on college grant programs. According to the report, the state provided \$71 million to grant programs in 2005-2006; the equivalent of 20.6% of state tax appropriations was spent on West Virginia's higher education institutions. The biggest merit-based program in West Virginia is the PROMISE Scholarship Program, while its biggest need-based program is the Higher Education Grant Program.

### **TEXAS A&M'S MINIMUM WAGE FOR STUDENT EMPLOYEES INCREASES**

The minimum wage rate for Texas A&M University's "Student Worker I" category has been revised by the university's department of student financial aid. The wage rate for student employees now falls between \$5.85 and \$8 per hour, and the wage rate for federal work-study and Texas work-study students now falls between \$5.85 and \$16 per hour. The increase in the federal minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$5.85 per hour triggered the increases. States have the authority to set minimum wage rates higher than the national rate. Valley of Oregon, the University of Oregon offers students opportunities in the fields of architecture, art, business, education, journalism, law, music, and dance.