

PIONEER

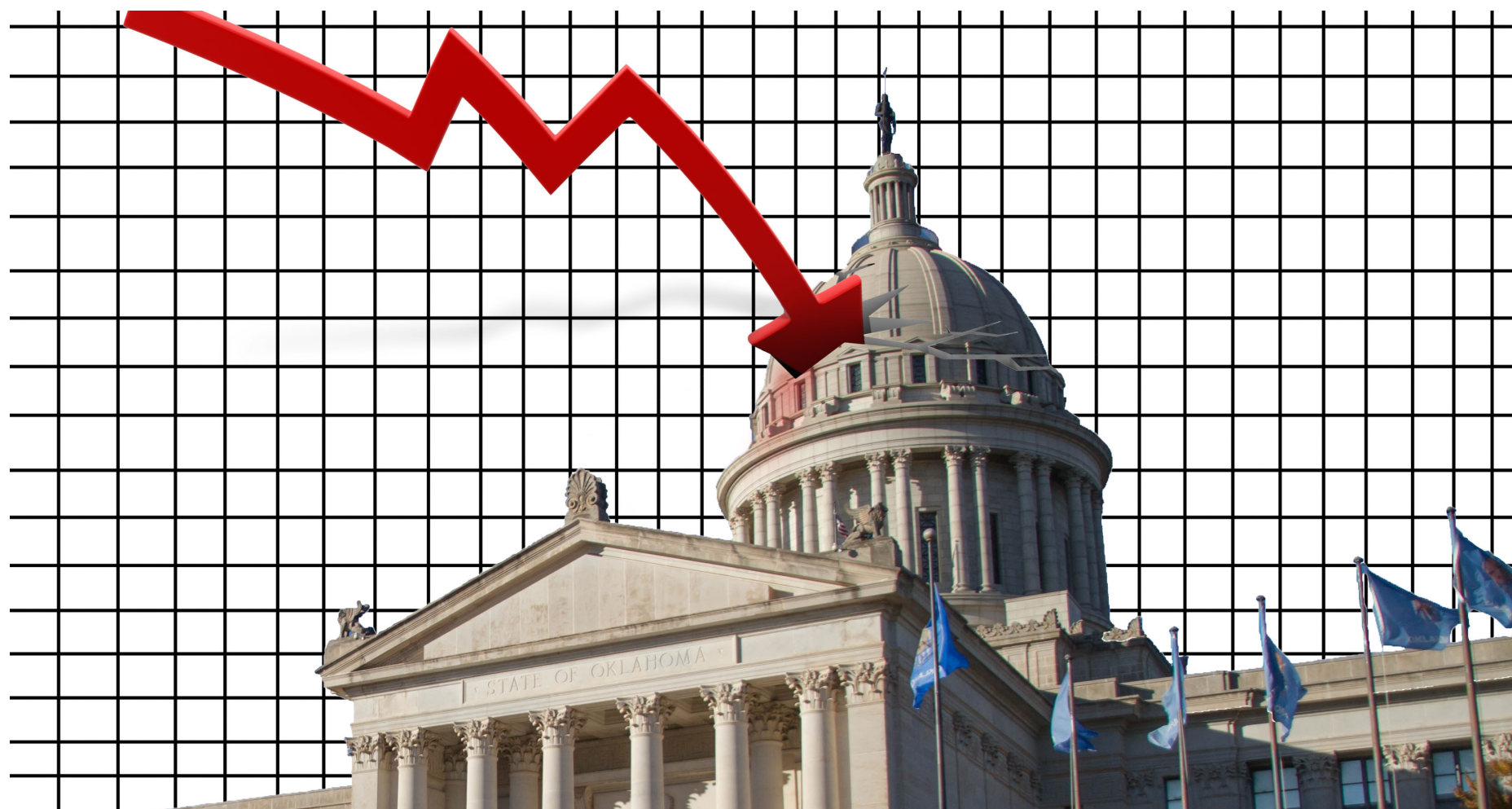
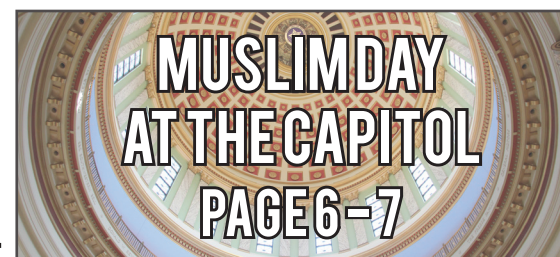


Photo illustration by Aaron Cardenas and Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer

Revenue failure chips away *at higher ed funding*

DEREK SCARSELLA
Staff Writer

The state of Oklahoma has declared a revenue failure.

For the second straight year, the Oklahoma legislature doesn't have enough money to pay its bills. On February 21, the Oklahoma Board of Equalization announced an \$878 million shortfall. This means the state will have 12.7 percent less money to work with than it did last year.

A report produced by the Board of Equalization indicates that much of the shortfall is due to a significant decrease in revenue generated from the Corporate Income Tax. Revenue generated from the Gross Production of Oil Tax failed to provide much cushion due to state enforced tax breaks for the oil industry.

So who will be footing the bill to make up the shortfall?

Article Ten, Section 23 of the Oklahoma State Constitution says revenue shortfalls are to be made up by across-the-board cuts to multiple state agencies. According to the Office of Management and Enterprise Services, state agencies can expect to see cuts of up to \$34.6 million dollars.

Those cuts include \$4.2 million from the Dept. of Human Services, \$4.65 million from higher education, \$4.65 million from the Oklahoma Healthcare Authority, \$3 million from the Dept. of Corrections, \$2.1 million from mental health services, and an \$11.1 million cut to public education.

OCCC's Chief Financial Officer John Boyd said the college was "drastically affected by the budget cuts" for fiscal year 2016.

"We went through and looked at all of our operating budgets. We eliminated unfilled positions out of our staffing plan. We did also increase tuition.

See **REVENUE** on page 10

Shortfall putting programs at risk

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Oklahoma City Community College President Jerry Steward said a decrease in state funding for fiscal year 2018, "will be devastating for OCCC, as well as for other state agencies, because we're all so lean now."

Steward made the statement during a meeting of the OCCC Faculty Association on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

"We are already down \$1.3 billion this year over the previous year, and we're down several hundred million from the year before that," Steward said of the state budget. "The stacking of these cuts is just Draconian."

See **CUTS** on page 10

EDITORIAL/OPINION

EDITORIAL | PUSH YOURSELF TO READ AND GET BETTER

Maybe we can make America read again



Reading makes you smarter

Reading is the easiest way to fall into a world of experiences and information that would otherwise be out of reach. While reading, you can be impressed by Roman history, follow the narrative of a Palestinian refugee, or find a connection with a modern writer's account of working on a farm. While spending days or weeks at a time working through a plot line, the empathic joy and pain that can be found in reading is unparalleled.

However, interesting stories and new thoughts and ideas are not the only rewards of reading. Reading gives you a clear and defined route towards "improved cognitive ability." To put that simply, reading

makes you smarter!

In childhood, those with reading levels that are advanced next to their peers are encouraged to read more challenging books. These readers invest more of their time reading, thus creating a positive feedback cycle. These children have the foundation and confidence needed to find pleasure in reading. Though this cycle works well for encouraging life long reading, it often leaves average or below average children behind. If reading was never your strong suit as child, have faith; research tells us you can still catch up.

Anne E. Cunningham, a researcher and professor from the University of California, Berkeley, says, "Reading yields significant dividends for everyone — not just for the 'smart kids' or the more able readers." Even those with limited reading and comprehension skills can build their vocabulary and cognition skills by reading, circumventing the reasons they avoided reading in the first place.

"Ability is not the only variable that counts in the development of intellectual functioning," Cunningham said. "Those who read a lot will enhance their verbal intelligence; that is, reading will make them smarter."

Reading makes you smarter than watching TV will

Cunningham studied the cognitive effects of reading compared to other forms of media. Cunningham looked at the amount of rare words found in books versus television or everyday conversation, and found that books have "50 percent more rare words in them than adult prime-time television."

The number of rare words found in a book or TV show is important because it shows us how many potentially new words a consumer can learn. "Rare" refers to words that are infrequently said in our spoken language, but appear more often in written texts. Some of these words include, "display," "maneuver," "equate," "relinquish," and "portray." These "rare" words are not irrelevant, fancy, or fluffy and meaningless words; they are necessary tools that make communication flow more smoothly. In the same study, it was concluded that preschool books contain more rare words than the most popular prime-time adult shows. If your goal is to widen your mind and improve your intelligence, you'll have a better time reading "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" than watching "The Walking Dead." Watching TV can not be a substitute for reading at any level.

In D. R. Olson's "Intelligence and Literacy," Olson noted, "It is easy to show that sensitivity to the subtleties of language are crucial to some undertakings. A person who does not clearly see the difference between an expression of intention and a promise, or between a mistake and an accident, or between a falsehood and a lie, should avoid a legal career or, for that matter, a theological one."

The more rare words we know, the more succinct and exact we can be when communicating our thoughts and ideas with others. Reading is a way to grow

our vocabulary so that we may write and speak effectively, which are vital skills to possess in our modern workforce.

Reading gives you "common sense."

Cunningham studied the differences in "common knowledge" or "common sense" between readers and non-readers. She devised a "practical knowledge test" that asked questions such as, "If a substance is carcinogenic, what does that mean? After the Federal Reserve Board raises the prime lending rate, the interest that you will be asked to pay on a car loan will generally increase/decrease/stay the same? What vitamin is highly concentrated in citrus fruits? When a stock exchange is in a "bear market," what is happening?"

The results of her research indicated that avid readers, regardless of their general intelligence, knew more about how a carburetor worked, were more likely to know who their United States senators were, etc. The knowledge that regular readers have is incredibly relevant and helpful to living in the United States in the 21st century.

Her research also found that readers believed less misinformation than TV watchers. Cunningham wrote, "The cognitive anatomy of misinformation appears to be one of too little exposure to print (or reading) and over-reliance on television for information about the world." This fact is highly relevant in today's age of fake news stories and sensationalist information. Read more, watch prime time news less!

Where to start?

We know that reading fosters sustained attention, engages parts of your brain that TV does not, educates the reader about cultural and historical references, and helps build a vocabulary for effective communication. All the reasons to start reading more are there; but where do you start?

An easy way to dive into reading is to visit your public library. You can always visit the classics section to find books that have been loved by thousands over the years, or you can turn to the new releases section to find what's popular now. It's important that you read what you are interested in and compelled by; otherwise you will opt for television instead of the book you've been trying to read for six months.

Newspapers and in-depth media outlets, such as the Economist or the Atlantic, are also great resources for getting into reading without devoting yourself to a hundred-something page novel.

Millennials and reading

After years of wondering if the time Millennials spent reading was going down the drain, a 2014 Pew Research Center more than calmed my fears. The data showed that 88 percent of Americans under 30 read a book in the past year, compared with 79 percent of those age 30 and older. Contrary to popular belief, Millennials are reading more now than the generations before them.

Maybe they got hooked on the Harry Potter series, or maybe they've dived into the world of e-books and Kindles. No matter what the initial impetus was, Millennials have somehow caught on that reading is important. Millennials are certainly the most tech-savvy generation. With all these Millennials reading so much, maybe we'll be the smartest generation too!

—SOPHIA BABB
EDITOR

COMMENTS AND REVIEWS

MUSIC REVIEW | TRACKS EXPLORE ALL SIDES OF RELATIONSHIPS



Kehlani bares her soul on new album

Oakland native Kehlani Parrish dropped her debut album on January 27. “Sweet-SexySavage,” a project combining ‘90s R&B underlaid with modern Hip-Hop production is Parrish’s third studio project, coming after mixtapes “Cloud 19” and “You Should Be Here.”

The song “Distraction,” has been a constant play in my daily rotation since it was released in the summer of 2016. It tells the story of a courtship minus the commitment.

“It’s cool to have a little thing but right now I’m so in my vibe,” Parrish said in an interview with *genius.com*, that she doesn’t have time for anything more than casual. Thus, the idea of “a distraction” is made – a partner who is solely around for entertainment.

Instantly, the soft register vocals reminisce of singer Brandy in her 1994 music debut.

Both create a seamless combination of Hip-Hop and Soul.

As the song progresses, Kehlani puts her own New Age spin on the track with a variation of hi-hats and a bass-heavy bed.

The track “Undercover,” combines a Spanish guitar, an Akon sample and original melodies. These mesh to produce an upbeat, feel-good love song.

“Keep On” describes the classic tale of an undeserving lover. In this case, that lover is Parrish herself.

“Cause I ain’t been the best that I could’ve been
I ain’t do the things that I should’ve did
But every time I come crawling on my knees

You’re there,
And you just keep on taking me back”

The bouncing basslines gives the song head-bop-ability. It’s got a prominent funk appeal but not so much that it’s overbearing. Parrish’s even vocals sit flawlessly on this track.

Parrish stays true to Bay-Area R&B with catchy lyrics, bright melodies and the occasional ballad.

Overall rating: 3.5 out of 5.

Would I buy it? Considering it is free to stream on Soundcloud, no.

—STEVANA SIMMONS
STAFF WRITER

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www.facebook.com/OCCCPioneer



CORNUCOPIA OF BOOKS: Labeled by genre with poster board and different colored balloons, tables covered with books are perused. (Below) From the general area entrance to the front doors, people wait along lines of caution tape for the doors to open. *Brandon King/Pioneer*

Library book sale draws large crowds

BRANDON KING
Staff Writer

The State Fair grounds were brimming with book fanatics as the Friends of the Metropolitan Library System held their 38th annual book sale in the Oklahoma Expo Hall. People from across the state came to buy from the large selection of donated books, which ranged in price from 50 cents to \$6.

The sale featured more than 700,000 books.

By 6 p.m., droves of people were shuffling to tables marked with signs and different colored balloons to indicate which genre belonged to each table. From Westerns to Romance and Classical to Sci-fi, compact discs and magazines had people moving.

Beth Toland was directing traffic at her information booth near the entrance. Toland said she has been a member of the Friends of the Metropolitan Library System organization for a number of years.

"We've been effective since 1981 and have been providing a public service for the libraries in the metro area ever since," she said. "When we started, our sale proceeds were \$6,240 while our grants approved \$4,606. In 2016 alone, our proceeds were \$5,455,268.35 and our grants were \$4,083,575. With this money, we've been able to help out our libraries and our desperately needing public education system."

The Friends of the Metropolitan Library system has donated books, school equipment, and money to aid public education since its founding. Teachers across the school boards dragged wheel barrows and library carts behind them in search of books to fill their classrooms.



One of the major supporters for this book fair was Karen Workun. Being an English teacher for Jenks High School in Tulsa, she said, "This is a tremendous service for teachers who are looking to establish and build robust and diverse classroom libraries."

"Seeing that we operate from limited salaries and our schools are constantly battling budget crises, the book sale gives us the opportunity to get the most bang for our buck," Workun said. "For teachers committed to promoting literacy and lifelong readership among students, this is a can't-miss event."

Anything from school bags and rolling suitcases to red Radio Flyer wagons were being pulled around by those willing to

get as many books as they could carry. With paperback books priced at 50 cents, the hardback books at a dollar, and the collectibles varying in price, Oklahomans were grabbing what they could.

Marcus Whittman was one of the thousands who came. Though his ivory-colored hair was frizzed on either side and he was clutching a tattered Army rucksack, his grin was the brightest in the room.

"This is my guilty pleasure every year," Whittman said. "My wife was always rolling her eyes whenever I would come home with a handful and a bag full of books, but she understood. God bless her, she knew that without books, none of our kids, none of our grand-kiddos would be able to experience life the way we were meant to without them. That's why this is so important. For us, for society."

Friends of the Metropolitan Library System will be returning to the Oklahoma State Fair Ground next year around the end of February.

Tickets will be available at your local library in support of libraries and public education systems.



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CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS

Christians on Campus at OCCC will host Bible studies Mondays from noon to 12:45 p.m. and Tuesdays from 12:30 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. in room 1C5 of the Arts and Humanities building.

March 13: Campus will be closed Monday, March 13 through Sunday, March 19.

March 21: Art, Music, Theater, Singing, Dancing, Audience interaction... all on one stage. All done as a team of friends seeing the world and sharing a love of the Arts. Witness the creativity of an artist painting a masterpiece before your eyes in mere moments, combined with captivating vocals, intricate choreography and exciting music.

March 24: Join Student Life for a service opportunity with Central Oklahoma Habitat for Humanity. Participants will be working alongside Habitat for Humanity employees to build, repair and finish houses for deserving families. Participants will be trained and overseen during the service project.

Service Learning is coordinated through the Office of Student Life. The Civic Honors and Campus Impact programs offer students the opportunity to earn service awards. Various service trips will be scheduled in a semester to give students the opportunity to do service within a group function. If you want to know more about service honors please contact Student Life.

April 11: OCCC Music presents the student Rock Band at 7:30 PM in the Bruce Owen Theater.

Admission is free.

Oklahoma City Community
College Main Campus - Arts and
Humanities Center

Room: Bruce Owen Theater

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Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the PIONEER, the college or the publisher.

The PIONEER welcomes letters to the editor and encourages the use of this publication as a community forum. All letters must include the author's name, address, phone number and signature.

E-mail letters should include all but the signature. The PIONEER will withhold

the author's name if the request is made in writing.

The PIONEER reserves the right to edit all letters and submissions for length, libel and obscenity. Letters should be no more than 250 words. Students must list a major. OCC staff and faculty must list a work title.

Letters to the editor can be submitted to the PIONEER office, located in room 1F2 on the first floor of the Art and Humanities Building, mailed to 7777 S May Ave., Oklahoma City, Okla. 73159, or submitted via e-mail to editor@ouccc.edu with a phone number for verification included.

The PIONEER ONLINE also can be accessed at <http://pioneer.occc.edu>.

Muslims bring message of faith, community to Capitol

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The Council for American-Islamic Relations of Oklahoma hosted the third annual Muslim Day Thursday, seeking to inform residents about the state of education, hate crimes, and community involvement.

Adam Soltani, executive director of CAIR-Oklahoma said the event has meant a lot for the people present and the community every year.

“In Oklahoma, since 2010, Muslims have been the target of anti-Muslim legislation and hateful, bigoted attacks from some of our elected officials,” he said. “This year in particular, we are not only concerned about engaging with our elected leaders and being educated on the issues. What we’re really trying to accomplish this year is to push people and encourage them to be advocates.”

Soltani said he wants people to advocate for the right to exist.

“We need to fight for the right to be accepted as Muslims in America, which sometimes can be a challenge, but that’s what we hope to ac-



See ADVOCATES on page 7



(Top) Muslim girls look for name tags at the event. (Below) Imam Imad Enchassi leads a prayer inside the Capitol. Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer

Advocates: Muslim constituents seek representation

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comply this year.”

There is a clear gap that should not exist between legislators and the people, Soltani said.

“Our legislators are elected to lead us and we should feel comfortable approaching them, but the reality is a lot of people don’t. Our goal is to get people over their fear and their apprehension and to really get them engaging with their elected leaders and get comfortable with that,” he said.

The event’s keynote speaker, state Representative Scott Inman, D-Oklahoma City, said he wanted to talk about ways for the Muslim community to get involved in local government.

“My basic message today is while legislators at the Capitol try to divide us along religious, cultural or other political lines, at the end of the day the common denominator is we’re all Oklahomans,” he said. “Regardless of how we pray or how we think, we’re all Oklahomans and everybody needs to be treated that way.”

The event this year held a series of panels focused around the legislative agenda for the year. It included issues on the budget crisis, public education, religious freedom, the First Amendment, and others.

Panelists that can speak to those issues included current or formerly elected officials, reporters, law professors, and community organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union of Oklahoma.

Panelist and Legal Director for the ACLU of Oklahoma, Brady Henderson, said the union has had a long standing relationship with CAIR.

“We do court cases together or we’ll have similar issues on behalf of marginalized communities. They have our phone number; we have theirs,” he said. “A lot of different organizations in the civil rights community work together. We will very often reach out to allies



A handful of people yelled and held signs towards arriving attendees during Muslim day at the Capitol. They declined to comment and give their names to Pioneer reporters. (Below) Members of the Interfaith Alliance of Oklahoma welcome attendees walking towards the south entrance of the Oklahoma State Capitol. Victor A. Pozadas/Pioneer

for things like that, both for expertise and for different perspective.”

CAIR has been involved in the Oklahoma community for more than ten

years. Government Affairs Director Anna Facci has held the position for only two months, but has been involved with the council for years as Apparitions

and Events Coordinator.

“The results of the 2016 election influenced what we wanted to talk about at the state and at the federal level,” she said.

Her focus this year was a broader look into the legislative agenda that still impacts Muslims like education, incarceration of women, or the budget crisis. She said these are issues that are deeply important to the community, as Muslims, and Oklahomans.

After Inman’s speech, the group relocated to the State Capitol where the rest of the event was taking place.

A handful of people held signs in protest. One sign read “Every Real Muslim Is A Jihadist.”

The protesters declined when approached for comment.

Anastasia Pittman, D-Oklahoma City, embraced people and shook hands. She raised her voice in the middle of the row and said “Welcome to your Capitol. You are all welcome here.”



Unraveling the stress of birth control

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Having grown up in Oklahoma, I did not receive a proper sexual education. This is a shared experience among my peers.

Sure, we learned about how babies are made and what a cartoon uterus looks like. We learned about the value of deodorant and what tampons were – but never sex itself. It was an unspoken ritual, some secret act that was never openly discussed. By these unsaid standards, sex was off-limits, and birth control was a ticket straight to hell.

Educating teenagers on birth control would insinuate that sex was a real thing that real people did. Like most adolescents, I grew up knowing only that when a man and a woman loved each other very much...a baby was made.

When I fell in love for the first time, a baby was the last thing on my mind. Becoming sexually active spurred a terrifying, confusing whirlwind of figuring out how to keep that from happening. I found that worrying about an accidental pregnancy was not a turn on.

Too many times I heard “If you don’t want to have a baby, don’t have sex!” from stiff older women and youth group leaders. I still wonder what world they lived in. I guess it was a world where sex only ever occurred with the intention of bringing another human being into the world.

The reality is that teenagers have sex. Lots of it. With teen birth rates in Oklahoma being one of the highest in the country, it’s clear: teaching abstinence to teens just doesn’t work. Birth control does – although we haven’t tried heavy duty chastity belts (don’t get any ideas, lawmakers).

According to the Oklahoma Policy Institute, Oklahoma ranks second among all U.S. states for the highest teen birth rate. Clearly our teenagers are uninformed about their options. I know I was.

For sexually active teenage girls, pregnancy scares are frequent, and endlessly anxiety-inducing. It’s hard to focus in class when you’re sure you’re pregnant. Your period is late and WebMD.com tells you sore gums may be a sign of pregnancy! The panicky question is louder than anything else: how will I deal with an unplanned pregnancy?

I was tired of worrying all the time, so I decided to get on birth control. The options were not endless, but there were many. The pill, the patch, the shot, the cervical cap, the IUD. It was intimidating. “I put what into my what?!” rang in my head. The pill was the least invasive option, so that’s what I chose.

I went to the pharmacy, and took home a plastic pack of 28 tiny pills. I took one the next morning and threw up. For the next two weeks, I was on a roller coaster of nausea and mood swings. No one had told me about how it would

affect my emotional state. I cried out of nowhere. I got pissed off, and fast. This wasn’t like me. By the end of the third month, I didn’t recognize myself anymore. My mood swings had leveled out, but left me feeling robotic and unfeeling. The natural ups and downs of my menstrual cycle were gone, leaving an even, uneventful month. After month. After month.

Some women appreciate the predictability of their moods on the pill, experiencing emotions like clockwork. I didn’t. I missed feeling human. I had no answers besides what my doctor told me: it takes a while to adjust. A while could have meant anything, but I hoped it meant soon. Exhausted and upset, I googled “birth control effects on mood.” I found that I was not alone in my experiences.

Jill Foster wrote an article for the Daily Mail about her experience with the pill. It echoed my own. She described how trying to pour herself a glass of orange juice nearly ended her relationship:

“Arriving home from a hard day at the office, tired and dehydrated, I reached into the fridge for the carton, poured out its contents — and the tiniest, meanest dribble of liquid fell into the glass. What can only be described as murderous rage surged through my body. I hurled the glass across the kitchen, sending it smashing into tiny pieces against the wall.

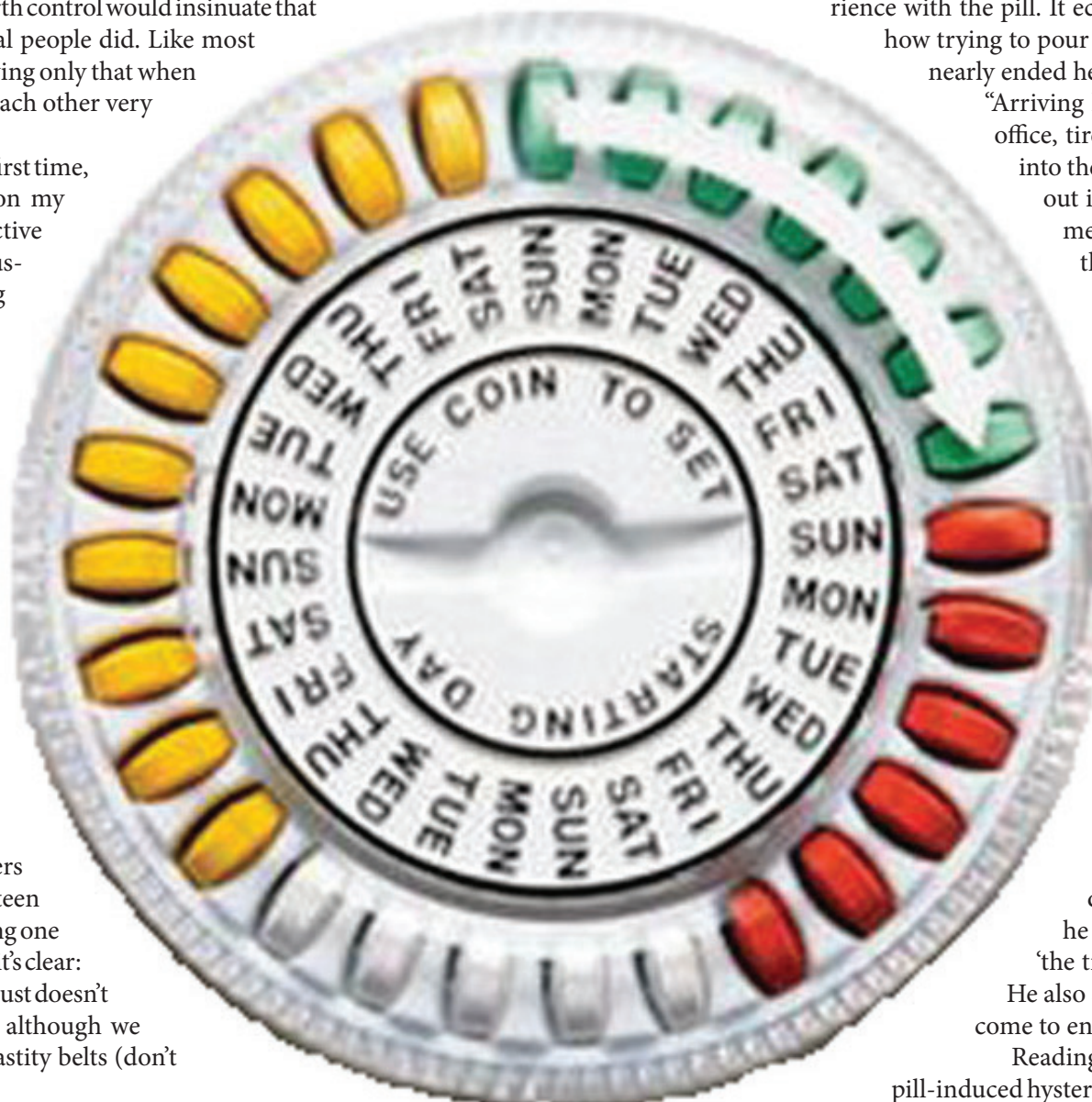
My boyfriend and I had a blazing row and I stormed out of the kitchen. Looking back, I’m astonished the poor boy was still in the house when I sheepishly returned an hour later. Especially when for weeks I’d been irritable and moody, barely wanting to touch him, let alone sleep with him. But stay he did. He is now my husband and he still refers to that moment as ‘the time you went a bit psychotic.’ He also admits it’s the closest he’s ever come to ending our relationship.”

Reading Foster’s account of her own pill-induced hysteria made me feel a lot less crazy.

I had been convinced it was either the pill or my own insanity that was the source of my violent ups and downs. I was relieved to know it wasn’t insanity. I was also relieved to know that my loss of a sex drive had a reason. A study of more than 1,000 women at Germany’s University of Heidelberg proved that taking the pill dramatically decreases libido and arousal. So there’s research proving that the pill changes women’s sex lives. Got it. But when it comes to the emotional effects, the research runs drier.

Every article I came across from a woman’s point of view was accompanied by hundreds of women who shared their own similarly negative experiences in the comments section. There were so many women who, like me, had wondered if they were just going crazy after taking the pill. But for every personal account I read, there was a research-based rebuttal, stating that the pill caused none of the things any of us had experienced.

We couldn’t all be crazy...could we?



See THE PILL on page 9

The pill: Many users experience depression

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Holly Grigg-Spall, author of *Sweetening The Pill: Or How We Got Hooked On Hormonal Birth Control*, has had little faith in the medical community when it comes to taking women's experiences seriously.

"Experts – mostly men – have lined up to tell us not to be alarmed, concerned or deterred from using hormonal contraceptive," Grigg-Spall wrote.

A recent study by the University of Copenhagen says otherwise, though. The study, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association Psychiatry*, took place over 13 years. It found that younger women taking the mini-pill were 34 percent more likely to be diagnosed with depression than those not on hormonal contraception.

The study is important for women like Grigg-Spall and me who have been told there was not sufficient research to back up our experiences, and that it could have been anything else. It's important because it helps us understand that our experiences are valid.

"Depression from hormonal contraceptives may not be the experience of every woman, but that doesn't mean it's not the experience of many women who, in reading about this study, could have their lives changed for the better," said Grigg-Spall.

The *Psychoneuroendocrinology Journal* published a study in 2013 that tested whether or not feeling depression on the pill was a placebo stemming from

hearsay about its potential effects. The study tested this with 34 women who said they felt strange on the pill. The women were placed in two randomized groups, with one group taking placebos, and one taking the actual pill. At the end of the study, the women who had been taking the actual pill without knowing had higher scores of depressed mood, mood swings, and fatigue than the placebo users. It was both gratifying and disappointing to know there was a reason for my inner chaos. I had gotten on the pill for a reason, hoping to help deter anxiety, but ended up feeling worse than before.

At the end of six months on the pill, I decided to stop taking it. It took a while to get back to where I was, and for my period to come back normally. But I was me again, and I was happier.

For the past year, I have been hormone free. Only recently did I decide that I was ready to try another form of birth control.

I found that the Kyleena IUD best suited my needs. I'm still struggling with emotional reactions to the hormones, but the ups and downs are much softer. Still, I wish I had been aware of the effects prior to taking the pill.

Further research is essential to making sure young women are aware of the emotional side effects that may come from hormonal birth control. Perhaps more studies will help expand the knowledge among young women looking for options, and help doctors better identify the cause of depression in those taking the pill.



Photo by jcomp/freepik.com

Revenue: Services may be taxed to compensate

continued from page 1

That really helped soak up the significant reduction in state appropriations,” Boyd said.

Boyd said OCCC will have to look very hard at whether we need to change the way we operate. “We are going to have to change the way we do business. It most likely means we may have to cut some programs and services. We may have to combine some sections. This may mean more students per class.”

Last year students saw tuition increases from \$83 to \$87 per credit hour plus a recurring \$5 security fee. The fee is used to pay for on-campus safety measures required by the state and federal government.

Boyd indicated that there have not been any talks yet about another tuition and fee increase. Those talks will not occur until April.

During Higher Education Day at the Capitol on Feb. 14, state Senator Joseph Silk, R-Broken Bow, discussed his constituents’ concerns about higher education.

“I talk to the people in Higher Ed and they are concerned with funding,” he said. “The public is concerned if they are using their funds properly. I think from a legislative standpoint you have to look and see how they are using their funds in a fiscally conservative manner where the taxpayer’s needs are met.”

Boyd disagrees.

“People think that colleges are administratively bloated. If they saw what we have to do on a daily basis just to keep everything running smooth, they may have a change of attitude. The mission of the college is to provide access to the students so that they can get an education. There is a lot that has to happen for that to be available,” Boyd said.

State Representative Mickey Dollens, D-Oklahoma City, said he believes the biggest concern in higher education is not the misuse of funds, but rather finding revenue that doesn’t put the burden on the backs of working Oklahomans. Dollens is referring to Governor Fallin’s recent tax proposal. The governor is suggesting a tax increase on nearly 160 services.



Photo illustration by Aaron Cardenas/Pioneer

Dollens applauded the governor for making an effort to fix the state revenue failure.

“At least she proposed a plan. It’s not a good plan, but at least it’s a starting point,” he said. “Too bad Lt. Governor Lamb jumped ship when the job got tough and didn’t propose a plan on how he is going to fund higher education.”

The governor’s proposal incorporates a diverse mix of regressive service taxes that includes things like dog grooming, funeral services, and trailer parks, to name a few. Dollens believes this type of taxation disproportionately affects the working class.

To counter the governor’s plan Dollens says, “The Democratic caucus is going to roll out a very comprehensive, detailed, and progressive revenue plan that will bring in over \$1 billion a year.”

Despite the political rhetoric coming from both the Republicans and Democrats, these policies have real-life repercussions for students.

Oklahoma State Regents Chancellor Glen D. Johnson said budget cuts “have resulted in forced furloughs and the reduction of academic programs, personnel, student services, and college degree completion initiatives.”

“As we continue preparations for our FY 2018 budget, our state system of higher education contin-

ues to implement significant cost-cutting measures, including sharing faculty and administrators between institutions, consolidation of back-office administrative functions, joint academic degree programs between institutions, travel reductions, early retirement options, and consolidation of campus sites,” Johnson, a former Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives, said.

Sociology major Cornelia Vann said she was able to lessen the blow from last year’s tuition increase by applying for scholarships. “I’m worried about tuition increases because the extra money spent on tuition could mean less gas money to and from school for some students.”

For students who are struggling to pay for school, she recommends checking out the Oklahoma City Community College Academic Works website. This is where students can discover scholarship opportunities on campus.

Education major Colette Pouliot says she’s worried about the cuts.

“Eventually, I’m going to be in big trouble if tuition keeps going up,” Pouliot said. “I get no help from my family and I pay out-of-state tuition. Financial aid doesn’t cover everything.”

Cuts: Low enrollment programs on chopping block

continued from page 1

The total revenue shortfall for the upcoming year is \$878 million, which equates to about a 12.78 percent decrease in the state budget.

Steward said the administration is looking at the possibility of closing the testing center as a means to offset budget pains.

“If I have a choice that has to be made between laying off current faculty, or not having the testing center, I’m going to keep the faculty,” he said. “I’m not telling you we’re closing the testing center, and there’s always a danger in even saying that’s a possibility. The

reason I’m saying it is I’m trying to be as transparent with you as I can, and not withhold information.”

“If we have to trim another 12.78 percent from our budget, we’re going to have more pain this coming year than this past year,” he said.

Even so, Steward said he does not expect any significant faculty layoffs. Instead, the college will be unable to fill all the vacant positions, and some low-enrollment programs may be impacted.

Steward said the faculty did not feel the same brunt of the budget cuts that the rest of the college did, as there were 16 new faculty positions hired last year while 64 other staffing positions were cut.

“This year, that’s not going to happen,” he said. “We have to preserve the core function of the college. The core function is teaching and learning. The aquatic center was nice, the arts festival was nice, but the core function is teaching and learning. That’s still my position.”

Steward ended his address to the association by saying a 12.78 percent funding reduction would be felt by the faculty.

“But I do not anticipate any significant layoffs of faculty,” he said. “We’re going to be cutting programs and services if we have that kind of cut again.”

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WEEKLY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1. Child
5. Urgency
10. Satisfy
14. Chills and fever
15. Made of oak wood
16. Anagram of "Wort"
17. Hybridize
19. Double-reed woodwind
20. It unlocks doors
21. Famous
22. Small slits
23. Conference
25. Not before
27. Sphere
28. Hideousness
31. A simple seat
34. Contemptuous look
35. Make lace
36. Tussock
37. Dried coconut meat
38. Russian parliament
39. F
40. Caps
41. Englishman
42. Extinct elephant-like mammal
44. Flee
45. Escapade
46. Illness
50. Our planet
52. Anagram of "Aside"
54. Record (abbrev.)
55. Fuss
56. Fan
58. Sense
59. Stars on stage
60. By mouth
61. Rational
62. Climb
63. Diminish



DOWN

1. Endorses
2. Jibe
3. Floats
4. Aye
5. Associate
6. Moses' brother
7. Distort
8. Adolescents
9. Terminate
10. Burgled
11. Botanical garden
12. Horn sound
13. Female sheep (plural)
18. Play the bagpipes
22. Blend
24. Lampblack
26. Parasitic insect
28. Remove the pins from
29. Identical
30. Remain
31. Flower stalk
32. A soft porous rock
33. Offstage
34. Sleep inducing
37. Formally surrender
38. 10 cent coin
40. 19th Hebrew letter
41. Lariat
43. Be a snitch
44. Be a go-between
46. Sticker
47. A kind of macaw
48. 4-door car
49. French school
50. FFFF
51. District
53. Opera star
56. Commercials
57. At this time

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