The meeting commenced at 7:00pm

Speaker of the House Paul Aljets:

“Welcome to the Second Annual State of the Students Address.

Tonight we’ll start with comments from myself. We’ll then move into remarks by the Vice-president finally from the President of ASOSU. Following that, if anyone has any comments they would like to give, please come to the podium and speak your mind.

I’d like to thank Chris and Kevin for coordinating their staff to attend the event. I’d also like to thank the Judicial Council as well as the professional staff and administrators for being in attendance.

ASOSU has gone through a lot of changes over the past 6-months. The Senate has become the Congress, with even greater opportunity to represent the student body. Now, legislation can be combed over more thoroughly and debated with all opinions heard.

Student organizations can now send delegates to Congress. I will be the first to say that, the representatives may listen to their neighbors and classmates, but they do not comprise the entire student collective. This is why all registered student organizations, large and small, have the right to send a delegate to Congress to sponsor legislation and plead their case for the people their group represents. With these new measures, no student voice will go unheard.

This year, I’ve had the honor to work with the Van Drimmelen administration, a collection of some of the most dedicated and active students on campus. Chris hit the ground running last May when he vowed to create a cabinet of rivals; a network of diverse backgrounds and
opinions, to capture a multitude of new ideas and innovations. I can say with confidence that the President did just that, and the results speak for themselves.

I’ve seen cordial cooperation and an overflow of creativity in this administration, necessary in one of the largest and most active student governments in the country. I can only imagine what can be accomplished when a goal is set before the Van Drimmelen Administration. And there is no shortage of challenges to be overcome this year.

Our new government means new precedence. The ASOSU has been reborn into a tumultuous time for the campus and the nation, and it is imperative that the new system works right the first time. But with a renewed relationship among the branches of government, and a drive for the betterment of all OSU, there are few challenges we cannot face together.

One of my own challenges is reenergizing the legislative branch of government. One thing I’ve always admired about the executive branch is their keen ability to train future advocates and activists. But this is not the role of Congress. Congress must train the policymakers of the future. The halls of the Senate and House of representatives must be the echoing chamber for all needs of the people, and grow to be the place students go for their opinions and complaints to be voiced.

Where the Executive Branch is the Heart of our government, ASOSU Congress must become the Soul.

Until now, my remarks have not contained anything really on the state of the students. I need not remind you of our present problems. We all live in this economy, for us Graduate students, many of our friends who graduated a year or two ago, have yet to find jobs. Costs of educations creep up and the quality slips into decline. The state of the student body is not good. But there is the chance for something better. If we continue to lag steps behind and fail to respond to the needs of students now, we will only further our own suffering. If we act boldly, with all the vigor we have to improve the state of the students, the future of this campus will only change for the better, and a bright future it will be.

Thank You.”
At 7:04pm, the floor was handed over to Vice President Kevin Schock.

**Vice President Schock:**

“Thank you Mr. Speaker.

Good evening senators, representatives, cabinet, staff, interns, and students. I would like to begin by thanking you all for being here tonight.

Tonight I have been charged with the task of speaking on the state of the students. I am pleased to announce that after extensive research, sleepless nights, and hundreds of working hours I have arrived at the definitive answer. The state of the students is: Oregon.

All humor aside, I put a lot of thought into the current status of the students of this University. I was able to quickly arrive at the conclusion that the state of the students is one of diversity. All of us come from different backgrounds, engage in different fields of study, and partake in sometimes radically different lifestyles. The thread that connects all of us, is simply the University’s recognition of our status as students. Therefore, I cannot create a string of words, a sentence, or a series of pages that will adequately address the state of all of you.

However, there is a sense of commonality between all of us that arises, simply by virtue of our status as students. This is our desire for a quality education; an education that will render us more holistic people, who are simultaneously worthy of gainful (and hopefully sometime lucrative) employment. Truthfully, the state of the students is one of self-service, and frankly it should be.

As a student of philosophy, I spend a great deal of time considering where (if anywhere) true meaning can be found in human life. Having progressed into a full-fledged (albeit sometimes strained) love affair with existentialism, I have concluded that in order for us as people to experience a meaningful life, we have to create it ourselves.

The way I see it, meaning, purpose, is created through sacrifice. Many of us experience this University as meaningful because we (and others in our lives) have laid down substantial
sacrifices to be here. However, I believe we can find even more meaning as students, and as people if we begin (or continue) to sacrifice, being (or continue) to serve each other.

What does this sacrifice look like? What cause are we serving? What is our reward? These may indeed be questions that some of you are thinking. However, I am no more of a prophet than I am a bodybuilder, and I will not presume an ability to answer questions of your experience. However, I can speak to my own experience. I, along with many others in this room sacrifice countless hours of my time. I give up the pleasure of free time, the apparent luxury of a regularly scheduled meal, and truth be told, a certain amount of attention to more personal relationships. Why, because I believe the cause I am serving is worthy of that sacrifice. The cause I am serving is a vision. It is a vision of an Oregon State University that actively and systematically enriches the lives of every student who gains enrollment. A vision where systemic oppression based upon race, gender, or socioeconomic status is mitigated and eliminated. A vision where student media is endowed with adequate staffing and faculty support to ensure their success. A vision where buildings are not on the verge of falling down like a game of Jenga. A vision where tuition is not increasing while the quality of service and programs is decreasing. A vision of campus where there is a 24 hour library, and a system for acquiring textbooks that is affordable and equitable.

In short, a vision of the university that is far different then the one we currently see. I will continue to sacrifice of myself to serve this vision, because I find meaning in creating a future that is better than my present.

People of the audience, the state of the students is changing. It is because of your dedication, your sacrifice, and your service, a service that is not limited to yourselves alone that we changing for the better.

Thank you. Good night. And Go Beavs.”

At 7:09pm, the floor was handed over to President Chris Van Drimmelen.
President Van Drimmelen:

“Fellow Students,

It is my privilege to address you, and it is a rare opportunity indeed when you all take time out of your busy schedules to come together as a student government and concerned students alike. The address I am to give is entitled the "state of the students," so named after the auspicious "state of the union," and for tradition's sake. I am asked to give an update, a snapshot, and a diagnosis of the students of OSU at this place and time. I'll be honest, I could no sooner count every star in the heavens than report a condition that would sum up every student experience on this campus, but I can attempt to give an idea of what we face in the year to come.

The academic year has just begun, and already it is clear that 2009-2010 will be a year of significant change and controversy, but it can also be a year of significant opportunity and innovation. Cuts in state funding and increases in tuition are going to result in students paying more for less. Dr. Ray, the President of the University has indicated that there will be significant reorganizations to attempt to do more with less, but at the same time that the university attempts to bolster what it calls "signature areas," smaller and more specialized programs will be phased out.

We're also being told that we must become a top ten land grant university by 2025. Being one of the best may sound like a rallying cry everyone can buy into, with some of the most laudable goals being to raise graduation and retention rates, but it comes with its own set of challenges. In order to be top ten, we're being told we need to increase the size of the university by ten thousand students. We're already experiencing record enrollment this year. More faculty will be needed to teach more students, and this need is cited as another goal along the way to becoming top ten. More important than gaining more faculty to become top ten is gaining more faculty to provide a higher quality of education for every student on this campus.

So what does a student do at a university that is simultaneously tightening its belt and aspiring to bigger and better? There is no easy answer for students in our position, so we must demand more or be left behind. We must never grow tired of advocating for students, especially not now. This is a pivotal moment for OSU as we move into the future, and students must make
themselves part of the institutional processes that will move us forward, or they will surely move forward without us.

Over the next year and beyond, we will be presented with solutions and ideas. If you feel that they will not benefit you, or that they won't work, or that you can do better, I charge you as students to say so. No one can know that which is not said, so speak your mind. The answer will probably be "this is the plan and we're doing it anyway," unless you persist. Come back with your own alternatives.

Over the next year and beyond we will be presented with new ideas. Don't be afraid, but if you have a better idea, I charge you as students to share it. The answer will probably be no, unless you persist. Challenge the assertion that a better way cannot be found.

Over the next year and beyond, we will develop plans for student driven programs and services that will be far reaching and innovative. I charge you as students to act on these plans and not let them slip through the cracks. When the plans are ready to implement, the answer will probably be "you are too ambitious, let's start small," unless you persist. Make sure that the needs of students like yourself are met, even if it means we must do it ourselves.

Pivotal moments are not easy moments. It would be too easy to be passive, and let the opportunities that will occur in the coming months pass by without action. If you don't act, someone else will, and you may not like what comes of it. It would be too easy to be combative, and insist on your own way. If you don't look for common ground, all parties may come off worse for it. The state of the students is a precarious one, and will only be strengthened by a careful balance of assertion and mindful listening. The future of the students must be one in which we search for common ground within the student population, and with the university administration. Do not let others create your environment for you, but do not fight for homogeneous environment in which only your interests are served.

If I were to summarize the state of the students, I could choose to paint a dark picture, but instead I see that what we hold in our hands is bright, but we must choose to make it so. Your student government is working to make sure you, the student, are heard, but we cannot stand alone. It is the right and the responsibility of every student to stand up for what they believe in. There may come a day when the courage, creativity, and optimism of this student body fails, but
it is not this day! Students of OSU, as one you are tough, but together, we are unstoppable, and the state of the students is strong!

President Van Drimmelen left the podium at 7:15pm.

**Gallery Comments**

**Speaker Aljets:** Are there any comments from the gallery?

**Michael Miller, Student Athletics Advisory Committee:** Hello, my name is Michael Miller. The one thing I would say is that the majority of students I know don’t know what’s going on. They don’t know they can say anything. Probe their minds, they all have a voice but don’t know how to use it. Get them to give their ideas willingly, there are too many voices that aren’t being heard. Bring them forward and get them to speak up. Thank you.

**Speaker Aljets:** As there are no more comments from the gallery, this meeting is adjourned.

The meeting adjourned at 7:17pm.