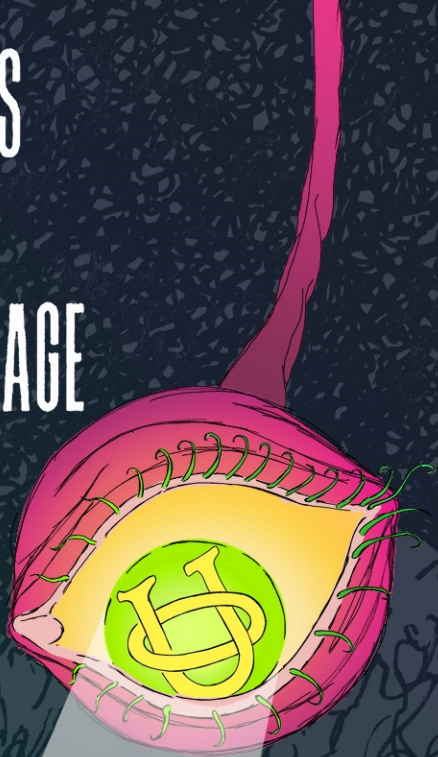


ADMINISTRATIVE TACTICS USED TO PACIFY, DELAY, UNDERMINE, AND SABOTAGE STUDENT ORGANIZING

WRITTEN BY MAX JENSEN

BASED ON OBSERVATIONS FROM
LANE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
AND THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON



Administrative Tactics Used to Pacify, Delay, Undermine, and Sabotage Student Organizing

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Based on observations from Lane Community College and the University
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- Contents -

Historical and Cultural Contexts -----3

Patience and Pressure ----- 5

Waiting Us Out - A War of Attrition

Taking Advantage of Lulls in Leadership

Taking Advantage of Moments of Chaos and Pressure

The Administrative Ratchet Effect

Starving the Beast, When You're the Beast

Condensed Timelines - Forcing you to make decisions quickly or before
you're ready

The Memory and Awareness of the Public

Distraction and Evasiveness -----8

Duplicitous Reasonability

Duplicitous Language and Logical Fallacy

False Choice or False Dilemma Fallacy

Behavioral Adjustment - Tone Policing

Bread and Circuses - Panem et Circenses

Hiding Behind Other Departments

Hiding Behind Procedures and Complex Systems

Compromise, Committees, and Appeasements

Holding Inaccessible Meetings

Limiting Testimony in Meetings
 Overwhelming you with Unhelpful Information
 The October Surprise

Divide and Conquer ----- 13

Divide and Conquer - Divide and Rule - Divide et Impera
 Isolate and Control

NEVER MEET UPPER ADMIN ALONE!
 YOU'RE WEAK ON YOUR OWN!

Tokenizing Students
 The Myth of Finite Resources
 Red Herrings
 Economic Blackmail
 Administrative Bloat
 Hiring and Tokenizing Marginalized Staff
 The "aboriginal tracker" and "apache scout"
 Scholarships and Financial Aid
 Developing Subtly Regimented Class Divisions

Architecture and Control ----- 19

Social Engineering in Architecture
 The Panopticon - Surveillance and the Demonstration Team
 Demonstration Team Admin Dedicated to Student Communities
 Space Allocation

Controlling the Narrative ----- 23

Redefining History
 Cherry Picking
 Setting or Reframing the Narrative
 Appropriating Student Successes
 Appropriating and Co-opting Core Concepts
 Dog Whistle Messaging

Targeting the Individual ----- 24

Petty Harassment and Intimidation through the Code of Conduct
 Devaluing a Target

Protest Policy and Procedure ----- 26

Who Designs the Policy?
 "Free Speech Zones" - Time, Place, and Manner Policy
 Amplified Sound
 Leaning Structures
 Blocking a Path

Sometimes They Will Just Lie ----- 28

Author Note ----- Back Cover

Historical and Cultural Contexts for Administrative Counterinsurgent Tactics

The tactics of institutions have changed over the decades. In the 1960's and 1970's they were much more authoritarian and would try to stamp out dissent when they saw it arise. They would expel students, call the police to drag students out of protest areas, or call in the National Guard and other kinds of law enforcement to subdue students with gas, clubs, non-lethal and lethal projectiles. These severe forms of discipline and control were very easy to categorize and respond to, because though they could cause terror, they also galvanized students against an identifiable opposing force. While institutions' goals haven't changed much and these authoritarian tendencies still show through, they've learned more subtle tactics. Increasingly they subdue, deceive, and pacify student populations to prevent insurrection from occurring and mitigate its effectiveness when it does.

The goal of the institution is to orient its systems towards maximizing projected personal profits and consistency for the least effort and cost. The organizations that work more directly with the upper administration

**"Supreme
excellence consists
of breaking the
enemy's resistance
without fighting."
- Sun Tzu,
The Art of War**

"If this is a firm, and if the Board of Regents are the Board of Directors, and if President Kerr in fact is the manager, then I tell you something — the faculty are a bunch of employees and we're the raw material! But we're a bunch of raw materials that don't mean to be — made into any product! — Don't mean to end up being bought by some clients of the University — We're human beings!"

**- Mario Savio,
UC Berkeley, 1964**

like the LBTESS are more likely to be influenced by the administration as, in order to exist with minimal pushback, it will adjust its programming to work towards institutional administration goals. Changing policy, improving resources, protests, and student power don't work toward those goals, and, if it means a choice between your needs and their continued existence, an administration-oriented organization will often support the administration and try to dissuade you from those ventures, sabotage you if you work toward them, or punish you if you achieve them. To achieve its goals with

the least cost and effort the institution must pursue a more complete control.

The capitalist administrative model reduces students to a means of income and growth. The institution is intent on making money, and education is the method it uses to do this. If it could take people and force them to hand it all of their money, it would. In economics, there's a term widget, which is an item representative of a manufacturer's products. You as a supposedly educated student in the eyes of upper admin would be considered a widget in the money-making machine of the university, that machine must work optimally. You can also be commodified in terms of human computing power: for example in the 1960s students in university math programs were used, unbeknownst to them, as calculators of bomb drops in Vietnam, and universities often still do research for military and corporate clients.

Upper Admin have the advantage of a lengthy perspective, and from their perspective perhaps student protests are a commonplace nuisance or even trivial. They may see variations of us throughout the year, every year, and have systems in place to make sure that our concerns are meaningless, and the machine can continue to run as it would benefit them.

These systems and skills must be learned. It's possible that the people who are hired for these positions and excel in them are people who learn how to evade responsibility, and use subterfuge to distract, delay, and pacify dissenters. The institution must also have an internal culture that rewards employees that verse themselves in tactics of subtle brutality and deception, reinforces this behavior, and leads to the development of specific leaders and policies. The most ambitious among them must learn these tricks in their interactions with each other, in meetings, and in the books they read, while the rest of the admin may only learn this through behaviors that are reinforced or discouraged. The institution must also troubleshoot their tactics amongst other institutions at conferences and between leaders.

Keep in mind that administrators are also people, and that a relationship with an administrator can yield access to power and change. Administrators can be thinking about what they believe are your best interests, but only through communication can you make sure that their actions result in a favorable outcome. If you can find where their interests and your interests intersect, you find the easiest points for them to move towards your positions, and then you might be able to mitigate the strain

of constant negotiation and battle. You can't always be on the offensive, and they won't always be the villain, but you shouldn't leave yourself open to attack. Attacks are not always easy to register, so you must be able to discern when and where your interactions with administrators are positive or negative, or both.

Learning the tactics of the institution, and being able to name them, is powerful – it's a shortcut to responding effectively or counteracting that tactic. If you're stuck trying to figure out what game is being played, then you're not countering their actions. You're just worrying about what may or may not be. You need to develop a vernacular, both theirs and your own if you wish to work on policy or defend and expand your resources.

Patience and Pressure

They trust that you will become tired, disinterested, and leave. They trust you will become overwhelmed, so they throw even more at you towards that end.

Waiting Us Out - A War of Attrition - Admin are here much longer than us and they know it. If students make work for them more difficult, they will simply wait on their plans until the key students are on their way out and push changes through during a lull in leadership. New leaders come in as blank slates with no prior impressions of the working structure and actions of the institution, no inkling of the work of their predecessors, or the powers that may have been stripped of them. This is admin's primary tool against you. You, in the way you organize, and the policies you pursue need to be finding ways to make your work last longer than you. Policy change needs to be structural and difficult to dismantle, you need to be making room for others to take up leadership in the future, and you need to make sure that our institutional memory is longer than a few years.

Taking Advantage of Lulls in Leadership - during a year when the student leadership in the LGBTQA3, the MCC, or the ASUO are weak/nonexistent the administrative staff (especially within and around those spaces) will take that opportunity to make changes in policy. Those changes will be the things that administrators have been waiting to pass. They will be structural, and they will be touted as a means of reducing the burden on student leaders – if student leaders are aware of these changes at all. In the ASUO, for instance, admin changed policy so that

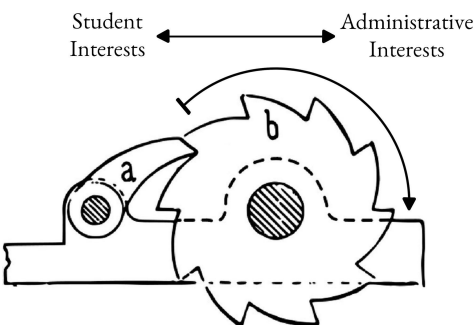
students were no longer the deciders on the hiring and firing of professional staff. This lasted long after implementation because students didn't know that this power was theirs, and when they found out about this loss they were about to graduate, were too tired, or didn't know where to start to change it back. In 2017 during the transition of ASUO leadership, professional staff eliminated 5 student work-study positions assigned to administrative support. Small losses last and compound on one another until you are no longer a potential threat to the institution.

Taking Advantage of Moments of Chaos and Pressure - This was a tactic used on tuition rates. Using tight deadlines as an excuse, admin can push past student resistance to pass what they like, especially when it aligns with state requirements for faculty benefits or major one-time expenses that are, or seem to be, imposed upon the school. Most commonly this happens after a tragedy (like a school shooting, terrorist attack, or a Neo-Nazi hate crime) on campus, in Oregon, or elsewhere in the country. They might use these instances to bolster campus security and control, give themselves powers to crack down on political speech and protests, redefine and reduce spaces where students can protest, etc. using a relevant issue to mask their intent. This way, people are less likely to ask questions or object.

"In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity"
- Sun Tzu,
The Art of War

The Administrative Ratchet Effect - Similar to the effect seen in congress, this ratchet effect is simply a way to visualize single-directional change. When students are active and organized they can hold onto existing institutional power. But when they are disorganized or have been sabotaged or co-opted, then the powers they had, policy they won, and even the beliefs they hold are swung toward the interests of administration.

This ratchet is driven by differentials in time, power and knowledge. Unlike liberals complicit in the stalling of leftward progress, most students simply don't know



the history of their institution, and are just learning what's important and what power they have by the end of their term in office or when they've almost graduated. The administrators, however, have a memory, a plan, and the time and staffing to execute that plan. When students aren't pulling the ratchet back to halt it, administration is able to quietly and quickly pass policy or take resources that were once controlled by students. The students must understand their position, their history, and their interests if they want to stop the ratchet from turning. If they want to turn it in their favor, they must blunt its teeth, and the structures must change.

Starving the Beast, When You're the Beast - A concept taken from the privatization of government services, this is another feature of the administrative ratchet effect. The administration will chip away at student autonomy over fee-funded programs, by picking up the slack when we fail – which as students we will sometimes do – or by withholding important information for the running of those services, so they can pick up the pieces when programs fail while students forget the powers they had. Admin might secure that power by making the student representatives in the student government, or elsewhere, question why they are paying for services that don't seem to be working or benefiting students. Sometimes they do it by force if they sense weakness. Most often it's by taking advantage of our shortened memories and recurring ineptitude, but the whole time they will contribute to these factors by undermining our political education. Essentially they sabotage our operations and take advantage of lulls in leadership to secure power for themselves in various ways.

Condensed Timelines - Forcing you to make decisions quickly or before you're ready - This is often done in spaces like joint planning committees with students and administrators, and is a classic way to get you to concede. These timelines will be implemented in conjunction with other tactics; rushing conversation and shortening testimony, calling the question in parliamentary procedure, capitalizing on circular discussion, presenting your options very specifically, making it seem like the decision doesn't matter, or literally telling you to hurry up with your vote in the hopes you'll make some logical error.

The Memory and Awareness of the Public - The public's memory is short, and because there is a level of separation, the reminders of

administrative actions are less frequent and further away. If the university does something and the public doesn't hear about it, or the decision makers don't hear about it, then it may as well not have happened. They trust that we're bad at publicity, so they don't worry too much about their public image when we're upset. You as an organizer need to maintain public memory and targeted memory for your work to succeed. Take tuition, for example: people often forget that in California before the 1960's tuition didn't exist in public universities and community colleges (actually even longer for community colleges). Incremental changes compound into major changes, but people won't know everything that was lost because it's not right in front of them.

Distraction and Evasiveness

Duplicitous Reasonability - By being deceptively reasonable - creating degrees of separation - An administrative tactician will want to make you think (and failing that, make the public think) that they are your best friend, and that they've got your best interests at heart. At the same time they will develop systems and policies to prevent your success, or do and say small imperceptible things to weaken you and make you seem unreasonable. Administrators will work to keep up an air of reasonability: they will ask you to take on a similar air and go through the processes they've laid out, so that you can give suggestions or make complaints for them to address. Otherwise, they'll ask you to correct your tone, or to cuss less, and so on. Asking you to go through the proper routes of communication is a ploy to stop the actions you've taken, to make you take time to figure out the systems they've put in place, and to ignore you and keep you at arm's length. By correcting your tone or asking that you not swear, it makes you think more about how you speak than what you're trying to relay to them. It pretends that they are willing to listen to you, and it gives them another means of ending the conversation and making you look like an impertinent unreasonable child.

Duplicitous Language and Logical Fallacy - Words don't always mean what you might think they mean. They can have a very distinct interpretation for administrators. When designing a policy, language and word adjustments are made for a reason, likely beyond sounding friendlier or being grammatically correct. In policy, presentations, negotiations, and meetings, words are powerful. Admin can trick you and defang any law or policy. The word "expected" does not mean

“mandatory.” “Faculty” does not mean all paid workers – “faculty” are professors, and “staff” are like librarians, financial aid officers and custodians, and “administration” are like deans, vice presidents, coordinators and directors. “Procedures” are designed for staff and “policies” are designed for everyone working and learning on campus. All of these terms and others have different meanings. None are synonymous or blanket terms, even though administrators will try to convince you they are in order to push through policy, obscure financial data, or make themselves seem like they have more authority over you.

False Choice or False Dilemma

Fallacy - This fallacy forces a person to choose between a set of (often two) predefined outcomes. Administrators will often give you three or four options, each with complex components, that may omit important possibilities they want to distract away from. The setting of these options forces you to spend time and energy choosing the lesser of two (or more) evils rather than constructing the solution that's best for your community.

Behavioral Adjustment - Tone

Policing - If you just asked properly

maybe we could have talked. Can you please stop swearing? -

asking that you change your behavior in seemingly reasonable ways, asking that you stop using profanities, restate your request in parliamentary procedure, stop using slang, or to take on a more polite tone. These force you to think twice about what you're saying and what is and isn't okay to say. It makes you second guess your statements and change your words to serve their wishes, instead of them responding to your feedback as they should. This makes them look like the adult in the conversation and makes you look unreasonable and childish if you don't comply. This also gives them an opportunity to escape. If you continue to speak coarsely they can then say that they've made a reasonable request and you refuse to engage with them respectfully so they won't engage with you at all. This is one place where the dangers of respectability politics and tone policing are in effect.

LAW 31 - CONTROL THE OPTIONS: GET OTHERS TO PLAY WITH THE CARDS YOU DEAL

The best deceptions are the ones that seem to give the other person a choice: your victims feel they are in control, but are actually your puppets. Give people options that come out in your favor whichever one they choose. Force them to make choices between the lesser of two evils, both of which serve your purpose. Put them on the horns of a dilemma: they are gored wherever they turn.

**The 48 Laws of Power
By Robert Greene**

Bread and Circuses - Panem et Circenses - This is something we see as freshmen enter the university, as well as with certain scholarships. Of course everyone should be made to feel welcome and wanted, but you can see with the level of investment in frivolities like the Flock Party how the administration uses subtle bribery, deception, and distraction. If your stomach's full and your minds distracted then you won't uproot the oppressive systems of the institution. In the case of Scholarships like the Diversity Excellence Scholarship students (Especially Students of Color and LGBTQIA+ Students) are made dependent on the university, and are also forced to attend annual dinners where they're fed delicious appetizers and told how special they are, and how exclusive their scholarship is. This creates an air of separation and natural superiority between the students who have the fund and those who don't, so they don't coordinate and start asking what problems the students who don't receive this are facing and what systems make it necessary for this scholarship to exist in the first place.

Hiding Behind Other Departments - "we can't do cultural competency because that falls under x department" - Tactics of hiding behind a segmented organizational structure is a classic move of bureaucratic organizations. While maintaining institutional control, the administration will hide behind departmental structure and independence. This is another example of a red herring; the institution is trying to divert responsibility away to a smaller department by making themselves look weaker than they are. While departments have the power to develop and implement internal policy, the institution's power is overarching and can set policies that affect all departments. Focusing on the power of the departments provides the university a scapegoat, a red herring, and makes the task seem even more daunting and hopeless.

Hiding Behind Procedures and Complex Systems - Administrators may make it possible to file complaints or add our voices to discussion, but will trust that the systems are too complex and that we aren't driven enough to start/continue with that line of action. You may know you can file a complaint but not know how to start, or you may know that you want to tell administrators not to go do something but not know when the meetings are, or know that you can file a lawsuit but know also that you don't have the necessary funds while they do. The process is as difficult as they want it to be, because they designed and enforce it.

Compromise, Committees, and Appeasements - Committees do accomplish things and are often necessary for progress, and small victories are still victories which should be celebrated. But oftentimes these actions taken by administrators which move in the direction of the progress you want can serve as a delaying and diversion tactic. They offer you the myth of compromise while sabotaging the project's chances of success. If there are no deadlines on the work of the committee, no consequences for the institution if the committee's work is not completed by that deadline, and no enshrined power or representation for the affected communities and students on that committee, then the committee is in dangerous proximity to uselessness or even counterproductiveness.

Holding Inaccessible Meetings - Important meetings like the Board of Trustees meetings or specific hearings may be timed intentionally to happen when students are out of town or likely busy – think during breaks and holidays, finals, or times when most students are in class. These meetings may be few and far between so there are no make-ups. These meetings are our opportunity to speak about issues; public institutions are generally required to hold public meetings when making policy decisions so that people can voice their input. Holding these meetings allows for institutions to say they fulfilled the requirements for public outreach and created spaces for students to speak. But if no one shows up they will call it evidence of apathy, rather than the result of deliberately denying students an opportunity to speak. If a body is being brazenly hostile after being met with dissent or disobedience they may threaten to cancel the meeting and conduct their business over the phone where there will be no opportunity for people to give their input.

Limiting Testimony in Meetings - In Board of Trustees meetings and other decision-making spaces that make room for testimony, board members may vote to reduce the overall or individual time allotments for testimony in an attempt to stifle potential dissenting voices. You should designate someone to show up early to meetings with a full list of everyone who was hoping to give testimony and have them add those names to the signup sheet. Make sure that person is in contact with the people who wish to speak. Write out your testimony and have someone designated to continue reading that statement when their turn comes up.

Overwhelming you with Unhelpful Information - especially in presentations - this makes your job harder because this information will come at you fast. They've likely had time to craft their arguments and will focus your attention onto statistics that make their case stronger while also throwing lots of extra information at you, making it difficult to find and interpret the pertinent information. Legal firms will do this if forced to release documents.

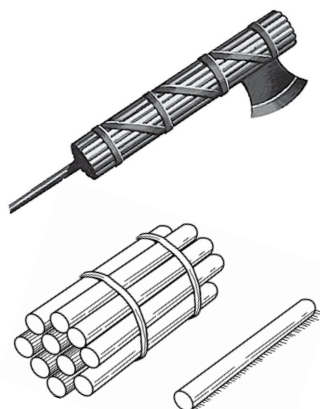
The October Surprise - *This is a term borrowed from politics where someone will find negative information on their opponent and hold onto it until a few weeks before an election to create insecurity among their voters with insufficient time to verify or disprove that information.* People with power and money have legal and institutional knowledge, and they may have research on individuals organizing against them. They will make this information public, usually by proxy, at the opportune time to disrupt your campaign and create hesitation and confusion among your supporters or potential allies. The information they gather doesn't have to be accurate, it just needs to cast doubt on your validity or morality, or even the ability of an ally to support your cause. This is a tool to silence or turn away popular support.

During the 2022 undergrad unionizing effort, the campaign was started with a \$13,000 request from the ASUO. Five weeks later, while requesting a formal statement of support and a neutral drop off location for union cards in the ASUO office, the student body president said the following, which they were told by university general council: "Under ORS 243.670, 'Prohibition of actions by public employer to assist, promote, or deter union organizing,' the ASUO cannot dedicate funds to any union effort." The ROAR office was then prohibited from using their funds for any union effort as well. It's disputed whether or not this law applies to the student I-fee at all. But since we don't have the legal or financial resources to verify the assertion, in effect this immediately banned union expenditures, demoralized campaign organizers, and blocked ASUO at the senate and executive levels from endorsing our campaign.

Divide and Conquer

Divide and Conquer - Divide and Rule -

Divide et Impera - A powerful symbol that's been appropriated by the fascist party under Benito Mussolini is the bundle of sticks. The bundle of sticks was represented by the fasces, which were bound sticks that formed an ax. This was the symbol of the fascist party as well as the origin of its name. It's also the origin of the earlier term faggot, which is similarly a bundle of sticks, but in that instance it means one used to set a larger fire.



Individually a twig is easily snapped, but when bound together they are strong and formidable.

Splitting groups up, pitting them against one another, and isolating individuals is a basic method of weakening an opponent so they can be manipulated, overpowered, and defeated. **Privileging a small group within a larger coalition by meeting with them and making small inconsequential degrees of progress, while pretending that there is a finite quantity of fiscal and political resources that can be expended at any given time, is a way of pitting communities against each other.** The other communities who have their own needs will then be seen as a threat to the initially favored community, since they distract from that favored community's needs by pursuing their own. This is only true if everyone is organizing separately and views their issues as wholly separate and distinct from the others. If you refocus to see how your issues overlap and come from similar sources, then you can focus on those shared issues and shared problems while supporting and bringing attention to the more unique issues groups face.

Divide and conquer is a tactic used by most major imperial powers. The Roman, British, and American Empires all utilized this tactic to reduce the levels of military force and investment needed to maintain control of a region. Britain most notably did this during the first half of the 20th century in India and Pakistan, in Rwanda to the Tutsi, and in Iraq with the Shia and Sunni.

The University of Oregon seems to have done this with the Black Student Task Force in 2016, when they implied they could only give so much, prompting BSTF Members to urge other groups to halt efforts to improve their own conditions. This tactic can be combated through

discussion, by having meetings with administrators be attended by two or more of the leaders of a group, or not meeting with the administrator at all.

Isolate and Control - Ophiocordyceps unilateralis - Divide and conquer can be done to the members of a single organization as well. An administrator might show one member particular attention, whispering in their ear and earning their favor, infiltrating the consciousness of the organization through that individual, and creating assumptions of status for the individual they're meeting with. They'll have private meetings with this student, get them to internalize their logic, try to buy them off at fancy events and with letters of recommendation, or they'll simply use the False Dilemma to force them to choose a lesser evil. If that student doesn't operate on the terms of the administrator, then they lose the administrator's ear and the perceived potential for any solution to their problems. This is an illusion on the part of the administrator: no conversation with a student, especially ones that are separate and private, is being conducted in good faith.

The administrator has separated a sheep from the flock, and will then work to turn a possible opposition leader into an advocate for the wolf, generating confusion, disillusionment, and infighting in the organization until it is powerless. This seems to be the case with student body presidents and leadership, who are more likely to interact with college presidents or board of trustee members, or it will happen between a trusted advisor, the head of the Multicultural Center, Dean of Students Office, or LGBTQ+ and the student leaders of their spaces. This can be counteracted with public meetings, by requiring meetings with administrators be documented or no agreement with them will be valid, with a general distrust of people in authority positions, or binding law securing student autonomy. **NEVER MEET UPPER ADMIN ALONE! YOU'RE WEAK ON YOUR OWN!**

Tokenizing Students - selecting ones to be a mouthpiece for their stances - The Brood Parasite - The administration can also create student advocates by installing them directly. This way they can argue to the people in power or in the legislature who care, that they've been in communications with students while not actually listening to students. Administrators will act as if those students represent the needs of all students when it benefits them. *This could also mean suggesting to students who do take on rolls of influence that there is a certain way of*

behaving in decision making spaces. They will infer to that student that one must think strategically in order to be listened to but not in ways that authentically help students, confusing those students and wasting their time. The students who have been elevated are now somewhat separated from the other student organizations. This can be counteracted with robust systems for leadership development, preventing openings for administrators to install student leaders themselves.

The Myth of Finite Resources - resources are scarce, and one can exhaust materials, time and energy in any given system. But oftentimes administrations and institutions will use this as an excuse to deny resources to students. The institution may say it's lacking in resources, that it can only do so much at any given time, and it may even be correct given the state of education budgets in Oregon. But all of this has to do with the structure of the organization and the pull of different interests on the institution and the institutions above it. The institution may tell you it can't pay for a policy while not telling you about the structural adjustments or tactics of making resources available to enact such a policy. It will scapegoat the state government, and tax laws, or individual departments, but it will not suggest diverting more resources to lobbying legislators for a more favorable budget, and the times when it does it has only its own interests in mind. This fallacy is central to the False Dilemma Fallacy and makes use of the Red Herring.

Red Herrings - This is an argumentative logical fallacy and a diversionary tactic that avoids the key issues, often by distracting away from opposing arguments with a vaguely related issue rather than addressing your core critiques or the responsibility of the administrator. This forces you to respond to the tangential issue before you can return to trying to solve the real problem. (Example: The level of mercury in seafood may be unsafe, but what will fishers do to support their families?) This also applies to economic blackmail and administrative bloat: you might say "why is the president earning \$800,000 a year plus benefits (house, car, health care, etc.) while we keep having to pay more in tuition dollars?" and they will respond with "I'm not the real problem, if you cut my salary that will only account for a few new teaching faculty, the real problem is the lack of state funding, let's go after that." The president knows that you know this, and that state funding is the real thing you want. But they also know that they will not have faculty go with you to lobby the state for more funding, and they will not hire extra

lobbyists who will advocate and strategize on your behalf. If they advocate to increase the corporate tax rate or defund the Prison-Industrial complex they will become an enemy of the corporate sector and the public, who either don't want to contribute or can't see the benefits of these actions. Administrators know that in a year far fewer people will remember and care about their involvement, and so they will not sign onto any binding agreements or deadlines. This way any verbal agreements they make to appease and redirect students will have no teeth to bite them in the future.

Economic Blackmail - "If we pass your policy, or pay student workers a living wage, then we will have to pull that money from this department, from this scholarship fund for poor and marginalized students, raise tuition by x percent, or we'll have to lay off teachers in these areas that you care about." This is especially effective when imposed on individual student power brokers: student body presidents, the few students representing their communities, the students sitting on the Board of Trustees or other important committees. This is also a mechanism for pitting teaching and professional staff on campus against student needs, furthering the divide and conquer tactic with a type of red herring. If you point this out as a scare tactic to divide us then you might be able to mobilize the two groups together to fight the administration. Admin are leaving out the solutions that would harm them and help you.

Administrative Bloat - when they get more money from the state they will hire more administrators to lock in those funds and create more degrees of separation between the students and the top administrators. The term administrator is broad, and they will cut administrative jobs from important resources and diversity programs rather than cutting top position pay or from more powerful departments. When less specific cuts are needed they will target teachers in specific departments, reducing their hours to part time in order to cut their benefits and pay, replacing them with Graduate Teaching Fellows. This administrative bloat insulates the key administrators from pushback, for example when they're using economic blackmail to avoid important policies with fiscal impacts, or to save them from tuition hike retaliation. This also ties up new funding and keeps other departments and services in a state of precariousness where they can be more easily threatened. It leaves the institution as a whole in a position to always need more money and grow larger. The administration can then focus their efforts on privatizing aspects of the

institution, since the educational benefits to society are merely ancillary to growth and profit.

The important thing about administrative bloat is not just the portion of the budget devoted to high salaries but also the purpose of it. Paying the college president \$800,000 a year doesn't just buy a good administrator, it buys someone's morals. The Board of Trustees is paying for someone who will fight against paying better wages in union disputes, constrict students' freedom of speech, lie about the programs available on campus, and get the best PR for diversity and inclusion without meaningful investment to those ends.

Hiring and Tokenizing Marginalized Staff - Ones who are willing to throw their community under the bus - the use of the "aboriginal tracker" and "apache scout"

This accomplishes several goals. On one level it makes the people you're working with think they're speaking to a friendly face who will understand their issues, or at the very least it makes you spend time wondering if you can trust this individual. They hire people who are more likely to understand the social justice vernacular of the students and can speak in that context while twisting concepts slightly to suit their needs. Some people ascribe to the idea that People of Color can't be racist or similar concepts, so the administrators will point to the fact that they have a division of diversity and inclusion led by people of color, while those same marginalized people work to undermine and dismantle the systems that protect marginalized students. The staff who are hired are likely to buy into ideals of professionalism and think this is the way to move ahead in an industry. The administration is taking people willing to sell out their ideals/community and people who are too shallow/cynical to see the significance of social justice work. They got their piece of the pie, and they weaponize their identity against the communities that share that identity, or other marginalized groups.

It's a common and successful tactic of colonizing forces to take people from the community they wish to subjugate and bribe or coerce some members to weaken and attack their own communities. The U.S. and Australian governments employed Indigenous trackers and scouts to hunt down Indigenous rebels, plan attacks, and adapt to the terrain.

"I cannot too strongly assert that there has never been any success in operations against these Indians unless Indian Scouts were used. [They] were of more value in hunting down and compelling the surrender of the

renegades than all other troops... combined.” - U.S. Army Brigadier General George Crook

Previously at the University of Oregon, then-President Michael Schill would frequently use two administrators as mouthpieces – Vice President for Student Affairs Kevin Marbury and Vice President for Diversity Equity and Inclusion Dr. Yvette Assensoh. Both were high position Black administrators who functioned to reinterpret the University President’s statements in meetings as less condescending, less racist, and less combative. This was by using the language of diversity and inclusion, or by praising Schill for his dedication to diversity to pacify meeting attendees. Kevin Marbury was also instrumental in taking the EMU in 2022 by cozying up to then-Student Body President, Isaiah Boyd, in private meetings to negotiate the transfer. Cultural authenticity, shared vernaculars, and perceived success as a Black professional seem to be tools for turning key student figures against their peers, and possibly creating a pipeline for future token administrators in university and corporate offices where they too could throw their communities under the bus. If anything, this shows marginalized students that there is a future for them doing this kind of work.

In 2017, Dr. Lesley-Anne Pittard seemed to oversee the Multicultural Center, and pushed out then-Director Steve Morozumi. Dr. Pittard was reported to have attempted to recruit student informants from within the multicultural center and was adamant about getting a part time office in the space to keep an eye on organizing activities. We later learned she was a member of the university’s Demonstration Team and was passing information along to upper administration. MCC Director Steven Morozumi was replaced with Jamar Bean who also became a member of the Demonstration Team.

Scholarships and Financial Aid - Scholarships are important and should be sought after, but they are ultimately just a patch to make people feel like they will have access to an education while inching the institution closer and closer to being a private entity. Scholarships and loans are also a way to help insure that the disenfranchised and poorer students are disinclined to cause any fuss for the institution. This is really another form of economic blackmail. These students need to keep up a certain GPA and must take a certain number of credits. Some scholarships provided by the university can be revoked based on behavior, meaning students can’t afford to spend time on non-schooling activities, and the university can punish students financially if they

become too active and troublesome. This is often true of international students, as their visas may bar them from engaging in political activism, denying them a voice to defend themselves from harmful policies or to advocate for others.

Developing Subtly Regimented Class Divisions - Where there is unity among students there are problems for administrators. The tuition model has shifted to a tiered locked model. The cost per credit at the start of your university career is the same as the price you pay at the end, so now the burden of tuition hikes are only felt by the incoming class. Their experience of burden is reduced because they've never known tuition at lower levels. Before this change the university would have tuition forums with about 100 to 150 angry students to contend with, and now most students don't know these happen, so there are only a dozen or so in the room if any.

Architecture and Control

Social Engineering in Architecture - The LCC Campus was originally designed so that most outdoor spaces were broken up into tiers, which would prevent the formation of rallies and riots. Many community colleges in California and elsewhere are placed far away from city centers, on hilltops or secluded areas. Partially this is for cheap land costs, but it's also to keep protests and rallies away from the public, avoiding property damage and public awareness. This was the case with many of the educational 1960's and 1970's construction projects, since those were times of political unrest and institutions were still operating on an authoritarian model of social control. Today many of these structures are falling apart and being replaced with large shining modern buildings with heavy administrative oversight and corporate interior design.

OSA Campus Organizer and UO Alumni Andrew Rogers explained that the administration's renovation of the Student Union Building (EMU) changed student organizing spaces. Centers, programs, unions, and admin had to compete and negotiate over available spaces during the process. The ROAR Center had their office space reduced twice, both during the renovation and in response to student-led sit-ins over Nike's labor practices. The Student Government office lost square footage, office phones, staff desk space, and computers – all necessary for organizing campaigns, performing phone banks, and maintaining any sense of student ownership in the space. The new individual offices, which look out onto the communal student space, are reserved for

professional staff. Something more like a lobby or waiting room with a small computer lab in the back took the place of the former office. This restructuring of the physical space deprives students of their modes of grassroots organizing and creates an environment that benefits administrators over student leaders.

The LGBTQA3 office used to be a single room in the EMU basement which could house weekly 40-50 person meetings. It now seats a maximum of 22 students. Though the square footage is roughly the same, there are now two spaces instead of one: a smaller individual office which takes up roughly 80 square feet, and a common space where students meet, study, and socialize surrounds it.

This two space system, which is both in the LGBTQA3 office and the student government office, has two uses: it can offer semi-private space for sensitive discussions or a quiet reprieve from a busy office, but it can also be adapted for a hierarchical and/or administrative spatial organization. When a professional staff person is hired, the smaller office can and likely will act as an administrative space reserved for that staff person alienating student organizers to the commons. This also maintains a proximity conducive to oversight, surveillance and the stripping of autonomy. In these two offices, we gained a secondary space but lost a student-controlled meeting space free of bureaucratic dependency on the scheduling office. This paved the way for future administrative oversight.

Cultural centers are also placed on display, with large windows facing high-traffic walkways so Students of Color and marginalized students can be showcased to the parents of incoming freshmen. This is an attempt to commodify campus diversity, enable administrators and campus security to watch what we're doing at any time. As large eye-level windows are placed in the MCC, BSU, and LGBTQA3 offices and security cameras are installed in the hallways, self-regulation becomes part of the building's structure. For certain spaces this became untenable, as the Women's Center required privacy for survivors of sexual assault and the BSU looked like they were about to become part of a human exhibit. The visibility and the corporate design of the spaces lends itself to control: administrators use office furniture maintenance and fire safety to control how we use our spaces, what messages and art we can put on our walls, and can monitor us easily as they walk through the building.

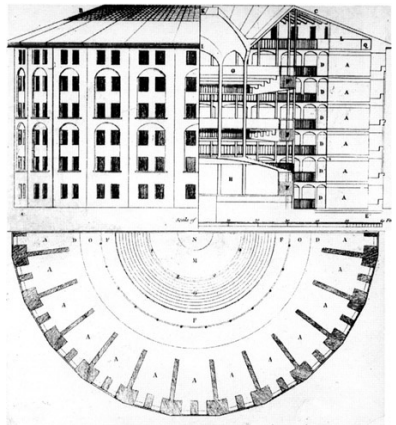
The Panopticon - Surveillance and the Demonstration Team - Students

worry that administration may be searching students' email correspondence for certain words relating to protests and other activities.

They can certainly use your email correspondence as evidence of conspiracy and wrongdoing after an event. There's no evidence of administrators searching through our emails, but the uncertainty of when you're being surveilled is a deterrent

itself. Either way, take care to avoid talking about sensitive information like times and locations of protests and actions in your uoregon.edu (or any school-run) emails if your protest / action has any potential for rule-breaking. Admin will find you on social media and look at any public posts or communications. **A public records request in 2022** revealed UO has a formal structure for observing and relaying information about student protest/organizing called **the Demonstration Team**. They primarily took photos of posters, followed and took screenshots of social media accounts, but also obtained screenshots of group chats and photos of student protesters. Much of the ~500 pages of documents received was redacted for student privacy, legal communications, or "proprietary" reasons.

The Panopticon is a concept from Michel Foucault that, depending on your major, you've probably heard of in your classes. It's the layout for a hypothetical prison where guards are placed in a central tower that can see out into prisoners' cells, which are placed in a circle around the tower. The prisoners can't see into the tower but the guards can see into the cells, meaning that the guards don't have to be watching all the time for the prisoners to be afraid that they're being watched. This causes the prisoners to regulate their own behavior.



Demonstration Team Admin Dedicated to Student Communities -

While getting this kind of support is important, it's not always trustworthy. Most directors and professional staff will be on year-by-year contracts, so they can be removed at year's end if the administration doesn't like their work. This systematically weeds out professional staff who put the needs of students over administrators. If you have admin in your space, they

will likely report to the people above them, alerting them before major political actions or feeding ideas about how to restrict your organizing potential through policy or procedure. If administrators are pushing an investment in space, resources, and staff you should be especially on guard.

The aforementioned 2022 records request showed that many professional staff advisors were part of the committee called the **Demonstration Team**, which formalized passing along information about our organizing activities. Informants included former ASUO Advisor Becky Girvin, former MCC Program Advisor Jamar Bean, and Assistant Dean of Students Justine Carpenter. We don't know that this makes them inherently terrible people, but it does mean that any information revealed around them regarding protest or political action will be transmitted through the administrative network.

The loss of student influence over advisor hiring means that administrators can insert their interests and operations into our spaces with greater ease, and the loss of firing power means students can't remove an advisor if they are discovered to be an admin mole. Even after they've been discovered, a mole will only need to wait through a few years of student leadership transitions to continue operating as usual – the new students may not know because of a lack of information, or have been selected to not care (in the case of admin-influenced positions like ASUO).

Space Allocation - This can relate to divide and conquer as well as the panopticon. - Every time a new barrier separates groups, their contact is drastically reduced. When you're moved out of the same office, down the hall, on a different floor, in a different building, or on the other side of campus, your likelihood of interacting with a group is lessened again and again. The LGBTQA3 Office was placed on the ground level of the EMU during a period of organizational weakness in an attempt to separate us further from the Multicultural Center, which was more prone to agitation and protest. The move was also meant to keep us closer to the Women's Center where (although we love the Women's Center) the LGBTESS Director at the time had more sway. The OSU Campus takes this further, as it has individual Centers for each of the primary communities fully equipped with computer labs, meeting spaces and kitchens. These are wonderful, but keep each group in a different part of the campus. On the OSU Campus the Black Cultural Center and the Pride Center are about 8 blocks from one another, hindering

collaboration and preventing LGBTQIA+ Students of Color from engaging with both communities.

Controlling the Narrative

Redefining History - calling in their own historian to help control and reframe the knowledge that goes out. This is another case of the institution taking advantage of our short memories and our lack of drive to read long documents. They do a broad search on a subject of institutional controversy and then **Cherry Pick** the information that suits them, using it to minimize any issues. They trust that because we lack their knowledge, or the energy/time to do our own cherry picking from long documents that are likely biased towards the university, we won't pick up public documents to investigate their sources.

Cherry Picking - also referred to as suppressed evidence, fallacy of incomplete evidence, ignoring inconvenient data, card stacking, argument by half-truth, fallacy of exclusion, slanting, one sided assessment and ignoring counter evidence - is a logical fallacy where one presents only the information that best serves their position while excluding evidence that goes against that position.

Setting or Reframing the Narrative - pivoting - getting their message out first - For example, President Schill put out a New York Times article calling students fascists for not allowing him to speak on the basis of him being a fascist. Admin have much more developed media connections than us and will use that, plus their superior staff capacity, to get their message out first and farther. This means you need to have a message preplanned and your media contacts contacted. If you don't have an easily actionable media campaign planned and prepared before you act, then you're already too late. This will hamper your effectiveness and potentially lose public support.

Appropriating Student Successes - The University can send photographers to events (even/especially protest actions) to take pictures for pamphlets and websites, making the university look more diverse or queer-friendly when recruiting students. Administration, when it suits them, may also take up student causes which they may have opposed or will later oppose, or claim responsibility for events they had nothing to do with as a way to get credit for positive change and show that they have a healthy working relationship with student organizers. Attaching

themselves to popular policies they oppose gives them access to the policy implementation. They can say “oh what a wonderful idea” and draft their own similar-seeming policy to what students want, but leave themselves loopholes to avoid having to make real change if it doesn’t suit them. If it seems like a student idea is going to gain lots of traction in the future, they can implement a weakened and watered-down policy and refer to it when students inevitably suggest similar changes in the future, saying they’ve already made a policy while ignoring its inefficacy. By saying publicly that they support an issue, they can also control the timeline of its implementation, making note of small insignificant victories every few years that ignore the core problem until people forget or become accustomed to inaction. This also defuses the urgency of action and makes it harder to organize around.

Appropriating and Co-opting Core Concepts - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - When a word loses its meaning it loses its power - At first, administrations will use these words to show off institutional progress, perhaps even really believing in them. But, even if it doesn’t begin this way, it will later be used as a shield against criticism. These words really only serve the University’s profit motive. After co-optation they retain their name, and the image they evoke in the minds of the public, but become meaningless in truth. The words become coded, corporatized, their programs bear these names (DEI, LBTESS, Zero Waste, etc.) and they as admin come up with an institutional definition that works with their needs.

Dog Whistle Messaging - Admin know how to speak to their audience, and will slip messages and phrases into their statements and speeches, saying small, almost-imperceptible things to weaken your position and make you seem unreasonable. An example is calling student protesters, especially when led by students of color, angry or lazy, positioning them as trying to get ‘something for nothing.’ This ties into the image of youths as immature and stereotypes about people of color, especially Black Women, living off government as “welfare queens.” Most people reading a president’s op-ed might just hear that students are whining and being lazy, but in the case of some readers this will make connections to subtle or overt racist beliefs. In folks who don’t hold strongly to those beliefs the statements go unnoticed, but for those who do hold these prejudices it may help galvanize them behind the administration.

Targeting the Individual

Petty Harassment and Intimidation - The Student Code of

Conduct silences public descent - Example: sending code of conduct warnings to students without pressing any specific charges. It looks very official, but is really a way of letting you know that they could have you expelled at any time if they really want to. If they know that you will be doing an action, they may send someone to tell you consequences for protesting in the 'wrong way.'

Admin know that if they go too far they might fuel controversy by making you into a martyr, so they will use light harassment or heavily individualized harassment to keep you quiet and docile. However, this can change quickly: depending on the administrator, their ego might amplify their ineptitude and make them act like a raging megalomaniac. They will generally leave you a path of least resistance to follow (which is what they want you to take). It may be silence or it may be worse, but it likely won't be bad enough that you can make them look like a

"To a surrounded enemy, you must leave a way of escape. They must see that there is an alternative to death"

- Sun Tzu,
The Art of War

villain or get the community to rally against them. They know that if you have no options and nothing left to lose that you will be more dangerous to them.

They know if they go after a leader too harshly they will create a martyr. At the same time, they are relying on the fickleness of students and subtle tactics to counteract that. If they want to deflate your organization's momentum they will identify its most active

leaders and find some way to quietly remove them from the field. They are likely to use the code of conduct to add pressure on those leading students, making it difficult for them to keep up with their course work, pay their bills, and manage their organizations, until they are forced to leave to take care of their mounting personal needs.

In 2008 the university ham-handedly responded to a lawsuit from the student survivor of sexual assault who was raped by several members of the men's basketball team with their own lawsuit to make her liable for damages to the university and the cost of the court case. The moral outrage leveled at the University of Oregon forced them to drop their

"Strike the shepherd and the sheep will scatter"

- Robert Greene
The 48 Laws of Power
Machiavellian Law 42

lawsuit, but it shows the extent to which they will punish individuals to protect their profits.

Devaluing a Target - Framing student organizers in a negative light to hurt their credibility is a defense tactic. To deflect from an event that gets public attention (or even has potential for it) the admin may attempt to devalue your stance by claiming that you're whining, characterizing your motives to reflect childishness, or stating that you don't really know what you want. Other institutions might devalue a target in different ways: the government would call you a terrorist, and the criminal justice system would classify you as a criminal. This is akin to the **Ad Hominem** attack because it's an attempt to characterize someone in a specific way to distract from the real issues. Additionally, by characterizing one's opponent as childish, reactionary, or ignorant, you implicitly characterize yourself as mature and wise. The administration has access to platforms much greater than anything we as students do (without significant work and luck), so they will try to misrepresent the situation to the broader population before we can share our experience.

Protest Policy and Procedure

Who Designs the Policy? - The administration will use new policies to erode your ability to protest and dissent publicly. They're constantly thinking about making your job more difficult while streamlining the system to suit their needs and profit motive. The system is designed by them for them, and your needs are secondary to their profit. The Student Code of Conduct may be useful in dealing with disputes between students, but it was also designed and enforced by the administration to stop you before you even begin dissenting.

"Free Speech Zones" - Time, Place, and Manner Policy - These policies are allowed by Supreme Court interpretations of the constitutional right to freedom of speech, but this is a primary way that institutions constrict and dampen student voices and civil disobedience. If we are restricted in how loud we can be and where we can be, our message won't reach the people we need it to. It won't affect the University, and therefore any protests we do in the EMU Amphitheater after classes are out, or very quietly during the day, will really be an exercise in quiet catharsis, a tantrum to let off steam, and act only to deflate student passion. Admin might not choose to enforce these rules if

they know it will make them look bad, but they will use subtle threats of various infractions to try and dampen your resolve. They like having the option of security dragging you away if they want, but may consider the threat of police intervention or possible expulsion more effective than the actual use of police intervention or expulsion. When they do this, they will pretend to be a helpful administrator telling you the rules for your own good. They never say “I will call the police to remove you” but instead “they might have to call the police” or “someone may call the police” in the hopes that that will reduce your momentum – if they were to say “I’m going to have the police drag you away” they would identify themselves as the enemy and would be more likely to bolster student aggression.

These policies are designed to maintain the pretense of reasonability while they disarm you with politeness before you even begin to protest, especially if they know you’re coming.

Amplified Sound - The University has rules about amplified sound as part of its “Time Place and Manner Policies.” This is framed as a protection for students in classes and is often used when music is played at tables or events – but this rule also applies to the use of megaphones. The institution wants to punish you for protesting, but realizing that that isn’t always possible, they instead ‘coincidentally’ punish you for common features of protest. This is an attempt to defang your protests and actions. This tactic can be combated with the people’s mic.

Leaning Structures - After a 2016 sit in about fossil fuels the administration launched a policy banning signs from being stood up against the walls of buildings. Students must be there to support signs, which means banners can no longer be dropped from the windows of Johnson Hall or lifted between its pillars, nor can signs be propped up outside. This is a specific rule designed to limit our ability to speak out against injustice hidden behind the guise of “fire safety.” Essentially, they’re forcing all protests into a filibuster model that are at most a slight nuisance to them, rather than a protracted embarrassment or real obstruction of their business.

Blocking a Path - This is actually a legal issue and is true of government buildings and corporate headquarters. If you are hosting a sit-in or other protest, it can’t block access to the building’s exits, and paths must be open between each space and those exits. If you are blocking an exit you will receive a warning and then the police will be

called to remove your protest. This is like so many things: a fire safety rule that is used to make your protests nothing more than a minor inconvenience.

Sometimes They Will Just Lie

If you make it easy for them, admin will lie to your face. Not all the time, but enough that you want to have documentation of agreements, and have sources to back up your statements. They will make promises without intending to keep them, and they'll tell you you're wrong without backing up their claims with evidence, since it'll take you time to fact check them and delay your progress (or it may be impossible inside a meeting).

Don't get overwhelmed or lose your ability to trust, within reason. If you talk honestly with your compatriots, you can parse through the noise and organize something better. They will try to destroy your spirit, support each other and be kind to one another to protect yourself from attack.