

Enrolled
House Bill 2557

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to higher education faculty.

Whereas after two decades of replacing full-time faculty positions with positions that are temporary or part-time, higher education nationally has reached the point where more than 70 percent of all college and university instructors are part-time or temporary, more than twice the national workforce average of 30 percent; and

Whereas the effect on students of the lack of government support and the decline of the full-time faculty workforce is becoming apparent; and

Whereas a faculty corps consisting primarily of full-time positions is essential because, just as in other professional fields, full-time commitment and professional treatment result in better service to students, and ultimately to taxpayers, and because tenure protects the academic freedom essential for teaching and high-level research; and

Whereas many colleges and universities have survived during the past decades of shrinking government support only because of the underpaid work of part-time faculty and full-time nontenure-track faculty; and

Whereas part-time or temporary faculty who, on many college campuses, now teach more than half the courses offered each academic semester must be treated professionally, paid fairly and recognized for their commitment to higher education even in the face of their own economic exploitation; and

Whereas the dearth of full-time positions has meant that the full-time faculty who remain are increasingly less able to devote the time they need to their research and teaching because they have an increased share of the responsibility for student advising, college governance and curriculum development; and

Whereas the shrinking percentage of full-time faculty positions has also placed increased burdens on other academic staff, whose workloads have risen as the number of full-time college and university professionals has declined; and

Whereas with fewer than 30 percent of faculty nationwide in full-time positions, the number of faculty who are institutionally supported to conduct research has declined dramatically, and the future of university-based research in the United States is now in danger; and

Whereas academic quality is impaired when the majority of faculty members are denied the resources and professional autonomy they need to do their best work; and

Whereas so long as part-time or adjunct faculty have to teach at multiple institutions to earn a living, so long as they have to worry about obtaining health and pension benefits, so long as they are hired under less than professional conditions, so long as evaluation of their work is cursory or nonexistent, so long as they lack office space and basic professional support, so long as they are unable to participate in college governance and so long as they are the academic equivalent of piece

workers, the quality of education, research and community service offered by Oregon colleges and universities will suffer; now, therefore,

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. As used in sections 2 and 3 of this 2009 Act, “public institution of higher education” means:

- (1) A community college; or
- (2) A state institution of higher education listed in ORS 352.002.

SECTION 2. (1) A part-time faculty member at a public institution of higher education is eligible for the same health care benefits as full-time faculty members if the part-time faculty member is eligible for membership in the Public Employees Retirement System by teaching either at a single public institution of higher education or in aggregate at multiple public institutions of higher education during the prior year.

(2) A part-time faculty member at a public institution of higher education shall pay all insurance premiums for health care benefits unless otherwise provided for by the policy of the institution or by collective bargaining at the institution.

(3) The Oregon Educators Benefit Board and the Public Employees’ Benefit Board shall each adopt rules to implement subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

SECTION 3. The State Board of Education and the State Board of Higher Education shall establish baselines and conduct annual reviews of each public institution of higher education with respect to the employment of full-time faculty and of faculty working less than full-time. Each public institution of higher education shall provide the necessary data for the board’s report prior to September 1 of each year. The boards shall report the results of the reviews to the Legislative Assembly and the Governor’s office prior to October 1 of each year. The reviews shall include:

(1) Examination of data related to the ratio of courses taught by the following faculty categories:

- (a) Full-time faculty;
 - (b) Part-time faculty; and
 - (c) Graduate assistants;
- (2) The pay differential for the faculty categories; and
- (3) The health care and other benefits provided for each faculty category.
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Passed by House June 18, 2009

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Chief Clerk of House

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Speaker of House

Passed by Senate June 27, 2009

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President of Senate

Received by Governor:

.....M,....., 2009

Approved:

.....M,....., 2009

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Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M,....., 2009

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Secretary of State