



PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

American Association of University Professors

Promoting Quality Higher Education – An Investment in Oregon's Future

DATE: 3 February 2014 (via Email)

TO: Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development
Sen. Mark Haas, Chair
Sen. Tim Knobb
Sen. Lee Beyer

Sen. Jeff Kruse
Sen. Arnie Roblan

On January 31, 2014 the Executive Council of the American Association of University Professors at Portland State University adopted an **OPPOSE unless amended position on Senate Bill 1525**. We request that this letter be distributed to members of the Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development and that the committee not move the bill to Ways and Means at its February 6, 2014 hearing.

We oppose the provision in section one granting the HECC the **“authority to enter into and administer interstate agreements regarding the provision of post-secondary distance education”** because it:

- is an example of legislative over-reach that flouts principles of quality control and accountability to students: keep decision making close to the classroom and the faculty senate of each campus.
- goes over the heads of faculty and deans who historically know Oregon students best and who have intellectual ownership of and day-to-day responsibility for the degrees offered at their own institutions.
- assumes a “virtual” and “average” on-line student body population, when studies show that the students looking to save money in the on-line educational realm are those most likely in need of remediation, special attention, and personal mentoring.
- ignores the quality of learning experience in bypassing issues of academic freedom and peer review, which are the guarantors of a rigorous, professionally sound faculty-controlled curriculum .
- entails wasteful bureaucratization in order to establish and track equivalencies among courses on other (“virtual”) campuses rather than focus local resources on meeting student needs on our own campuses and pursuing research and refinement of course content and delivery at home.
- portends out-sourcing of faculty work, potentially sending Oregon students and Oregon dollars out of state. Oregon should promote the creation and retention of middle class jobs, not the decimation of the higher education faculty profession.
- instigates a generic , crowd-sourced curriculum, reducing student choice, diversity, and local responsiveness.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please do not hesitate to call on me with any further questions.

Respectfully submitted.

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Chair, Legislative Committee, PSU-AAUP

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