



# American Association of University Professors

*Academic Freedom for a Free Society*

March 23, 2023

Senator Dembrow, Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Education  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Senate Bill 416 - Support

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Committee,

I am a faculty member at Oregon State University and the Vice President of Political Action for AAUP Oregon. On behalf of the more than 6,300 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, our collective bargaining chapters at the University of Oregon, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and Oregon Institute of Technology, and our faculty members across Oregon, I ask that you please support SB 416.

Universities across our state over-rely on adjunct faculty labor to educate our students. These faculty often have higher workloads, larger classes, greater job instability, and fewer benefits than full-time instructors and tenure-track professors in the same departments. This inequity in pay and benefits persists despite adjunct faculty possessing the same degrees, certifications, and credentials as their full-time colleagues. Yet due to the nature of their contract alone, university administrations are empowered to balance institutional budgets on the backs of this hard-working group of faculty members.

As a state, we must do more for our educators and their students, and SB 416 is one step in the right direction. When administrations underpay and overwork adjunct faculty, their students and institutions suffer. Due to low pay and lack of benefits, adjunct faculty members must scramble to take on as much work as they can to simply make ends meet. This means they have less time for individual student care, professional development, or curricular revision. How can they fully support their students or contribute to their field of study when they must divide their attention across multiple institutions, outside jobs and gig work?

Faculty interactions with students have consistently been linked to student success. Despite this fact the administrative solution to our budgetary challenges has been to slash faculty positions, pay, and benefits. This failed approach has not revitalized our institutions and has instead compounded our university system's problems. Equitable pay for all faculty members within departments will incentivize our universities to find better solutions to the real challenges we face. Reverting to failed austerity measures adversely impacts the lowest-paid and hardest-working members of our university community, and does absolutely nothing to increase graduation rates.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Louisa Hooven  
Vice President of Political Action, AAUP Oregon