

23 March 2023

Dear members of the Senate Committee on Education,

Thank you for allowing me to share with you my experience as a Part-Time Faculty member at Linn-Benton Community College in Corvallis.

After a 25-year career as owner of a garden design and habitat restoration company in Austin, Texas, my family and I moved to Oregon, the home state of several generations of my ancestors. I returned to college to pursue an advanced degree and graduated from Oregon State University in 2014 with a PhD in Forest Ecosystems and Society. The following year I was hired as a part-time instructor in the Biology Department at LBCC, where I have been teaching General Biology for the past eight years.

I absolutely love teaching at LBCC because of the diversity of the student body and the passion that my colleagues have for helping students overcome barriers to achieve their educational goals. Some of my students are returning to school after raising a family, or are seeking a mid-life career change. Others are international students who are dual-enrolled at OSU and appreciate the smaller class sizes and greater access to instructors that LBCC provides. Many of my students are unable to attend a university because of financial constraints, and the lower tuition at Oregon community colleges provides them an avenue to higher education and higher-paying jobs as a result.

I have chosen to work part-time as my husband and I have been providing care for several terminally ill family members over the past few years. Many of my part-time faculty colleagues are unable to work full-time due to family obligations, personal health issues or other constraints. However, working part-time at LBCC means we have no health insurance, vacation time, or retirement benefits.

In addition to this lack of benefits, we are also paid much less per hour than our full-time faculty colleagues at LBCC for the same job responsibilities, even if we have as much or more teaching experience and advanced degrees. For example, part-time faculty are limited to teaching fewer than 24 work credit hours per academic year in (fall, winter and spring terms combined), while full-time faculty are expected to teach approximately 45 credits. After advancing to step 9 of the salary schedule, I earn \$24,593 per academic year (the equivalent of \$49,186 full-time) while my full-time colleagues earn \$76,584 plus benefits. **I am being paid \$1051 per work credit hour compared to \$1702 per work credit hour for full-time faculty for the same work. That equates to only 62 cents per dollar. This is a huge disparity.**

This combined inequity of lower pay and no access to benefits puts many of my colleagues below the federal poverty level if they are single and trying to raise two children with no access to benefits. Others cannot afford to retire because this pay inequity leaves nothing to save for retirement. I am fortunate to have a partner who works full-time and I have access to health insurance but get no vacation time or retirement benefits. Some of my part-time faculty friends have had to take out a loan in order to have necessary dental work done, and a medical issue can be financially devastating.

We talk a lot about racial equity and gender equity, but little attention has been paid to pay equity for part-time faculty until now. I am thankful that you are considering it now. Yes, we are more affordable than full-time faculty if the college doesn't have to pay for benefits, but that does not justify only valuing our time and expertise at 66 cents on the dollar. **I urge you to pass SB 416 and demonstrate that all teachers are valued and deserve to be paid fairly.**

Respectfully,

Susan Morr , PhD

Part-Time Faculty Association President

Instructor, Biological Sciences

Linn-Benton Community College

WOH 220 | BC 201A

Pronouns: she, her, hers morres@linnbenton.edu 541-760-2351