

Submitter: Amanda Granrud
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB416

Thank you for this opportunity, Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee. For the record, I am Amanda Granrud. I have taught part-time and full-time at six different institutions in North Carolina, Kansas, Nebraska, and Oregon. For the last 12 years, I've been a full-time instructor at Oregon State University and on occasion taught part-time at Western Oregon University.

Like my part-time colleagues, I love my job. I love teaching skills-based communication courses my students may only take once in their lives, but will nonetheless have positive, tangible, lasting effects on their careers and relationships. Also, like too many of my part-time colleagues, I have experienced an unwarranted, unfair, and illogical hierarchy among part-time, full-time, and tenure-track faculty. Indeed, I regularly share an office with a revolving door of part-time faculty, who are just as knowledgeable, hardworking, and inspiring as anyone I have ever worked with.

Yet, my colleagues and I talk regularly about the disconnection they feel when it comes to the department and university. I hear about their struggle to commit fully to an organization that won't commit to or equally value them. I hear them weigh the costs and benefits when it comes to staying or going—sometimes in terms of literal dollars, because too many are one broken appliance away from serious hardship.

Yet, students value part-time faculty a great deal. I see them coming to office hours, getting extra help with projects, asking for letters of recommendation, wanting to know what classes they're teaching next term so they can get registered, and just needing advice from someone they respect and like. We talk about equity in terms of students all the time...making higher education accessible and sustainable, creating equal opportunities for all students to learn, using teaching techniques and assessment tools that give every student a chance to succeed. Why does the principle of equity not apply to us?

There is no reason for part-time faculty to be paid less for the same work. I'm not a better teacher when I'm full-time, and I'm not a worse teacher because I'm not tenure-track. Paying people what they're worth is not only fair and reasonable, but also overdue recognition that a student's transformational education doesn't hinge on how many hours their teacher is on campus or how many years their teacher has worked at the school.

You can teach one course incredibly well and change the trajectory of students' lives. I know, because that's exactly what happened to me when I was an undergraduate some thirty years ago in Montana. That contribution and impact of part-time faculty should never be underestimated or undercompensated. Equal pay for equal work. I urge you to vote yes on SB 416. Thank you for your time.