



From the President



The unique role of AOF

The Association of Oregon Faculties is a unique faculty organization whose goal is to protect and improve the working environment of faculty at all 7 public Oregon universities. Since the break-up of the Oregon University System (OUS) in 2014, AOF's key role in promoting system-wide faculty interests in Salem has become even more important. The AOF is not a union but cooperates with other faculty organizations and related groups to further shared interests by interacting with both the legislature and the Higher Education Coordinating Committee (HECC). During the 2014-15 session, the AOF strongly supported SB 702 to provide health care benefits to part-time/adjunct faculty and was also a major force in passing HB 2611 to require continuation of key shared services among Oregon's public universities. The AOF joined the Inter-institutional Faculty Senate (IFS) to stress the importance of the "quality" of a university degree as the HECC deliberated adopting an outcomes-based funding model. As a member of the PERS coalition, the AOF supported successful judicial

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Legislative Report

It is hard to believe that Fall is already in full swing and that Winter is just around the corner! AOF had a successful 2015 legislative session on several fronts. Some of the highlights included the passage of HB 2611, requiring key shared services in the university system to continue for at least another four years, protection of the faculty/staff tuition benefit, and a significant re-investment in higher education funding for the biennium (up ~\$142 million). In addition, conversations around providing health care benefits to part-time/adjunct faculty and keeping faculty/staff-to-management ratios in check both progressed with passage of SB 113 which resulted in the convening of workgroups within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). These workgroups have been tasked with providing better and more accurate information, as well as coordinating on possible solutions in a future session. AOF is keeping a close eye on these issues as they progress and will be engaging on them as we move forward.

There have been some changes at the HECC in recent months. Dr. Veronica Dujon of PSU was hired to replace Dr. Salaam Noor as the Director of University Academic Planning

and Policy. In addition, HECC has elected new leadership with former Chair Tim Nesbit being replaced by Neil Bryant and faculty member David Rives being elected Vice-Chair. We look forward to working with Veronica, Neil, and David in their new capacities.

The HECC released the first funding numbers for universities under the newly adopted SSCM (Student Success and Completion Model) that replaced the RAM (Resource Allocation Model). It is important to note that a portion of the SSCM includes a percentage of funds to be based on outcomes (diplomas/graduation rates, service to certain student demographics, etc.) for part of the budget for each university. The HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee recently recommended that the full HECC adopt the proposed allocations under the SSCM, which total \$379,195,906 for all seven of Oregon's public universities. Time will tell how the SSCM formulas will affect individual university budgets. AOF has been, and will continue to be a strong voice fighting to make sure that factors other than just the number of

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From the President

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efforts to overturn legislative changes approved in 2013 that would have nullified contractual agreements by lowering cost-of-living adjustments negotiated before the state reformed the public pension system.

AOF's unique position has also allowed it to support faculty interests in venues beyond the legislature. One unintended consequence of the break-up of the OUS was the uncertain fate of the faculty/staff tuition benefit that has served faculty well since the mid-1990s. The AOF played a key role in developing an agreement signed in 2015 by all 7 public university presidents to retain the benefit. No other faculty-based interest group could have championed this issue as effectively at a system-wide level.

If you are not already an AOF member, please consider joining and supporting our work to protect and promote your interests. Check out our website to learn more, and please contact me or other board members with your thoughts or questions (<http://oregonfaculties.org>).

Alan Bakalinsky
Oregon State University

Legislative Report — Continued

diplomas awarded be part of the new SSCM model to help ensure fair and adequate funding at our universities.

It seems as though the legislature adjourned just yesterday, but we are already looking towards and preparing for the upcoming session in February. As we quickly

approach the end of the calendar year and head towards the 2016 short legislative session, AOF will continue to advocate effectively for you and the issues you care about.

Chris Parta
Parta Oregon
AOF Lobbyist

Campus Report

Jacqueline Arante, Portland State University

PSU welcomed over 70 new full-time faculty and many adjunct faculty this fall, according to Provost Andrews. We are now a faculty and staff of slightly more than 1260. President Wiewel reports to the Senate that enrollment overall is flat, but growing in some colleges and in non-residents and new students. The Faculty Senate will discuss the proposed PSU Strategic Plan during the November meeting.

The Administration and AAUP have endorsed the new Post-Tenure Review Guidelines and process. Reviews, as per the AAUP contract, will begin in 2016. The process includes a regular 5-year evaluation of tenured faculty. Those who undergo review will be eligible for possible salary increases, professional development funds, or a professional development plan. Budget planning in the Office of Academic Affairs continues apace, primarily to address deficits. The Faculty Senate has proposed new Promotion and Tenure Guidelines to be implemented this year. Hiring has begun in the new professional ranks. Among non-tenure track faculty, the proportion on multi-year contracts is now 80%.

The Senate Committee on Academic Prioritization has been unable to carry out the planned pilot project due to lack of support, time, and effective structure; it has, instead, earned Senate endorsement to create an "Atlas of Academic Programs." A final report on its work is expected by the end of Winter quarter, 2016. (*cont.*)

Are you a member of AOF? If so, thank you for your continued support!

If you're not an AOF member, why not join today? AOF actively lobbies for you in Salem, advocating for faculty interests as well as for your health care and retirement benefits.

Membership is only \$90/year, payable by monthly payroll deduction or annual check.

*For more information about AOF and how to join, please visit us at **oregonfaculties.org**.*

Campus Report – Continued

A Senate review of the proposal for a School of Public Health has resulted in a recommendation for the establishment of the School and this year's Senate will undertake the work of implementation: relocating some academic units, transferring faculty, and creating new Senate seats and new School committees. Additional work of the Senate will include a Task Force on Academic Quality, which has two goals: 1) to ensure that academic quality be considered along with standard quantifiable measures of achievement such as funding and growth in enrollment; and 2) to identify aspirational practices at comparable universities to guide investments in excellence at PSU. The Senate plans to reflect on the character of liberal education at PSU.

The Provost proposes to work jointly with the Senate on a Work Plan for 2015-2016 that includes, among others, a Task Force on Academic Quality, Textbook Affordability, Pre-Baccalaureate Certificates, "Liberal Arts Conversation," Academic Department/Program re-structuring, and Teaching-Intensive Tenure Track Faculty.

As of this writing, SEIU has settled its contract, and both AAUP and PSUFA-AFT are in negotiations. Both bargaining units have chosen to engage in "interest-based" bargaining with the Administration. Interest-based bargaining attempts, from the outset, to find "win-win" solutions. Each team identifies topics for negotiations, lists their priorities and interests, and both teams work together to develop and evaluate solutions that address both teams' interests. Check their websites for the latest bargaining updates.

The Association of Oregon Faculties (AOF, <http://oregonfaculties.org>) is an association that represents and protects the interests of Oregon's public university faculty and professional staff before the Oregon Legislature and various state agencies. Our primary goal is to increase the quality of our professional working environment.

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