

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Alison Lutz and I am a part-time faculty member at Chemeketa Community College and Portland State University. I teach studio art and art appreciation classes and I love what I do. I love being able to share the power of artistic expression with the students of Chemeketa at PSU. Many of my students have never had exposure to art or art-making and it's a pleasure to help students learn how to look at, talk about, and make art that moves and challenges them.

I have taught at Chemeketa for 11 years and am one of around 10 part-time faculty members in the art department. I have taught at PSU for one year and am one of countless part-time faculty in the art department there. Teaching is my main source of income, it is my career, it is my passion, and I would love to move into a full-time position.

At Chemeketa, a part-time faculty member is currently paid 65% of what a full-time member is paid in wages and part-time faculty receive very few, if any, benefits. For me this pay disparity has necessitated multiple part-time jobs outside of teaching in order to pay my bills. I currently have two additional part-time jobs outside of academia, along with maintaining an artistic studio practice. Due to my seniority at Chemeketa, I am assigned a full teaching load, but that means that I teach every term, year-round, including summer term. My annual teaching load is greater than a full-time faculty member, yet I am paid less in wages per year than my full-time colleagues with equivalent seniority. In the last 5 years I have had only one term off from teaching and that was because my class was reassigned to a full-time faculty member to fill their workload. To reduce my teaching load is to reduce my income and I cannot afford that. For years before SB551 was passed, I had to pay exorbitant health insurance premiums out-of-pocket. With gratitude, I am one of few part-time faculty members who can take advantage of this legislation, but more needs to be done.

The bottom line is: Despite doing more than full-time work, it is impossible for me to find a full-time position – and the security that would bring my life – because the system institutions have created is one based on what's best for the bottom line, not students and staff. Institutions use part-time faculty to save costs, at a disservice to the students and the system. The legislature has the opportunity to force institutions to do what's right and build a system that is fair to its students and fair to its faculty. Please vote yes on HB 3115.

Sincerely,
Alison Lutz
Part-time Faculty at Chemeketa
Adjunct Assistant Professor at PSU