

Submitter: Bennett Gilbert  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure: SB416

I teach history and philosophy. Teaching in the humanities requires continuous renewal of knowledge of texts and of the instructor's thinking about the ideas at stake. This takes time: I re-read every text before the class session in which it is to be discussed, no matter how many times I've read it before and no matter how much I think I know, because I always discover more in it than I recall. Furthermore, this kind of teaching also requires that the instructor pursue a program of research, writing, and publication. One becomes a stale, dreary teacher without doing so. This, too, takes time---massive amounts of time. And these are my practices: I work full time as a scholar and therefore bring my latest research and thinking into the classroom like hotcakes fresh off the griddle, no matter whether my students are first-year or fourth-year. In these two ways, teaching one course well requires the same measure of activity of full-time, appointed faculty for teaching the same course. And, obviously, adjuncts must devote the same time devoted to helping each student as appointed faculty do.

Teaching well in these ways is all the harder when one is contingent. Insufficient income means insecurity as to what one will eat and where one can live. It means ceaselessly gnawing worry about whether one will have any income at all in the next term or the next year. Nonetheless, one perseveres. Because teaching is a calling to which one devotes oneself, fully and seriously.

For these and other reasons, Oregon adjuncts deserve pay parity.