

My name is Bernadette Kapocias and I'm a Professor of Communication Studies at Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC) in Coos Bay. After earning my Masters of Arts in Communication in 1997, I worked as a secretary while teaching part time at both Walla Walla Community College and Walla Walla University, and driving to Blue Mountain CC once a week for a night class. I moved to Coos Bay and taught part time at SWOCC for two years until I got hired full time in 2002, and I've been full time since then.

I'm testifying in support of HB 2669.

I was encouraged to hear the enthusiasm for pay equity from the committee members during the hearing. As a full-time professor, my job description is "80% teaching, 20% other duties," and I believe the solution you're seeking for pay equity for part-time teachers lies in those numbers.

I'm looking at this from a student's perspective. I quickly searched some popular classes this term at SWOCC, students are more likely to have a part time teacher in:

- ❖ Psychology (60% part time)
- ❖ Writing (60% part time)
- ❖ Communication (58% part time)
- ❖ Math (50/50)

At the beginning of this term, I ran into a student on campus who was lost and looking for their writing teacher, who happened to be a part-time instructor. Because of the consistent turnover that results from part-time faculty being underpaid and overworked, I wasn't familiar with this instructor and couldn't be of much help. This moment really highlighted for me that we set students up for better success when they have a stable and consistent teaching staff, which they don't get as easily with overstretched part-time faculty members.

At SWOCC, we have invited part-time faculty to serve on our institutional committees, but I don't know any who do, as that would be more work for free. Because of the lack of full-time faculty at SWOCC, we had to shrink our committees, and even our Faculty Senate. This has really diminished the effectiveness of our shared governance structures, as institutional committees play a vital role in the decision-making and overall effectiveness of our colleges.

Why pay part-time faculty at the same rate as full-time? Because it's the right thing to do! Besides, it's *literally the same job*. We have added our new "Z" designation to our core classes (COMM 111Z, for instance), which guarantees that the class is the same across colleges. If it's the same, what's up with the difference in pay?

I know employers these days are struggling to find a stable workforce. We ALL want that.

Passing HB2669 could lead to

- ❖ Less administrative stress in making sure folks are kept below the minimum hours before you have to pay them benefits,
- ❖ Less time searching for new teachers for a "disposable" workforce,
- ❖ Students would be able to **feel consistent and stable support**, and a
- ❖ Stronger sense of community in our colleges and our towns.

Passing HB 2669 would be good for students, workers, the economy, and our communities.

Sincerely,

Bernadette Kapocias