We are building our union
Dear Colleague,

We are teaching and research faculty at the University of Oregon working to organize our faculty union. Our ranks consist of tenure-track faculty, full- and part-time non-tenure-track faculty, research assistants, and post-doctoral scholars employed at the university.

We see that the ability to do our jobs—to deliver the highest quality education for our students, to conduct high caliber research, and to provide service to the university and the community—is being eroded. Public education is under attack—and we must be united to fight for the future of a strong public university.

We want an effective voice in our workplace. Teaching, research and service are essential to the university’s core mission, but without a binding contract, crucial decisions that affect the allocation of University resources, institutional priorities, promotion and tenure policies, faculty compensation and employee benefits are made without our participation. Shifts in the relationship between the University of Oregon and the Oregon University System further underscore the need for us to have a seat at the table, now.

We need to guarantee an active role for faculty in shaping the direction of our University, as well as in determining curricula, budget priorities, and other policies that shape our academic community and our working lives.

We want the chance to compete. Recruiting and retaining excellent faculty is critical to the mission of our University. Bringing faculty compensation to a level of parity with other members of the American Association of Universities (AAU) must be a transparent process for the faculty as well as the administration. It takes more than a one-time salary boost to achieve equity. The ability to attract and retain high quality faculty requires stable and continuous increases. Strong contracts, with competitive salaries for the entire faculty, are what strengthen our university.

We want to focus on the full picture of University operations. Faculty work hard to bring in funds for research and teaching. We deserve to have a clear understanding of how the funds we attract are spent on the administrative side—and how the administration makes decisions about the funding we bring to the University of Oregon.

With our union, we will have the strength of collective voice and the legal grounds to require transparency. A university is a place for openness and knowledge. With our union we will bring accountability and work truly as partners with the administration to develop fair policy on budgets and spending.
We believe in shared governance. Working in partnership with the Senate, we hope to increase effective participation in our own governance. Any erosion of faculty involvement in the governance of our institution threatens the quality of education. True shared governance can only be achieved when reinforced by the power of collective bargaining.

Our contract will be what we make it. Union members in each department will develop proposals that align with their specific needs and vision, and together we will negotiate a strong contract that furthers the mission of the University—and protects what we value most about our jobs: the ability to hold our teaching and research to the highest professional standards. United in our union we will negotiate collectively and achieve our goals.

All of us need to participate in this process. We are escalating the work of building our strong faculty union here at the University of Oregon. All concerns must be heard; and we must all begin to envision what we want in our contract once we establish our union. With our voice and vision, our professional, democratic, and principled effort to make the UO one of the top teaching and research universities in the country will succeed.

The collection of statements included in this booklet provide many of the diverse reasons why faculty members have already committed to working to build a strong faculty union at the UO. Please go to our website at www.UAUOregon.org to find out more. To get involved, talk to a United Academics activist in your department or call the office of our organizing team at 541-636-4714.

Sincerely,

Your United Academics Organizing Committee
Faculty Voices
... our faculty union will work alongside the Faculty Senate and the administration to maintain our status as a top-notch AAU research university while also making this university a model of workplace equity and democratic governance.

“I am active in the United Academics campaign because I believe that a faculty union is the only way for us to achieve budgetary transparency, equitable working conditions and true and effective shared governance at the University of Oregon. Without an organized faculty with collective bargaining rights, we have little ability to influence those local and state-wide decisions that are having and will continue to have a direct impact on our lives and careers. Our union will enable us to insist upon accountability for misplaced budgetary priorities and arbitrary policy decisions. It will provide clear mechanisms to ensure and protect our academic freedoms. It will give us a powerful voice in Salem. My vision for the U of O is that our faculty union will work alongside the Faculty Senate and the administration to maintain our status as a top-notch AAU research university while also making this university a model of workplace equity and democratic governance.”

Karen McPherson
Romance Languages

“I believe that faculty governance is central to the University’s mission of teaching, research, and service. Since universities adopted a “business model” to manage their operations, old forms of faculty governance have become less and less effective. Budget priorities, including research and program funding, undergraduate admission standards, administrative policies that affect working conditions (including faculty review and space allocation), and fundraising goals are often decided with little or no faculty input. A faculty union, with its potential for collective deliberation and action, will be able to work with the University Senate and the administration to ensure that the faculty has a significant voice in setting university priorities, fostering budget transparency, and achieving equitable working conditions.”

Scott Pratt
Philosophy

“I support unionization at the U of O because I firmly believe that a unionized faculty has the best shot at being taken seriously in decision-making processes. I am dismayed by the growing trend toward corporatization that many campuses, including this one, now face – a process that often places decision-making power into the hands of career administrators far removed from the reality of the classroom, laboratory, and/or fieldwork setting. A union contract levels the playing field and ensures that the professional judgment of faculty will be used and protected and not dismissed or ignored (as sometimes happens with the University Senate). At a time when many seek to erode the power of unions nationwide, I believe even more strongly in the slogan, “United we negotiate, divided we beg.”

Jill Harrison
Sociology
“Public employees, especially teachers, are increasingly under attack, portrayed by the right-wing as spoiled liberals who don’t work for their money. The defamatory public relations campaign that has been undertaken against public employees can’t be fought by individuals, we need a collective voice that includes professors, public school teachers, firefighters, police officers, and other public employees. Those who want to remove collective bargaining from the American landscape are the same people who want to privatize everything, so that only the children of the wealthy get health care, and only the children of the wealthy get an education. None of us is powerful enough to fight the very wealthy lobby that supports these changes alone, nor can we negotiate our way individually to a better social situation for everyone. It is of little importance to me whether individual professors are able to negotiate good deals for themselves with the university — I am concerned with the whole social fabric of the community that we are tasked with building together.”

Bonnie Mann
Philosophy

“As a non-tenure track instructor, I take my commitment to teach very seriously, but with term-to-term or nine-month contracts, I have yet to feel secure about my longevity at the U of O. At a minimum, I believe a union can help me be a better teacher and mentor by providing more job security. Working under a multi-year contract that contains clear language about my future employment can only help me feel more connected to this campus and my work. Right now, I believe the only way for me to advance my career as a writing instructor — which ultimately means serving students — is through collective bargaining.”

Tina Boscha
English

“I support building a faculty union with my colleagues at University of Oregon because I believe that a larger collective body is needed to improve the quality of education and ensure just working conditions.”

Derrick Hindery
International Studies
I support unionization at the University of Oregon because I see it as one of the best ways to ensure transparency and fairness for all of the employees of the University.

“Within my department I see a lot of variation in terms of salary, benefits, and working conditions among people with the same qualification and job title. As a research associate I feel fortunate to work in a lab where my contributions are valued and I feel fairly compensated, but some of my colleagues who are funded from different sources are left without any guarantee of benefits and there is a lot of variation in terms of job security and working conditions. Scientists are increasingly spending a significant portion of their careers in non-tenure-track research positions but I feel like we don’t have anyone advocating for postdocs and research associates at higher levels in the University. I would like to have some say in University decisions and policies that affect me directly. I support unionization at the University of Oregon because I see it as one of the best ways to ensure transparency and fairness for all the employees of the University.”

Steven Kembel
Institute for Ecology and Evolution

“Higher education is changing rapidly. By organizing together and bargaining collectively as faculty, we can help lead these changes. Alone, we can only follow them.”

Daniel Hosang
Ethnic Studies

“A faculty union at the University of Oregon will improve the university community at all levels. The faculty here want to make the U of O a place where learning and research thrive. A union will give us the power we need.”

Karen Needham
Institute of Molecular Biology

“As I see it, the most pressing problem at the UO — the long-term and systematic disinvestment in faculty, students and academic facilities like the library collection — is not unique to our university. It represents a broader shift in institutional priorities in the US from advancing knowledge and preparing the next generation for democratic citizenship and meaningful work to the accumulation of wealth, status and power in a small group of privileged people. To me, a faculty union offers a viable way to help put our university and our state back on track by ensuring that resources are mobilized and invested in ways that reflect our values.”

Gerald Berk
Political Science
“Having taken a Research Assistant position for the first leg of my professional career, I think it’s safe to say that I take science seriously. One of the cornerstones of being a good scientist is being open and transparent in every step one takes. When attempting to ascertain the specifics of my own contract, I’ve found vague language and opaque organization. I’ve observed similar issues in how the University deals with donors and other administrative aspects. Such operations do the University community a disservice and reflect poorly on its character. By uniting with a common voice, we can insist that the University operate transparently and with plain language, and by this further empower the University to fulfill its duties to the public.”

Wayne Manselle  
Neuroscience

“I support a faculty union because I am of the opinion that union representation and collective bargaining power will help achieve greater pay equities, more regular salary increases, assurance of fair reviews, and stronger recruitment and retention packages. Furthermore I think these are critical to address overall climate and faculty morale. At a time of intense budget crisis, it is more important than ever for the faculty as a collective body to have both representation and collective voice at the university as well as the state level.”

Lynn Fujiwara  
Ethnic Studies

“I was a member of the classified union at the UO for many years and appreciated the benefits I received through union representation. I believe that a union will help UO faculty speak as one strong voice in financial, healthcare, and policy issues that will benefit all.”

Karen Lawrence  
Early Intervention Programs

“I support a faculty union because it would help provide oversight to issues such as hiring, firing, and raises which are currently often opaque. I’ve worked for other state agencies with unions and I feel that the oversight that the union provided was a useful component of a good working environment.”

Rodger Voelker  
Institute of Molecular Biology
“Without a social fabric we are nothing more than a collection of individuals. Remarkably, the USA is one of the most primitive cultures due to its fear of society and the fear of the concept that we need collective care and protection. Even more remarkably, despite their high intellectual outlook, many academics are not immune to this fear and are suspicious of unions. Union membership would be voluntary, not compulsory, and would offer faculty a vehicle for the collective care, protection, and voice that we need.”

Richard Taylor
Physics

“I came to the UO after eleven years at a public university with a strong faculty union. The differences in terms of faculty salaries, protected benefits, governance and institutional priorities are striking. Instead of the leveling role presumed by some of my colleagues, a faculty union was crucial in securing salaries that far exceed the UO at the highest as well as the middle and lower tiers. Equally important, changes in health care and other benefits were determined by a collective bargaining process rather than passed down as a fait accompli. A faculty union also was valuable in giving faculty true power in university governance and in facilitating a more equitable environment. These are some of the most prominent reasons why I support unionization at the UO.”

Daniel Tichenor
Political Science

“As a member of the research faculty at the UO for 23 years, I have been able to witness first hand the decline of voter and governmental support for public education and for public employees. I am the child of educators who belonged to the first wave of teachers’ union organizing. As such, I have been able to use my perspective to assess the long-term worth to the community of public employee unions. The basis of economic growth is a well-educated populace. If we want to foster a responsible society to pass on to our children, we have to fully support and prioritize academic growth. Without provision of equitable compensation for public employees, there will be a real lack of educators in Oregon’s future and consequently a serious lack of an accomplished and educated workforce.”

Bonnie Ullmann
Neuroscience

“I strongly support a faculty union at the UO because I believe unions give us a stronger position to negotiate for things important to faculty, from the best conditions for our jobs teaching and helping students, to salary levels within hailing distance of our comparator universities. I can’t believe that, unlike so many universities, the UO of all places still lacks a faculty union. It’s time to strengthen the University of Oregon faculty.”

Martha Bayless
English
“The U of O needs a union for the simple reason that the faculty and staff here deserve to be well represented, at the bargaining table and beyond. The University Senate does serve as a forum to express faculty and staff views, but it has largely an advisory role to the administration, and can easily be ignored in the decision-making process. The more that the university continues to be run along a business model, the more obvious it becomes that those of us working at the university need a union that can stand up for our rights.”

Frederick Colby
Religious Studies

“I support collective bargaining at the University of Oregon because I believe it will create a more democratic and equitable environment for teachers and a better educational value for students. Better representation and support for instructional staff can only benefit students, as instructional staff have the most contact with students and can advocate for student’s educational needs while bargaining for better working conditions.”

Karen Creighton
Physical Education and Recreation

“The faculty at UO face a number of challenges, some unique to our institution, others that we share with universities around the country. Our salaries are at the bottom of the list when compared to our peers. There is an increasing reliance on non-tenure-track positions and part-time positions for undergraduate (and even much graduate) teaching. And there is increasing pressure for us to share the cost of our pensions and health insurance, which would drive our take-home pay even lower. Meanwhile, the University, though its state support continues to dwindle, has been increasingly successful in drawing operating money from other sources. Many other faculties have found that collective bargaining is the most effective way to work with administrators to address problems such as the ones we face, and it seems to me that it is time for us to try it.”

Jack Boss
Music

Many other faculties have found that collective bargaining is the most effective way to work with administrators to address problems such as the ones we face, and it seems to me that it is time for us to try it.

“I believe union representation would lead to greater transparency and informed decision-making. As the UO continues to grow, faculty need a strong, unified voice that can speak out on compensation, benefits, and other issues that directly affect our ability to teach, conduct research, and retain talented colleagues.”

Loren Kajikawa
Music
In a society fractured by adversarial and competitive hyper-individualism, unions offer our culture an opportunity to recall the values of interdependence and fairness. Public institutions of higher education — at their best — elevate those cultural principles as well, and further meld them together in a mission to create opportunities, regardless of background or income, to pursue understanding and knowledge for the betterment of our world. At a time when equality of access to that dream is lambasted, when the 'public' in our public institutions corrodes in the face of hostile forces, it is fitting that educators, scholars and scientists defend and advance the public mission of our university using every institutional tool possible, including unions. I support United Academics at UO for all of the pragmatic reasons of unionizing as well as to help protect and advance the legacy of America’s system of public higher education.”

Michael Dreiling
Sociology

As non-tenure track core faculty in English, I believe a union would offer stability concerning my contract at the University of Oregon. My funding comes from outside the English Department — I am funded by the Office of Multicultural Academic Success, and work with their counselors to retain the University’s first-generation, low-income, at-risk students of diverse background by teaching them first year writing. Because of the unique nature of my funding and my co-location between departments, I have little assurance concerning my position year to year, though the students I serve are among the UO’s most vulnerable, and I take my job teaching and mentoring such students seriously. A union with collective bargaining rights would make me feel more connected to the University’s educational mission and daily function, suggesting that my work has importance.”

Michael Copperman
English

In 1980, opponents of faculty unionization at the University of Oregon defined our drive as divisive. That was and IS not the case! If UO faculty can engage in collective bargaining through United Academics, we will be able to come together with unionized operations and clerical staff to make our university a better place to work, teach, and learn. Imagine no more quibbling over miniscule pay raises, competing for insufficient travel allowances, or watching helplessly as our health benefits erode. A unionized faculty will earn others’ respect and enhance our own self-respect.”

Marion Goldman
Sociology
“As a veteran professional in the performing arts who has seen a few things both good and bad about unions throughout the years, I have to say the good outweighs the bad by a long shot. The protections from unfair practices and the attempts to have artists counted as equal contributing citizens have led me to believe strongly that without union representation working artists would be a lot worse off than we are. As a veteran teacher whose medium happens to be in the performing arts it also makes me feel vulnerable to be without those protections in place. Like so many things in today’s complex world, a union can be a double-edged sword — a union has to work hard to be representative and responsive to its members. I will always support a union for teachers and faculty, especially when there is movement in our country to downplay our vital contribution to society.”

Walter Kennedy
Dance

“I support the unionization of the faculty at the University of Oregon. At the moment, the faculty seems to have no voice in matters regarding employment and policies that affect our ability to carry out the research and teaching missions of the University. The Senate has not done a good job in this regard.”

Terry Takahashi
Biology

“Faculty have the primary responsibility for seeing to it that the university provides a top-notch education, yet we have no say in many of the things that determine our ability to do that, from class size to teaching load to salaries that enable us to recruit and retain good colleagues. It seems wrong that we have so little voice in budget priorities, especially as instruction is getting an ever-smaller piece of the pie. We should also keep in mind how public employees have been scapegoated for budget shortfalls in other states. Discussions of this nature have started in Oregon as well, and our future compensation packages will simply be dictated to us if we don’t have the ability to negotiate.”

Eric Mentzel
Music

“Academia tends to be closed, and bureaucracies tend to consolidate power. But the challenges facing our society this century will require our institutions of learning and teaching to be open beyond disciplinary boundaries, and to share power just as they share ideas. Intelligent, mission-driven unions can help this process.”

Joshua Skov
Business Management
“As a non-tenure faculty member, I support our faculty union at the University of Oregon. All faculty need representation regarding their workload, responsibilities and policies that impact faculty.”

Kathleen Roberts  
Communication Disorders & Sciences

“I support collective bargaining as a method of ensuring fair wages and benefits. I also appreciate a union’s sense of responsibility in fighting for a safe workplace. I think this will become more important as funding for government agencies is cut.”

Janet Rose  
Theatre Arts

“A union would serve to help attract and keep better postdocs here at the UO by ensuring reasonable wages and health insurance for its members. As a graduate student at the UO, I greatly benefited from the GTFF’s tireless work in gaining top-notch health insurance, and efforts to improve the quality of life of its members. I am grateful for their efforts and would like to see a similar organization for postdocs and faculty.”

David Rowland  
Neuroscience

“Collective bargaining helps everyone and is particularly crucial for non-tenure track instructors, especially those without multiple-year contracts. A faculty union is crucial for ensuring that commitments to the University — and to the student — are strengthened.”

Elaine Replogle  
Sociology

“I am a senior research assistant and non-tenure track (NTT) faculty member at the University of Oregon. For the past 20 years I’ve coordinated a number of grant funded research projects, periodically seeking out new funding opportunities and assisting in the development of grant proposals. I’ve enjoyed my work, and appreciate the opportunity to work in an academic environment, but wish that positions such as mine had some policies related to work security. Specifically, I would like to see policies related to the end of grant funding and consideration for a NTT employees skills, performance record and seniority in other available positions within the university. Currently, when your grant runs out within a department, you are out of a job unless you have assisted in writing for and securing funding through another grant (or your department has additional FTE available).”

Elizabeth Twombly  
Early Intervention Programs
“As a former newspaper guild member, I saw first hand how collective bargaining can help to improve working conditions and workplace climate. I support a faculty union because I believe that it will help to ensure fair evaluation practices, foster productive and civil dialogue with administration, and build relationships with other universities in Oregon and across the nation.”

Cynthia Tolentino
English

“I’ve been a member of the national musicians’ union since 1988, and my family has a background in K-12 public education unions. I feel that we can have a stronger, more cohesive voice for all faculty members at UO through the establishment of a union here. It’s invigorating to acknowledge that we can determine the parameters of our own union from its inception. I’m interested in preserving medical and retirement benefits and protecting and supporting contingent faculty rights.”

Steven Vacchi
Music

“I support a faculty union at the UO because of my experience organizing as a graduate student. I was very skeptical of unions before our campus organized. In fact, while I thought that unions were a good thing for industrial trades, I didn’t see how they could possibly benefit academics. I was wrong. Prior to our union movement, we had lousy pay and even worse benefits. After our union organized, I happily saw a substantial increase in my pay every month — about $300 more, as I recall. We also saw increased benefits for healthcare. Where we were charged to visit the doctor before, most routine things were free. These concrete gains made me a believer. I would also like to point out that we have had two major cuts to our health care benefits this year. Under a collective bargaining agreement, Providence wouldn’t be able to cut our benefits unilaterally. Given the uncertainty in our economy, I would feel much more secure with a collectively bargained contract that would secure our pay and benefits, possibly increasing them along the way.”

David Vazquez
English

“Given the uncertainty in our economy, I would feel much more secure with a collectively bargained contract that would secure our pay and benefits, possibly increasing them along the way.

“I think UO faculty members need a unified voice to speak for them to the legislators. We don’t have that now. Those universities that have faculty unions and a unified voice are treated better because their concerns and issues are being heard.”

Frank Vignola
Physics
The formation and active engagement of any organization that fights for and strengthens the rights of ordinary citizens in the current environment is desperately needed at this time.

“The sustained and massive attack on the rights and opportunities of working people underway in the US has eroded the capacity of our educational systems to meet basic requirements of sustaining our nation. While proponents of reducing public support for educational institutions cite financial frugality as their purpose, the actual consequence of this attack is to disenfranchise Americans by keeping them so uneducated and misinformed that they cannot discern who their enemies are, cannot identify their actual jeopardies, are not able protect their interests and opportunities. The actual purpose of the movement to reduce government, or to starve it until it dies, Grover Norquist’s stated goal, is to leave Americans too weakened and economically terrified that they will not fight for their rights or the health of the country. The right wing hates unions as much or more than it hates regulatory government precisely because both protect the rights of the many against the power of the few.

The formation and active engagement of any organization that fights for and strengthens the rights of ordinary citizens in the current environment is desperately needed at this time. I strongly support the formation of our union, United Academics, at the University of Oregon.”

Allan Branscomb
Institute for a Sustainable Environment

“We work hard to prepare our grad students professionally for university positions. Yet good university positions are declining rapidly, and tenure-track university positions are an endangered species. We need collective bargaining in higher education to stop the erosion of tenure-track faculty positions, and to improve the working conditions of non tenure track faculty.”

Marc Vanscheeuwijck
Music

“As a Post Doctoral faculty member, I could have benefited from an organization of peers and colleagues advocating on my behalf to challenge my exclusion from the group health insurance plan offered to other postdocs, an exclusion based only on my type of funding. In general, I think a union can provide a means to tap the diverse, intelligent, committed population of faculty, postdocs, technicians, and research associates, and to help structure and guide the university in a way that many do not currently feel empowered to do.”

Susan Bassham
Institute for Ecology and Evolution
“Despite the best efforts of the Senate over many decades now, our salaries remain the lowest or close to the lowest of all our directly comparable institutions. Given the high quality of research and teaching being done at the University of Oregon, that situation cannot be allowed to continue any longer. The current system of everyone for themselves serves a few faculty and the administration well, but not the faculty as a whole. If we choose to remain divided, then we will continue to suffer the consequences of self-imposed ‘divide and rule.’”

Kevin Nute
Architecture

“I support a union because I feel that faculty should have a greater voice in the administrative decisions that affect us all. As the state continues to disinvest in public education, faculty at the UO face bigger class sizes, stagnant or inequitable salaries, shrinking instructional space, and an uncertain future regarding benefits. Collective bargaining will ensure that faculty directly participate in all decisions that impact such issues. It is faculty who carry out the educational and research mission of the university and it should be faculty who shape its priorities. A union will give us the power to do so.”

Lowell Bowditch
Classics

“The increasing privatization of our public education, although superficially beneficial, is a Trojan horse. While I applaud the generosity of donors, I am also worried about the potential for "strings attached”, in terms of limitations in free speech and research. The debate about the possible elimination of tenure (and the protection it affords) is also troublesome in this respect. The present national climate makes it imperative that faculty — as well as other workers — have representation that advocates for our needs, highlights the benefits that we bring to this state and brings about fairness, transparency and accountability within the university system. I am especially concerned about the increased reliance on non-tenured faculty to carry the load of educating our students. While equally knowledgeable and qualified as tenured faculty, this class of instructors are exploited and kept in a condition of chronic peonage vis-a-vis benefits, pay and job security. A union would help immensely to establish clear guidelines concerning the assimilation of these invaluable and dedicated educators in the university’s body. We need to strengthen education, now more than ever, and a union that can effectively harmonize the needs of faculty, administration and public is the best strategy to face our current hardships.”

Cristina Calhoon
Classics
"Faculty can embrace their labor through a union, and a faculty union can help with transparency on campus."

Louise Bishop
Honors College

"There are three primary reasons for my involvement in the push towards unionization at UO: (1) to protect salary and benefits packages, (2) to advocate for a stronger faculty voice, and (3) to strive for equity across the University. While we have a Senate in which to express our needs and opinions, it doesn’t have power to make decisions that directly affect us, and I’m concerned about the recent and ongoing changes to my healthcare coverage, for example. I would like to be involved in the dialogue for sound budgetary and policy decisions, and understand the reasons when necessary changes are taking place. In addition, I want to advocate for my colleagues. While I enjoy excellent working conditions and a reasonable degree of job security, there are others who struggle with these problems, as well as other equity issues. Our union would ensure stronger faculty advocacy and fairness across the University."

Lisa Hellemn
Special Education

"I have been at three institutions during my career, and the U of O is the only one that hasn’t had a faculty union. I have witnessed first-hand the benefits of faculty representation in terms of salary negotiations and professional disputes. The lack of a union renders faculty vulnerable to unfair practices of university administrations. That is why I fully support the creation of a faculty union at the U of O."

Charise Cheney
Ethnic Studies

"The formation of a union for faculty and instructional staff at the UO is a simple, natural way for those of us most directly responsible for advancing the educational and scholarly missions of the University to make common cause in support of the priority of those missions."

Jeffrey Cina
Chemistry
“I was in the MS program at California State University, Northridge and in the PhD program at Florida State University when both of those universities got graduate student unions. Before the union the primary concerns were related to salary and benefits, but after the unions were in place we learned a lot about the other things unions work for. At both universities they negotiated legal rights and legal help for graduate teaching and research assistants, and greater intellectual property rights. Unions work to secure rights that individuals don’t even know they need to worry about until it’s often too late. As individuals, we are vulnerable on many different levels. A union allows us to create a system where we can draw on larger experiences, and advocate for ourselves and others.”

Janna Fierst  
*Institute for Ecology and Evolution*

“A united, well-represented voice of instructors would help ensure that our shared concerns would be recognized. This would in turn foster a greater sense of belonging and mutual respect within the university, which would help promote a greater sense of community and commitment. Such an endeavor would contribute quite positively to the university environment. Collective bargaining rights would also help ensure greater transparency and accountability with respect to contracts and pay-scales. This would allow the instructor population to spend more time focused on the materials they are teaching, rather than worrying about whether or not they have a job in nine weeks.”

Daniel Wood  
*American English Institute*

“What I like in the University of California Postdoctoral Scholars contract is that Postdoctoral Scholar “Fellows” have the same rights and benefits as other university employees. This is not the case yet at UO; Postdoctoral Scholars do not have the same benefit of discounted fees that other UO employees have and are not under the same health plan as other UO employees. As one of these Postdoctoral Scholar “Fellows” who has won a prestigious and competitive international fellowship, I feel disappointed by not being treated as equal to other UO employees knowing that I’m benefiting and working for UO at no cost.

That’s why I fully support the creation of a union at UO.”

Kamel Hammani  
*Institute of Molecular Biology*
Mark Currey  
Institute for Ecology and Evolution

“**I have been employed as a lab technician for 7+ years** and have a great working environment and stimulating job. I plan to try and make a career doing this. I would like to see policy set in place by the University that creates more job security and clearer policies for opportunities for advancement. I support unionization to help mediate these needs.”

The idea of collective bargaining strikes me as a good thing — for all parties, in all times. It can facilitate open and honest negotiation around conditions of work and compensation for contributions to a shared mission. It seems especially important when the stakes are high and the lines of decision-making seem blurred. These factors appear to be at play at the UO right now. For these reasons, I support a thoughtful discussion of the issues that will move us forward with collective bargaining for our faculty.”

Stephen Wooten  
International Studies

“**Within the current economic climate** unions have never been more needed. As a research assistant I am concerned about job security due to funding fluctuations, yearly contract negotiations, equitable pay structure and opportunities for advancement. I strongly support, and urge others to support, the creation of faculty union at the UO.”

Marie Valle  
Institute of Molecular Biology

“By and large I am satisfied with my job as a research assistant; my compensation stacks up favorably against positions at other Oregon universities and my working environment is fantastic. So it is not for being discontented at work that I support unionization, but rather to achieve greater job stability for research staff. Research assistant jobs are often contingent on grant funding, which can leave longer-term lab members caught in the lurch between funded projects with little or no recourse. A union could effectively negotiate for bridge funding and work proactively with the administration for the stability of unclassified, non-tenure-track jobs.”

Timothy O'Connor  
Institute for Ecology and Evolution
“I came to the UO two years ago after being a long-time union member in my previous employment. I have found there to be huge differences between working in a union and non-union environment. We need a faculty union to help ensure equitable salaries, adequate benefits and working conditions, and job security. An individual faculty member has little voice or recourse when decisions are made that affect us; as a union, we will have a collective voice to ensure our rights and to have a role in decisions that affect the university.”

Nancy Bray
Education Studies

“I believe a union that includes non-tenure and tenure-track faculty could help to clarify and even simplify contracts, pay scales, tenure and retirement agreements. With a collective voice we can have stronger faculty governance but could also be a more effective ally with our administrators, many of whom impress me as people we would want to support, as this university redesigns its place in state priorities. It makes sense, given our university’s history in the study and support of local unions, union history and law, that we should take the next step. We are clearly in a moment of great uncertainty, and I hope my colleagues would recognize this as a valuable moment for solidarity.”

John Schmor
Theatre Arts

“Experience has taught me that in non-union environments, an employee’s job security is subject to the arbitrary whims and personal politics of employers/administrators. That also seems to be the case for non-tenure track faculty at the UO, to the detriment of both faculty and students.

I’ve taught in a private, for-profit college, where exploitation of both students and faculty ran rampant. Only the owners were well served. As I watch the UO take steps towards privatization / corporate subsidization, I worry that the same dynamic could develop here. A union would allow faculty a greater voice in shaping the university’s direction and would allow for a staff that could function to provide greater transparency around presently opaque budget policy and related matters.”

John Davidson
Political Science
“As a research associate, my salary comes from grant support secured by the Principal Investigator. Depending on the type of grant, this support can range from 3 to 5 years which makes long term goals difficult to plan. As I love my work, I only wish to make a decent living and be able to contribute to world class research. I grew up in a ‘Union family’ as my father was an electrician in local union #3 in NYC. I know firsthand how it was only with a Union support that we were able to live a comfortable life when he put in a hard week’s work. I will never take that experience for granted and therefore support building a faculty union that empowers academic employees. I believe it’s been long overdue.”

John Willis
Institute for Ecology and Evolution

“In my conversations with other faculty some have voiced concern that unionization might adversely affect the pursuit of excellence within their department. ‘I know that they are really having problems over in such-and-such department, but we’re doing just fine without a union in our department.’ I usually remind them of something that they really already know — a truly excellent department can only exist within the context of a truly excellent university. An effective faculty union can be a powerful force for achieving and maintaining that kind of across-the-board excellence within a university.”

Randy Sullivan
Chemistry

... a united faculty can help safeguard public employee health care benefits, or retirement benefits, which will help the University attract better faculty.

“I deem it incredibly important for the University of Oregon faculty to form a union to meet the extraordinary economic and political pressures working against education and public employees today. In my opinion, the administration of the University of Oregon should welcome a faculty union at this time for many reasons, but especially since it will mainly help protect higher education in Salem. For example, a united faculty can help safeguard public employee health care benefits, or retirement benefits, which will help the University attract better faculty. The goals of the union will be decided by the faculty, and if the faculty and administration are wise, they could work together better for such things as smaller class sizes, more competitive salaries and more research support—including goals such as funding for the library or more support for our dedicated staff. Overall, the faculty will have a greater say in University governance. A union will in no way threaten excellence, instead it will help attract high quality faculty in these uncertain times, and it will better protect the highly exploited among us.”

Jane Cramer
Political Science
“I support unionization” because I want to see more financial transparency and because I want power to do something if unfair decisions are made. I want a stronger voice, which I feel I lack as an unclassified staff member. I recently heard rumors of significant raises for senior faculty and other high ranked officers, while my salary has been frozen for two years and my health care costs keep getting increased. I want credible information and reasonable fairness of pay and benefits. I hope that unionization will at the very least bring the transparency I seek.”

Astra Henner
Institute of Molecular Biology

“I support our union at the UO” because faculty need a voice that is respected, listened to, and strong. Individuals talking make noise, but a united faculty has a loud voice that can not be ignored. We can not stand by and miss out on this opportunity to make a positive change for the academic side of the school.”

Scott Fallstrom
Mathematics

“I support our effort to form a union” with AFT and AAUP. We must have input on guidelines for our pension and insurance plans, and have a voice in the compensation matters that affect our lives.”

Wendy Machalicek
Special Education and Clinical Sciences

“I support the union” because it provides a democratic voice for faculty in key economic decisions. In an era of tight budgets, to be without a strong voice is to be left behind. In particular, NTTFs have little leverage to require the University to treat them with respect and fairness - a union contract creates collective power which offers that leverage.”

Jeffrey Edmundson
Education Studies

“I support collective bargaining” to provide a forum for input from faculty. As a non-tenured faculty member, I am subject to high standards for teaching and research, which are very similar to those that tenured faculty enjoy, but without the job security. I believe that collective bargaining will improve transparency for academic and budgetary decisions, and provide faculty with more input to University decision-making as a whole.”

Debra Eisert
CHD Administration
As a newly tenured faculty member, I want to work at a University of Oregon where everyone feels well represented at the bargaining table. It is through a union that collective bargaining and transparency will be possible, and by working with the administration, it will create a more democratic environment for all of us. Ultimately, the union will strengthen our rights, will make us feel less vulnerable, and will help us make our university, ours.

Cecilia Enjuto Rangel
Romance Languages

I have learned from colleagues at universities with collective bargaining how unions and faculty senates can work separately but in synchrony to advance faculty employee interests. This is the key reason that I support the union effort. I would like to see the Senate and the Union work to achieve better faculty governance at the UO: input upon P & T protocols, on health benefits, and on merit reviews and salary increases, both for tenure-related and non tenure-track faculty; these are some important goals that a union can help achieve at the UO.

Gordon Sayre
English

The faculty at the UO fit into two seemingly contradictory slots. On the one hand we are part of the shared governance system of the university, participating in decisions affecting the university in a substantive way. On the other hand, as individual employees of the State of Oregon, each of us has essentially no power to negotiate the terms of our employment, and must accept whatever unilateral decisions are made by PEBB, PERS, the legislature or the Governor. A union will give us more power to collectively negotiate those conditions, especially important in these straitened economic times.

Peter Keyes
Architecture

Every day I encounter faculty who are committed to contributing scholarship within their respective fields along with ensuring their classrooms are engaging and meaningful for students. Often we find ourselves working side-by-side, independently and connected through sharing a department or college name. Thus, when it comes time to respond to the challenges facing the University of Oregon, the response is often unorganized. A union is a means of mobilizing our voice and giving visibility to our priorities as faculty.

Alison Schmitke
Education Studies
“I support a faculty union for several reasons, but mostly, it’s the best way for a faculty voice to be heard on UO’s academic priorities. A collective bargaining contract puts into writing what we decide is important to the academic mission of the university: for example, support for students, a strong research focus, and maintaining an excellent faculty. Our students should not have to endure endless tuition increases. We should not have to teach larger and larger classes with little to no support. Long-time faculty should not be demoralized by new hires making the same or higher salaries. Promotion standards should be transparent for NTTF and tenure track faculty across the university. It is easy for any administration to ignore a faculty senate, as we have experienced in the past, but a contract is a legal document.”

Deborah Olson
Special Education

“Given the current massive public disinvestment in public higher education, the increasing dependence of public universities on private donations and increasing corporatization of those universities, the recent aggressive and unjust attacks on public employees, and the fact that UO faculty salaries remain anywhere from 5% to 40% below that of our comparator universities in the AAU, it only seems reasonable to me that UO faculty should support unionization. Collective bargaining can help increase faculty leverage and the chances that our voices and priorities will be heard and respected by legislators, administrators, and donors.”

Paul Peppis
English

“I support forming our union because I support the right to collectively bargain and because I support a wage floor, health benefits and workplace protections for part-time academic workers (like me).”

Joel Black
History

“There are no issues more critical to academic freedom and intellectual integrity than those brought to light with collective bargaining. Participation will improve working conditions for those of us on the ground doing the labor of education and research which will in turn maintain and invigorate academic excellence at the University of Oregon.”

Debra Merskin
Journalism and Communication
“I support a faculty union at the University of Oregon for the simple fact that it would provide us with more influence in policy making decisions. We may have a voice now but it isn’t guaranteed that our ideas and values will be considered.”

Robert Hoselton
Early Intervention Programs

“The faculty at the University of Oregon needs to unionize not only to assure fair wages and decent working conditions but also to uphold the academic integrity of the institution. Collective bargaining would protect the faculty from being used as interchangeable parts and therefore would ensure the quality of education that this generation of students needs and deserves.”

Edward Duggan
Political Science

“Having worked for the Kansas State Legislature before joining the faculty at the University of Oregon, I saw first hand the kind of powerful influence that a union can have in persuading legislators and in helping to develop legislation. It is important for individuals, who may not have much of an influence on the legislative process on their own, to be represented by a group that can argue for their best interests. I believe that United Academics University of Oregon will ensure that my needs, as a non-tenure track faculty member, will be represented throughout the political process, and that my voice will be heard.”

Kristen Kellems
Early Intervention Programs

... a faculty union will provide the necessary catalyst needed to ensure a collective voice and input into how our university confronts and deals with future challenges.

“When individuals unite and advocate collectively, we improve organizational effectiveness, efficiency and ensure financial performance. Currently, our faculty must contend with increasing workloads, pay inequity across disciplines, unilateral decisions to modify our healthcare benefits, and pending legislation to reduce employer contributions and retirement plans. Given the misplaced budgetary priorities and arbitrary policy decisions currently being made, a faculty union will provide the necessary catalyst needed to ensure a collective voice and input into how our university confronts and deals with future challenges. If we are to make any gains in the betterment of our profession, our university and the education of our students we need to replace complacency with a unified effort and stand together.”

Emma Martin
Special Education
“**I appreciate the opportunities I’ve had** through my employment at the University of Oregon. It is gratifying to work with forward-thinking colleagues who have placed social justice at the heart of their programs and policies. A faculty union is a natural step forward in preserving — and promoting — the progressive nature of this institution. The U of O has the power to set an example in the state and in the country by moving forward to protect faculty rights at a time when the rights of individuals who make up our nation are rapidly eroding.”

**Rhonda Lynn Myers**  
*Education Studies*

“A faculty union is a natural step forward in preserving — and promoting — the progressive nature of this institution.

“I’ve worked at two campuses where graduate students were organized and one where they weren’t. It’s difficult to describe how different the atmosphere was at the non-union campus. Students’ salaries were lower, their benefits packages more meager, and they had no recourse — no grievance procedure — when things went poorly with advisors and departments. Adjunct faculty members were in an even worse position. Tenured and tenure-stream faculty members at places like UO might think that tenure offers protections, but even tenured faculty members have seen their benefits eroded, their salaries decreased, and their job security undermined. The best way to safeguard our future — and the future of our students — is to unionize.”

**Carol Stabile**  
*Center for the Study of Women in Society*

“I have always viewed the unions as the key component for achieving and maintaining the rights of workers in any field. Obviously that includes the academic arena. Though many people do not commonly think of universities as being institutions, which are always looking at ‘the bottom line,’ they do. One prominent result of that bottom line is that part-time/adjunct instructors who are not usually protected by the ‘tenure umbrella’, are being hired in ever-increasing numbers all across the nation. Although colleges and universities may make every effort to accord all of their faculty equal rights and equal protections, inequities can and do arise. In that respect, a union is valuable to both the institution and the faculty. The union can help institutions avoid decisions which seem reasonable and necessary in the short term but which can create a divisive atmosphere, while providing a sense of security to all faculty members.”

**Belinda Young-Davy**  
*American English Institute*
"I believe in cooperatively working with the University of Oregon’s administration. I likewise support collective bargaining strategies in order to ensure faculty representation regarding college affairs."

La Donna L. Forsgren
Theatre Arts

“A union at the UO would be a step toward attracting the best instructors, researchers and innovators to our campus. We have quality faculty here, but only those who are willing and able to forgo market-standard salaries in exchange for the academic and geographical environment that are the appeal of UO. A union would also ensure the rights of graduate students and staff whose voices are not usually heard by the administration. In an era in which civil rights are not guaranteed - are indeed topics for debate - we need unions to ensure that graduate students, professional staff, and faculty are all treated fairly. We can’t simply say that infringement of worker rights, ‘would never happen here,’ because it can and it may.”

Rose Reynolds
Institute for Ecology and Evolution

I support organizing a union because I believe in the academic mission of the university. I believe faculty at the UO should have an integral voice in decision-making that affects our lives as teachers, researchers and colleagues as well as the lives of students. As a non tenure-track professor, I also believe in a union as the most viable avenue to ensure that the least secure faculty at the university are also represented and given voice in decisions that affect our livelihoods and morale — salaries, security, class-size, respect and dignity.”

Jennifer Hehnke
Political Science

“As a Post-doc there is no mechanism for me to have a voice with regard to the system here at the University of Oregon. For example, upon receiving a national fellowship to support my work, I was taken ‘off payroll’ (yet I am still paid through payroll). As a result, I do not receive the standard suite of benefits I had when I was paid directly from my PI’s grants and the reduced benefits I do receive have to be paid out of pocket (though my generous PI reimburses me for these expenses). Thus the University has effectively punished me for obtaining outside funding to support my work here at UO. I support the union because collective bargaining with the University would give a voice to the post-doctoral community about employment issues here at the University of Oregon.”

Joshua Troll
Institute of Molecular Biology
“For the last seven-and-a-half years, I have enjoyed and been committed to my position as a non-tenured senior research assistant at the U of O. Most of our research staff play central leadership and management roles in outreach and research projects. Yet, because our positions are grant-funded, our FTE levels fluctuate with funding availability. When a grant project ends there is no guarantee that our positions will be secure until another begins. A union at U of O could bargain for designated university funding to carry grant-funded staff through such emergency periods, providing a level of security we don’t currently have, allowing us to plan for future projects more effectively, and enabling us to make long-term commitments to our areas of research and outreach. I’m also concerned with several recent cuts made to health benefits without faculty and staff input and with little notice. A union would enable us to actively participate in conversations and decisions about health benefits and other budget issues that are significant to our lives and work.”

Kristin Funk  
*Early Intervention Programs*

“A union at U of O could bargain for designated university funding to carry grant-funded staff through such emergency periods, providing a level of security we don’t currently have, allowing us to plan for future projects more effectively, and enabling us to make long-term commitments to our areas of research and outreach.

“I feel privileged to have the local work environment I do: a good boss, great colleagues and work that is extremely satisfying. A union seems fundamental to me, though, for two reasons: first, it provides a mechanism to address larger, structural issues at the University, from employee benefits and stable terms of work, to the burden of paperwork I have to complete. Second, with constantly receding funding from the State, and a general public that seems to view higher education with apathy and downright hostility, I seek a group to represent my voice at large to the political bodies and to the people of the state of Oregon directly.”

Julian Catchen  
*Institute for Ecology and Evolution*

“Teaching and research activities are not a monologue, but a dialogue among staff, students, faculty, administrators, and the larger community. When these activities become a monologue, it is the antithesis of teaching, disappearance of research, cessation of new knowledge, and demise of production itself. I support United Academics for active and collective dialogues between and among all members of the University of Oregon community.”

On-Ook Oh  
*Business Decision Sciences*
“Unionization will allow us to enhance faculty governance, to make our voices heard, and to defend our individual and collective rights. A faculty union will help the University of Oregon realize its academic mission with fairness, transparency, and accountability, and will make sure that it does so under the highest academic standards. The University of Oregon community at large — not just its faculty — will benefit tremendously from faculty unionization.”

Carlos Aguirre  
History

“I support our union as a good way to help the University of Oregon increase the well-below-average wages of all teaching and research faculty.”

Lara Bovilsy  
English

“University of Oregon faculty need a union. We must address inequities, create a fair process for resolving conflicts and win the right to bargain over our salary and benefit structure. It’s about democracy; and it’s the only effective way to make the changes we need to move our institution forward.”

Barbara Byrd  
Labor Education & Research Center

“Why do we need a union? I favor faculty collective bargaining at the University of Oregon as a means to restore faculty governance — absolutely critical in maintaining the quality of the university and fulfilling its teaching, research, and service mission. As higher education becomes increasingly corporatized, faculty have seen their voices diminished and their efforts to teach their students undermined. Collective bargaining offers a tool, not merely to reverse the disinvestment in higher education and to improve faculty working lives, but just as significantly to advocate effectively for our students and the university itself on a range of issues: insisting on smaller class sizes, better facilities, more library funding, or better financial support for graduate students.”

Matthew Dennis  
History
“As a graduate student at the U of O, I was a member of the GTFF and saw the difference that an active union can make in the lives of university employees. As an adjunct professor, I know that the quality of education can only be maintained if tenure track and non-tenure track professors have a voice in the operation of the university.”

Jared Davis-Haug  
Art

“I support a union because I believe in democracy. To me democracy means that we all have a say, and are involved in, the decisions that affect us all. A union is the only way that we can be sure that our voices are heard.”

Darrin Divers  
American English Institute

“I support building our faculty union at the University of Oregon because a collective bargaining agreement offers the opportunity for transparency as well as faculty input into decision-making. I believe our faculty union will help us collectively improve salaries, benefits, and job security.”

Misti Waddell  
Early Intervention Programs

“My sixteen years of teaching experience at the UO has taught me that NTTFs have little say about and even less leverage in matters of university policy. The pay for the majority of NTTFs lags well behind comparable institutions nationwide. This has been the case for years and the promised remedies appear as distant as ever. Why wouldn’t we vote for a union?”

Alex Dracobly  
History

“I am in favor of a union at the U of O because the majority of instructors in my department are adjunct and we don’t have a voice in terms of decisions that affect our working lives, such as financial equity, job security, or the number of in-class contact hours with students.”

Della Gilchrist  
American English Institute
“There is a clear relationship between the growth of unions and the growth of the middle class and an increase in people’s standard of living. While my position seems safe and my income and benefits, while not great, are sufficient, I strongly believe that we sink or swim together. Our country grew into a great country through people helping each other, and that is the mission of unions.”

Bruce Evans
American English Institute

“There is a strong tendency to superpose corporatist ideology on university government and education’s raison d’être. The appropriation of education by infallible corporatist seers has also made possible an unhealthy emphasis on material values in an area that has historically placed a stronger emphasis on ends rather than means. In this context education is visibly becoming more and more a tool in the hands of superindividualistic corporatism or materialistic-oriented attitudes and approaches, whose objective is not the examined life or the good life, but the goods’ life. In this perspective a university union should attempt to promote what essentially democracy attempts to promote: non-concentration of resources and decisional ability in the hands of the few (presidents, the administration, CEOs) and also a shift from temporary objectifying means to ends: from stuff to people, from matter to spirit — after all, if words still mean something, let’s not forget the University of Oregon’s motto: ‘Mens agitat molem.’ ”

Daniel Gheorghe
American English Institute

“Unions provide a strong independent voice in how the workplace operates. With all the changes happening in higher education and specifically at the UO these days, I think forming a union is the best way for faculty to protect and enhance both the quality of education we deliver as well as our own quality of life. As a non-tenure track faculty member, that sounds like a win-win to me.”

Lynn Feekin
Labor Education & Research Center

“Our faculty union at the UO will give us the much needed legal means for collective bargaining and will guarantee market-standard salaries for faculty and instructors as well as fair working conditions for all.”

Juan Epple
Romance Languages
“When talking about unionization with colleagues, the objection sometimes arises that our situation at the UO is pretty good when compared to many places in our nation where education is under assault — and I agree that it is. But it is not perfect, nor is the future guaranteed. That is precisely why I support a faculty union now: waiting to organize collective bargaining until a specific threat appears is akin to closing the stable door after the horses have bolted. As the University of Oregon grows and changes, it is essential that the faculty have a voice in its governance. Preserving the high-quality teaching and research that make a UO education so valuable to our students demands no less.”

Lindsay Braun
History

“I support the union because I don’t have time to do the research to find out how the university’s money is spent, and to plan strategies for how we can work to stop — and maybe reverse — the increasing bureaucratization of the university. I don’t agree with everything I have heard at the United Academics meetings, but without question the organization’s goals overlap with my own far more than not and they have been able to gather, analyze and present far more information than I had before those meetings. I am happy that I will soon have the option to join a faculty union that is able to give me information I need in order to let me participate in faculty governance more actively and at lower personal cost.”

Spike Gildea
Linguistics

“I support United Academics and the unionization effort because more than ever we need a united voice to face administrators, the legislature, and the governor. In the case of administrators, they may think they’re doing good by us, but the results are often not completely positive, such as the recent salary increases given to some, but not to all faculty. This was done in secrecy, and those of us who benefitted the most were not supposed to tell others about it. Obviously, something like this could not be kept secret, and it has become a terrible morale issue now. We also got a new plan from PEBB that includes various kinds of draconian features. In both cases, a strong and unified union would be a check on these kinds of arbitrary-seeming measures, done without any consultation with the majority of those affected by them. We need a voice, in other words, a strong, collective voice.”

Bob Haskett
History
I rely heavily on the retirement benefits and insurance benefits that we receive at the university, and I believe a union would help to maintain those benefits as well as ensure timely cost of living increases in pay.

“As a GTF, I always felt secure about the pay and benefits I would receive because I knew the GTFF (the union for the GTFs) was working hard negotiating with the University. They reminded the administration of how much student contact GTFs actually have and how vital it is to keep this group happy. Now, as a full-time faculty member, I find myself in a similar situation. I rely heavily on the retirement benefits and insurance benefits that we receive at the university, and I believe a union would help to maintain those benefits as well as ensure timely cost of living increases in pay.”

Nate Soelberg
American English Institute

“The University of Oregon, like universities around the country, is in the midst of profound changes, over which we have little control, that will affect every aspect of our lives and work. If we form a union, we will be in a position to shape that transformation.”

David Luebke
History

“I’m concerned about ballooning investment in non-faculty professionals like coaching staffs and managerial careerists, emphasis on sports over academics, and the omnipresence of corporate-modeled jargon concerning measurability, revenue streams, and mission statements. I hope that a union will bring greater transparency and faculty voice.”

Bryna Goodman
History

“I think a union would ensure that the faculty members working in our department would get a fair share of the revenues coming in from our constituents — international students. As our department is directly responsible for teaching students who bring in much needed cash to the university, I think it is only fair that the faculty members who teach them receive a portion of that to keep up with the cost of living and instructor performance increases. I also think a union would help instructors keep their benefits instead of letting them slowly deteriorate. Without a union, any part of our benefits package could be taken away at a whim. Finally, I think a union would give instructors more security. Instead of perpetually signing three month or six month contracts, a union could help instructors bargain for longer term contracts for those who prove themselves to be assets to the university.”

Ruka Ishihara
American English Institute
"When I was a student at the University of Texas, student government temporarily changed the university’s motto from ‘Enter to learn. Go forth to serve,’ to ‘Money talks.’ So do voices speaking in unison. In tough economic times when so many live in fear of losing their jobs or having to take on more work without extra compensation, we need a faculty union to make sure our voices are heard as loudly as those whose pockets are deep.”

Leigh Anne Jasheway-Bryant
Journalism and Communication

"On the one hand the employees at the university — classified staff, faculty, adjunct faculty, and administrators — are ultimately on the same team and working toward the same overall goal: to provide a quality education to students. On the other hand, there are times where policies and decisions that represent the perspective and interests of one party do not adequately take account of the needs of other parties. When an individual or small group speaks out against an action, it is easier for the concerns to be brushed aside or ignored all together. Our union will give faculty a stronger voice in decisions that affect our working conditions and the overall environment in which the mission of the university — education and research — occurs. It also puts a structure in place that can be used to resolve differences in opinion between groups of stakeholders rather than requiring groups to mobilize to have their voice heard or perspectives represented on a case-by-case basis.

The less time and energy faculty members have to spend resolving grievances, advocating for our needs or feeling disgruntled about our work environment, the more we will have available to do excellent research and provide high-quality education to students.”

Char Heitman
American English Institute

"I see three advantages to faculty collective bargaining at the University of Oregon — power, rights and resources. A collective bargaining contract will back up and supplement effective faculty governance that has been weakened by administrative action and inaction. Individual rights will advance when there’s a grievance procedure that gives organizational support to those faced with inequities and mistreatment. Working together with faculties at other organized campuses and with public and private employees around the state will help us combat the disinvestment in public higher education and the trend toward privatization. I’m convinced that unionization will benefit not just the members of the bargaining unit but the educational mission of the University of Oregon.”

Daniel Pope
History
Academia is under attack across the country — under pressure to act more like a corporation, with every department constantly pushed to maximize revenues. In this context, faculty are the most important constituency on campus dedicated not only to our own economic interests, but to the values of small class sizes, face-to-face education and individual mentorship, quality research, and academic freedom. We need a voice that’s more powerful than a student council.

Gordon Lafer  
Labor Education & Research Center

A union would serve to help keep worthy instructors here at the UO. If you guarantee better pay and benefits for instructors, the pool will become more competitive, better qualified and more motivated. Keeping the status quo is detrimental to the instruction the UO claims is its top priority.

Marc Zollinger  
Romance Languages

I am one of the NTTF adjunct instructors who constitute the majority of faculty at the American English Institute’s Intensive English Program. Full-time NTTF adjunct instructors carry a teaching load of 18 classroom hours per week. In addition we participate in student orientation, registration and testing, attend staff meetings, make curriculum decisions, select and create course materials, work with Linguistics Department students in their observations of classes, and attend professional development conferences and workshops whenever possible. In short, we are full-time professionals who contribute more to the AEI program than our ‘adjunct’ status implies. Yet, according to the AEI’s Faculty Handbook (p. 9), adjunct instructors are not eligible: for promotion; for the regular faculty salary increase; for timely notice; or to participate in university governance. The NTTF adjunct faculty need a union to address these inequities, so that we may attain fair salaries that reflect our contributions and that include increases, reasonable job security, and a voice in decisions that affect our future.

Grace Richards  
American English Institute

As a non-tenure track instructor, I am a strong supporter of having union representation here at the University of Oregon. United Academics would provide faculty the opportunity to have a voice in decisions that impact our future and that of our families.

Karen Ulloa  
American English Institute
“Adjuncts have no rights, no security and no protection. Even the GTF’s have a better compensation package than the adjunct professors. Any adjunct that thinks their job is secure is seriously mistaken; unionization is their only hope for sensible employment. I see the fear and anxiousness in my fellow employees’ faces and conversations. I would strongly urge them to support unionization and take an active role in supporting a union. Adjuncts need to have security and clearly defined rules, an equitable compensation package and to have a voice without fear of retribution. Only unionization will accomplish this.”

John McBride
American English Institute

“American universities have undergone historic structural changes in the last decade or so, rendering faculty comparatively weaker in terms of security, benefits, salary, academic freedom, and voice in university administration. Forming a union is by far the best thing we can do to stave off more changes and perhaps begin to reverse them. None of us can do this alone.”

Joseph Lowndes
Political Science

“I support building a faculty union with my colleagues at the University of Oregon because if we wait until we are faced with a crisis to organize, it will be too late. Moreover, as a father of two I know how important it is for parents to be with their babies during the first months of life, and I believe that a union can help us negotiate better conditions for parental leave.”

Max Bezada
Geological Sciences

“We should be rushing to get this done. Clearly we will have a stronger, more informed faculty presence in university matters, if we work through a union process. I too am guilty of letting involvement slide while other demands press and other colleagues do the work that will eventually benefit us all. I can only stress that we all try to do something, no matter how much, to make this campaign a success.

Roxann Prazniak
Honors College
“I am a strong supporter of United Academics because I believe collective bargaining is the only way faculty at the U of O can ensure they have a meaningful voice as the structure of the University evolves. Strong faculty governance is crucial, but we need more than that in this era of fiscal austerity. We need the right to negotiate a labor contract, and we need the reciprocal responsibility on the part of University management. Only a labor union can provide that. It is something that can enhance our status as scholars and as teachers.”

Marcus Widenor
Labor Education & Research Center

“All of the people who devote their time and energy to provide an inclusive and stimulating learning environment here at the University of Oregon should have representation in the form of a union. Graduate students and classified staff do. It is past time for faculty to have it as well.”

Mary Baxter
Geological Sciences

“The goal of unionizing the University of Oregon is more than an idea to me. It is a way to examine our priorities, ensure and enhance the stability of our intellectual community through shared governance and unify the voice of the broad array of departments toward our collective vision. Each organizing meeting has shown how vital this need is and how ready we are to move forward to achieve this together.”

Juanita Devereaux
Romance Languages

“I have been an instructor for many years in the Romance Languages department and I believe we should have a union at the UO for multiple reasons. For non-tenure track faculty, our union would give us a voice as well as create better job security (e.g. ending term-by-term contracts) and establish a system of seniority by recognizing expertise and experience. It would also create levels of promotion, allow us to negotiate fair pay and reasonable work conditions, and increase the status of non-tenure track faculty.”

Hilary Fisher
Romance Languages

[Our union] is a way to examine our priorities, ensure and enhance the stability of our intellectual community through shared governance and unify the voice of the broad array of departments toward our collective vision.
“I have supported unionization at the UO for a long time because of the lack of transparency and accountability that has been demonstrated time and again by our administration, and the absence of power on the part of the faculty that is necessary to have an effect on university policies. Indeed, now that we are witnessing a dramatic shift in public opinion against public employees in this country, I believe the time to unionize is now. A union will provide the UO faculty with a unified voice and a mechanism whereby our needs and our vision for the future can no longer be ignored.”

Judith Kenner
Psychology

“I support collective bargaining at the University of Oregon because our union will give us a stronger voice in negotiating salary, benefits, and working conditions and because it will represent in a flexible and collaborative manner the varied interests of our members.”

Susan Anderson
German and Scandinavian

“I feel a union is necessary at the U of O because the wages that adjunct PE instructors are paid are ridiculously low. We often have 40 students per class, so we are bringing in a great deal of money, but not being paid nearly enough for what we bring to these classes. Additionally, we are not paid for the extra time we spend preparing our classes or the extra time we spend with our students.”

Viriam K. Khalsa
Physical Education and Recreation

“I am a non-tenure track senior instructor. Because I am lucky enough to work in a department where I am appreciated and supported by my colleagues and director, I don’t receive lesser treatment because of my status. That may not be the case for other non-tenure track instructors. I believe that a union contract is the effective vehicle to promote fair and equitable treatment, and I support United Academics for that reason.”

Helen Moss
Labor Education & Research Center

“A union provides an excellent opportunity to reflect the faculty voice more objectively, accurately and directly.”

Yi-Yuan Tang
Psychology

Indeed, now that we are witnessing a dramatic shift in public opinion against public employees in this country, I believe the time to unionize is now.
I have seen first-hand the great benefit to workers brought by union membership - a sense of democracy and justice in the workplace, and more specifically better pay and benefits than would otherwise be possible.

“I was a member of United Food and Commercial Workers for almost 20 years, and a member of the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation for over five years. I have seen first-hand the great benefit to workers brought by union membership - a sense of democracy and justice in the workplace, and more specifically better pay and benefits than would otherwise be possible. Therefore, I fully support the faculty/unclassified staff union organizing effort here at the University of Oregon.”

James Palandri
Geological Sciences

“I believe it is essential for faculty at the University of Oregon to form a union because it is the most viable way to protect and improve salaries and benefits, as well as maintain a healthy work environment on our campus. In the current economic and political climate, we are vulnerable without a collective voice that will be heard both locally and state-wide. It is time to work together to create a faculty union through which we can positively influence the University of Oregon experience for students and faculty alike.”

Kelley Leon Howarth
Romance Languages

“I support building a faculty union at the University of Oregon because such a union will protect the rights and responsibilities of its members, as public employees, better than individuals can on their own. I believe an organized union will more effectively protect the public’s invested educational interests and fulfill the educational goals of the University of Oregon Board of Trustees.”

Noah Marchal
Psychology

“I have been employed as a lab technician with the University of Oregon for just over 6 years. Throughout the years I have seen many individuals lose their jobs due to a lack of funding in their perspective lab. I support unionization in hopes that if I am put in this position in the future there may be a better plan in place.”

Tiffany Kroeger
Institute of Molecular Biology
“**I support a union** because it will create better representation for all faculty, and especially instructors, in shared bargaining, decision making and governance of the University. We need employment policies that are fair, consistent and transparent.”

_Shelley Merello_  
_Romance Languages_

“**Everyone is concerned about compensation issues** — salary, health insurance, retirement — but that’s not the only thing a union can improve for us. I’m very invested in the shared governance of the university, and collective bargaining can strengthen the faculty role. The faculty are part of the long-term identity of the UO, yet we have less and less voice in the decisions that affect the whole institution, such as how much of our budget actually goes to instruction — which is the mission of the institution. You often hear us called the academic side of the university. I disagree: we’re the academic core. Without a union, we have made no headway in restoring that mission, and the faculty, as the academic core.

I am also concerned about increasing our enrollment from 16,000 students in 1989 to 23,389 in 2011, without allocating the resources for any real increase in tenure-line faculty. Consequently, we have more non-tenure-track colleagues who don’t have the same salary scale, job security, due process protections, and working conditions. A union can bargain for more tenure-track opportunities for these colleagues, along with less exploitation of those in non-tenure-track positions.”

_Regina Psaki_  
_Romance Languages_

“**As a soon-to-be-retired professor and former dean,** I am active with the unionizing effort at the UO because I would like to leave this university a stronger place than when I entered it twenty years ago. I have seen what a struggle it is, even at the level of middle-administration, to achieve adequate compensation at all levels, good working conditions, and equitable contracts, despite the best of intentions. Both the administration and the state legislature would be more responsive to the faculty speaking with one voice than with the individual pleading or general whining that is now the custom. We need transparency, negotiating power, and the sense of empowerment that comes with unionization.

_Anne Dhu McLucas_  
_Music_

I’m very invested in the shared governance of the university, and collective bargaining can strengthen the faculty role.
“I graduated from the University of Oregon in 1991 and joined the faculty in 2002. I am deeply committed to this university and I am concerned that the academic experience of students is currently on the chopping block as a result of misplaced priorities. I have seen instructional faculty members increasingly overburdened with ballooning class sizes, subpar facilities (particularly offices and classrooms), and growing workloads. At the same time, our compensation stagnates and our benefits get the nip and tuck. Who pays the greatest price for this transformation in faculty working conditions? I feel that even as students are being asked to pay higher tuition, they are in danger of losing out on the quality academic experience they have a right to expect from Oregon’s flagship university. A union of academics across faculty ranks can work more effectively with the administration to fulfill the university’s noble mission to uphold the highest standards of academic inquiry, learning and service than any of us could hope to achieve individually.”

Analisa Taylor
Romance Languages

“Unions allow the disparate to speak with one voice; they are a framework for working people to act together to improve their jobs. I support forming a unified faculty union because I believe it will improve working conditions, protect faculty, and provide more skilled teachers for our students.”

Graham Kroese
Physical Education and Recreation

“You can put my name on a list of supporters. No matter what I always believe that collective bargaining is good for the people.”

Sarah Pedersen
Ed IVDB Administration

“I support the efforts to organize a faculty union because I believe that professors at all levels deserve more support for the work they do. Non-tenured faculty members must endure unstable year-to-year contracts with minimal compensation. And even tenured and tenure-track professors at the UO are paid far less than their colleagues at comparable schools. A union would give them a stronger voice. If the university offers more support to its faculty, it will be able to recruit and retain the top-caliber teachers and researchers it needs to thrive.”

Stephen Rodgers
Music
“Since fall 2005, I have held a career non-tenure track position at the rank of Instructor. I completed a Ph.D. from one of the most reputable universities in the country and am very active with research, guest lecturing, consultations, and publications. The budget and teaching load I would have in a tenure-track position would allow me to devote more time and funds to my research. I support an academic union at the UO as it may help me to achieve this goal, which would in turn benefit students and enable me to further contribute to my profession.”

Tim Pack
Music

“I have many reasons for strongly supporting a faculty union at UO. Among these are that ALL of us who are responsible for carrying out the critical teaching mission of the University will be included in the union. Also, I know that the job benefits I enjoy as a faculty member are as good as they are because of the hard work of public sector unions in Oregon. I want to see UO faculty contribute to these efforts in the future, not just continue as free riders. Finally, I’ve lived in Oregon since 1989 and I also know I have public sector unions to thank for the FAILURE of any number of state-wide ballot initiatives targeting LGBTQ people and promoting a more regressive tax system, as well as for the SUCCESS of other initiatives that expand human rights and further justice and equality in the state. As a union member I would be doing more to support the latter sorts of efforts.”

Linda Fuller
Women's and Gender Studies

“A union for UO faculty is long overdue. With the state’s continued divestment in higher education, a means for a consolidated voice is of increasing importance. If the goal is indeed education, then who would oppose the creation of a union, giving voice to those who actually teach the next generation? If the UO is to compete at the highest level for education, it must also maintain quality faculty with competitive salaries. I support the creation of a union to allow us all to be a part of the solution.”

Lorri Nelson
Landscape Architecture

“It is merely the assumption of a basic responsibility of individuals to seek meaningful participation in the direction of the institutions which facilitate, limit, condition, and extend their actions as individuals. I am convinced that participation by faculty in the direction of the university will be most meaningful, however, not by individual action, but through the collective voice and independent agency that a union would provide. Conceived of in this way, a union is simply a means to a greater capacity to direct one’s own actions, and to the ethical self possession, that is the dignity, which such a capacity affords.”

Steven Brence
Philosophy
"I support creating our faculty union because it will give us a stronger voice in fulfilling the educational mission of the UO and improving the quality of student education here. Although there has been real success to enhance selected aspects of our university, overall, it seems as though the UO is drifting away from its core educational values of instruction and research. Now, compared to universities of similar caliber, support for student education has decreased, faculty salaries are dismal, and the strong tradition and academic reputation of the UO is in decline. By working together to build our union, faculty who are concerned about the future of this place will have more power to help improve conditions for our students and teachers.

Creating a union of concerned faculty will also give us greater ability to defend our university against the organized assaults on education and public employees. It will give faculty an increased role in making the UO a better place for students and teachers, which will benefit the entire state of Oregon.

Dan Wojcik
English

"I have been at the U of O for 10 years and have seen the structure of the University become modeled more and more like a business corporation. While this is not to my liking, it is a fact. Understanding this, I believe that it is imperative for teachers and researchers here to organize into a coherent structure that can negotiate with the Administration. I support a faculty Union as the structure of choice because unionization increases our chances of effectively addressing the following University-wide concerns: the need for more assertive faculty governance, protection against further cuts in our benefits, the provision of added security for our non-tenured colleagues, and the imperative for improving the quality of education. In the last few years I have witnessed closed searches for high-ranking administrative positions, an increase in class size, and some rather questionable decisions that I feel have moved us from what should be the core mission of a public research institution. I believe that we need to organize and provide the Administration with a coherent faculty partner so that we can address these issues. I believe that those of us who have tenure need to stand in solidarity with our colleagues who do not. As it stands right now, I feel that we are governed largely from the top down and fall prey to a host of decisions made without our participation. I believe that the time for a Union is now."

Michael Stern
German and Scandinavian

"I support a union of UO faculty because we need to stand in solidarity with fellow union workers across the state and the country. As individuals we have limited power to effect change — not only in our workplace but in broader public arenas. Without grouping together to make positive changes, our voices get drowned out. It’s too important to too many people for us to stand by; we need to bring the collective power of faculty to bear on critical issues— not just at the UO and in Oregon but across the country."

Josh Razink
CAMCOR
“This will be my 50th year in the Architecture program; I am probably the longest term Adjunct Associate Professor the University of Oregon has ever had. It has become difficult working for a professional school, university and department that administers and treats the long and short-term adjuncts as unethically and unprofessionally as the University of Oregon. A union for the adjuncts and tenured faculty is desperately needed and will be the only vehicle for adequate recognition, compensation and possible advancement for those who want to continue in the Architecture program and at the UO.

The School depends on adjunct instructors as a way to meet their budgets and accreditation. They invite adjuncts as ‘giving back’ or remind them what an ‘honor’ it is to be asked or selected to teach, instead of offering fair compensation for their work. I strongly support a faculty union that will represent the adjuncts and the tenured faculty. The future and strength of the Architecture program and the University depends on faculty being appreciated for what each brings to the programs and students, and on the ethical treatment of all faculty — who provide strength to each of the UO’s academic programs.”

Otto Poticha
Architecture

“I support a union for three main reasons. First, it’s about basic fairness and democracy: bringing more democracy to workplaces and giving workers a meaningful voice in determining wages, benefits, and working conditions leads to a better quality of life for all involved. Second, it’s about promoting greater equality and respect within workplaces and in our larger society. Vigorous engagement by unions has brought us progressive reforms over the decades — from the 40-hour week, to employer sponsored health insurance and pensions, to laws and policies supporting racial, gender, and sexual diversity as well as family medical leave, workplace safety, etc. Third, public sector unions in Oregon and scores of other states have been a key force defending vital social programs and public policies at the state and national level — including K-16 education funding, Medicare, Social Security, investment in public infrastructure, civil rights laws and tax fairness. As University faculty, a union would allow us to be effective participants in such critical and timely efforts.”

Greg McLauchlan
Sociology

“I support a faculty union because it will help create a workplace in which all people are treated fairly. A union will promote employment policies that are transparent, consistent, and uniformly applied.”

Jean Stockard
Planning, Public Policy and Management – Emerita

… it’s about basic fairness and democracy: bringing more democracy to workplaces and giving workers a meaningful voice in determining wages, benefits, and working conditions leads to a better quality of life for all involved.
“Here are a few reasons why I have come to believe that a faculty union is a needed new institution at the U. of O. In Architecture and Allied Arts for example, adjunct practicing professionals continue to be woefully — and unethically — underpaid and excluded from benefits. They have no representation or recourse. And this is an old story for the dedicated core of part-timers who teach the many freshman English and composition classes. As budgets have tightened, the adjunct situation across campus has become more and more acute. More generally, the decline of state support has led to a whole new corporate administrative culture on campus. And this rise of professional university management has created a widening gap between faculty and administration and a serious decline in faculty influence over university decisions. A faculty union, one that includes department heads because they are drawn from and eventually return to the teaching faculty, has become necessary in order to represent and protect faculty interests.”

Jerry Diethelm
Landscape Architecture — Emeritus

“I support unions, and a faculty union at the University of Oregon, in order to enhance workplace democracy. We live in a political democracy, but most workers check their constitutional rights at the door of the workplace. Unions give employees an authentic voice in the affairs of the organization, and this is true for universities as well as other types of organizations. Faculty have enjoyed some aspects of self-governance, but we need a stronger collective voice and more transparency. Universities are changing, and we must ensure active faculty participation in our future.”

Margaret Hallock
Labor Education and Research Center — Emerita

“I wrote the following statement in 1976, during an AAUP organizing campaign, and I continue to support collective bargaining for faculty at the University of Oregon.

‘As resources get scarcer, consensus becomes harder and harder to reach. As a result, the decision becomes more and more formalized and centralized. Many authorities seem to think that collective bargaining cannot help but hasten the formalization, which will probably come anyway. But bargaining can help lessen the centralization, and keep the faculty with a strong voice in the decision-making at a large institution with limited resources and many conflicting demands on these resources.’”

Robert Mazo
Chemistry — Emeritus

Unions give employees an authentic voice in the affairs of the organization, and this is true for universities as well as other types of organizations.
“Having worked at this university and OSU for thirty-five years, I have watched a steady decline in respect for teaching faculty and the real work of educating students. My experience spans some interesting history. Now a Professor Emerita, I began as an Instructor with a new Ph.D. and spent eleven years in that precarious situation where one could be summarily dismissed without cause (which happened to me at one point), and where one could do exactly the same teaching and research as a tenure-track person but receive only a fraction of the salary. Even during those years, at the UO we had a President who had risen from the ranks of regular faculty and whose door was always open to talk with all teaching faculty. University governance happened in regular Assembly meetings of the entire faculty, led by the President. Once I entered the tenured ranks, I watched with dismay as higher administration withdrew step by step from close collaboration with and respect for the faculty. Administrative population increased and increased, so that for example, the CAS Dean’s Office grew from one Dean and several secretaries to a Dean and three Associate Deans plus a Development staff. Administrative salaries increased steadily out of proportion to faculty salaries. More and more adjunct faculty replaced tenure-track faculty as student numbers grew. Back in the 1980s Bart Giamatti, then President of Yale, came to deliver the Commencement Address and warned us of the threat of corporatization in higher education. Apparently nobody took him very seriously, or alternatively, the process already had such momentum that it could not be stopped. In any case, we are increasingly where Giamatti feared we were heading. Faculty are regarded simply as workers whose “productivity” is seen in industrial terms, and we are all supposed to be “entrepreneurial,” as one hears regularly in university committee meetings. As in the corporate world, CEO and other managerial staff receive huge salaries, while lower echelons chug along more or less as always. The public is increasingly jealous of our benefit packages, and some political forces wish to reduce them significantly. Teachers are becoming scapegoats for society’s ills.

In the old days, I used to feel that the university community was more or less collegial and that the decency of the institution’s culture meant that we could trust each other and resolve problems in Assembly meetings where we all had a vote. Changes in institutional culture and life over the past few decades convince me that we now need unionization.”

Louise Westling

English — Emerita

“Unions allow even the most gentle voices to be heard. It is a time when we need that type of representation. That is why I support organizing our union with AFT-AAUP.”

Michael Posner

Psychology — Emeritus