

# Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate

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Testimony to the Oregon Joint Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Education  
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By

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## *Shared Opportunity for Oregon Students*

As Oregon tightens its belt, turns its head down, and braves through this budget storm the Oregon University System is getting creative with keeping Oregonians at home and working hard to assist in directing students' educational needs and dreams. The current economic crisis has more eager learners turning to universities for answers. As enrollments increase, capacity issues are still a reality. The University of Oregon and Southern Oregon University have created a partnership to keep UO students on course as they start their education at Southern Oregon University (dual enrolled at both institutions) and two years later complete their degrees at UO. Known to those who have the vocabulary as "Systems Enrollment Management" the partnership allows for Oregon to serve more students and fill campuses that have the capacity to grow.

Students who arrive at SOU under this UO umbrella will have the opportunity to participate in University Seminar and University Studies at SOU. University Seminar is the freshmen experience that immerses first year students deep into subject matter as the curriculum integrates the process of writing, communication, and critical thinking into a content area of choice. The University Studies portion of the SOU experience guides the student into the liberal arts education while focused on prophecies shared by the American Association of Colleges and Universities as being Best Practices in learning for higher education.

It is a shared belief by both universities that not all students that enter SOU as UO students will leave to complete their studies in Eugene. Think back to the course that made you realize what you wanted your major to be...this usually happens within the first two years of college. Although SOU does not have the number of degree offerings that UO does, the smaller class size and teacher centered program offerings is a wonderful experience for students who do well in this type of learning environment.

The reputation of the University of Oregon as an AAU Institution and as a tier one research institution will attract many students back to their campus to study with professors who have strong endorsements and acknowledgement in their field of expertise. The admission standards for UO remain the same. Students going to SOU as prospective UO campus students are held to the same standards as the Ducks to the north. And the UO will ensure they are kept in contact with their future alma mater.

Regretfully, both schools are expecting to significantly increase tuition and please note that this effort to share students is not a budgetary item to save money. Rather, it is truly a creative way under the auspices of the OUS system to start an admission sharing process that is expected to carry over to other campuses. Serving students and educating our citizenry in Oregon is within the mission of every campus in the system.

A highly educated populace is essential to the future of Oregon. The Oregon University System is truly a System – and the “Systems Enrollment Management” described above is an example of this – it is a partnership between two public Universities in the state of Oregon that will enable more Oregonians to obtain a quality higher education. We know these are difficult economic times and there are many calls upon the limited resources of our state. Still, Higher Education is one of the few “positive sum games” available – where the monetary return to the State over the long run far exceeds the monetary input.

The Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate reports to the Faculty Senates of the OUS Universities and represents the faculty of the OUS System. In our role as the immediate past president and as the current president of the IFS, we respectfully urge you to fund the Oregon University System to the greatest extent possible. The future of Oregon is at stake.

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20 April 2009

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