

Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate

Members of the State Board of Higher Education

2 October 2009

My name is Peter B Gilkey. I am President of the InterInstitutional Faculty Senate for 2009 and a Professor of Mathematics at the University of Oregon. As always, it is an honor and a pleasure to address you.

Classes started on our campuses this week. During the summer many members of the faculty spend time away from their Universities working on their research projects, preparing their classes for the forthcoming year, and other similar tasks – often on an unpaid basis. But it does mean that the pace of academic life for the faculty transpires at a less rapid rate than when the University is in regular session. For that reason, I will forgo my usual summary of campus activities across the OUS system. Instead, I will simply raise with you 4 related topics that are of concern to many in the OUS system and which I wanted to be sure are on your radar screen as well:

1. Furloughs
2. Financial stability for the long term – University budgets and implications
3. Changes to the Health Insurance
4. Steps taken to deal with a possible H1N1 (“swine flu”) epidemic.

All indications are that communication on these issues is proceeding extremely well on our respective campuses. For example, to list just 3 exemplars (and I could list many more)

1. Emails at OIT explain the wide temporary salary reductions.
2. The OSU Senate has held meetings concerning the changes to the Health Insurance.
3. The UO has provided information about how to deal with H1N1 on the UO Campus.

As Benjamin Franklin put it: “We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately” -- Accurate and consistent communication is central to getting through these difficult times. But for now, the weather is, for the most part, lovely, and I look forward to my teaching duties this Fall -- my classes are full and the students seem well prepared.

Respectfully submitted

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President (2009) InterInstitutional Faculty Senate