

Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate

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Handbook

Mission Statement

The Faculty Senate of Oregon State University, within the framework of legislation providing for Land-Grant Institutions and the Oregon State System of Higher Education, on behalf of the Faculty: determines and establishes the purposes of Oregon State University, formulates and evaluates policies and activities in harmony with these purposes; assumes responsibility for the creation, maintenance, and protection of a University environment conducive to the full and free development and preservation of scholarly learning, teaching and research; and provides the means by which the administration may be apprised of representative opinion of the entire Faculty.

The Faculty Senate has legislative responsibility with respect to academic policies, educational standards, curricula, and academic regulations; studies and prepares recommendations to the President of Oregon State University concerning the welfare of the Faculty; provides means through which any matter of general interest to the Faculty or pertaining to the institution and its purpose may be brought to the Faculty Senate for discussion and appropriate action. The mission of the Faculty Senate also is carried out through a number of committees and councils that report to the Senate.

The Faculty Senate is the representative of the entire Faculty of Oregon State University and has both the authority and responsibility to act for and on behalf of the Faculty in all matters stated above.

From Oregon State University Bylaws of the Faculty Senate

Statement of Vision

The vision for the Oregon State University Faculty Senate continues to be one of providing safeguards for faculty in the areas of academic freedom; to ensure that faculty have a role in providing input in program development, reduction or redirection; to continue to strive for shared governance in the areas that directly affect faculty; and to continue to provide formal recommendations on areas that affect faculty. It is the vision of the leaders of this organization that the Senate will continue to be involved with substantial issues that are of concern to Oregon State and its faculty and that through continued participation, members of the Faculty will become involved in the important issues that face higher education.

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Faculty Senate

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General Information Regarding the Faculty Senate and Your Responsibilities as a Senator

We are very pleased to welcome you to the Faculty Senate, and look forward to working with you and the other new Senators. The purpose of this document and the references to other important data is to provide some general information about the Senate and instructions that may assist you in carrying out your responsibilities as a Senator.

1. Responsibilities of Senators

A copy of the current [Faculty Senate Bylaws](#) are available on the web. Your attention is called to Article II, which defines the "OBJECTS" or purpose of the Faculty Senate. We suggest that you also note Article III, which defines the authority and responsibilities of the representatives. It is important to note that "representatives to the Faculty Senate are the 'uninstructed representatives' of their constituents," but that "it shall be the responsibility of the members of the Faculty Senate to seek for the opinions of their constituents. Having exercised such responsibility, the members of the Faculty Senate shall feel free to make such decisions and vote on matters according to their own reasoned judgments."

To assist Senators in communicating with their constituents and in seeking their opinions, Article XV, Sec. 4 of the Bylaws recommends that Senators be given the use of departmental or college/unit meetings or facilities. You may request assistance from your apportionment head's office in preparing and mailing communications to your colleagues. You may also request time at departmental/unit meetings to report/discuss Senate related business with your constituents.

According to the Senate Bylaws (Article X, Sec. 2, Paragraph 4), "It shall be the responsibility of all members to attend meetings of the Faculty Senate. When circumstances require the absence of a Senator from one or more meetings, it shall be the Senator's responsibility to provide a substitute to attend who is eligible for election to the Faculty Senate (from the Senator's constituency but is not a current Senator or ex-officio member.)" Such eligibility is defined in Article III, Sec. 1. If it becomes necessary to send a proxy (substitute), it shall be the responsibility of the elected Senator to provide the proxy with the distributed materials related to the meeting agenda and to instruct the proxy to sign the attendance roster. The names of elected Senators will be printed on the attendance roster in alpha order within apportionment unit; proxies should be instructed to place a check mark in the parentheses preceding the printed name of the absent Senator and **print, legibly**, his/her name in the space following the printed name. Attendance records are published [online](#) following each Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Senate Office can assist you in determining eligible substitutes.

2. Faculty Senate Committees and Councils

Most of the work of the Senate is done by its committees and councils. Article IX of the Senate Bylaws lists the present standing committees and councils and includes general provisions for terms and appointment of members and for review and approval of Standing Rules for each of the [committees and councils](#). The full Standing Rules and Membership Rosters are also available on the web.

3. Forthcoming Meetings of the Faculty Senate

First Regular Meeting: Thursday, January 9, 2014; 3:00 PM, LaSells Stewart Center Construction and Engineering Hall

Subsequent Meetings: Generally, the second Thursday of each month, October through June, 3:00 PM, normally in the LaSells Stewart Center

For the remainder of 2014, the regular monthly meetings are scheduled for February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8, June 12, October 9, November 13, and December 11. Because of the heavy load of agenda items during Spring Term, there is always the possibility of a meeting being carried over to the

following week if there is insufficient time to conduct all business before the Senate. The Senate has, in the past, adopted a policy of not beginning any new business after 5:00 PM, and has, therefore, had to carry over part of the agenda to the following Thursday. However, upon occasion, when the agenda could be completed by 5:30, the Senate has elected to remain to finish its business, in order to avoid having to call a continued meeting. Senators are expected to remain until the meeting is adjourned.

4. Other Special Senate Meetings

Special meetings may be called and announced in accordance with the provisions of the Bylaws (Article X, Sec. 2). Normally, the Senate does not meet during the summer months; rather, the Executive Committee acts on behalf of the Senate. If urgent matters need attention, a special Senate meeting may be called during the summer (last done in 2009).

5. Agendas for Faculty Senate Meetings

According to the Bylaws, the Executive Committee has the responsibility of scheduling the Senate meetings and determining the agenda. All Senators or other members of the Faculty are invited and encouraged to propose or submit agenda items either directly to the Executive Committee or to the appropriate Senate committee or council. Senators may also suggest potential agenda items from the floor during meetings (see Article XIII of the Bylaws).

You will receive, via e-mail, the Faculty Senate agenda, listing additional details about the coming meeting, including linked copies of appropriate reports related to the agenda. Please check your copy of the agenda to confirm the time and place of each meeting.

* * * * *

Other general information or instructions will be presented as needed. We encourage you to study the Bylaws with care and to raise any questions you might have regarding the Senate and its operation or procedures. If at any time you have questions or need information, please feel free to consult directly with any member of the Executive Committee or contact the [Faculty Senate Office](#).

We welcome you as a newly-elected member of the Faculty Senate and look forward to working with you in this important endeavor. We have a great deal of work ahead and hope you will find your term in the Senate stimulating, challenging, and rewarding.

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To be effective as a Senator, it is important that you understand the procedures and customs of the Faculty Senate at Oregon State. Here are a few things that you might keep in mind as you begin your term as a Faculty Senator:

1) Meeting Minutes –

The meeting minutes serve as the official record of Faculty Senate business. Thus, it is important that they accurately reflect what transpires at each Faculty Senate meeting. The minutes are transcribed from a tape recording of the meetings. To ensure that your participation in the meeting is fully documented, please identify yourself and your college or apportionment unit affiliation (not departmental affiliation) when rising to speak at a meeting. This will allow us to identify participants in the official record of the meeting.

When you receive your copy of the previous meetings' minutes, please review it carefully. If you find an error, contact the Faculty Senate Office or note the error when the minutes are presented for approval at the next Faculty Senate meeting. If you wish to review past meeting minutes, they are on file at the Faculty Senate Office; feel free to call or stop in to utilize the file. [Minutes](#) dating back to January 1997 are also available on the web.

2) Meetings –

As you know, the meetings are traditionally held the second Thursday of each month from 3:00-5:00 in the afternoon, October through June. Occasionally we will vary from this schedule, so it is important that you check your agenda when you receive it to confirm the time and location of the meeting. The meetings are typically held at the LaSells Stewart Center Construction and Engineering Hall. But, again, from time to time we are forced to meet at another location. If we must vary from our traditional schedule or location, this will be clearly noted at the top of your agenda.

In effect, three types of activities occur at each meeting: Information is provided through reports from various on and off campus individuals or committees; Issues of concern to the faculty and the university community as a whole are discussed; and Action is taken on items which require approval, consent, or recommendation from the full Faculty Senate.

3) Meeting Agenda and Senate Action –

The agenda for each meeting is set by the Executive Committee about one week prior to each monthly meeting. The agenda is circulated in advance to each Faculty Senate member. Individual Faculty Senate members can request, up to three weeks prior to the meeting, that an item be addressed at a meeting by requesting that the Executive Committee place it on the agenda. This normally gives the Executive Committee time to provide any desirable clarification and allows members of the Senate to have a chance to fully consider it prior to the meeting. A Senator may also initiate an item for the agenda through the appropriate Faculty Senate standing committee/council. The committee/council will then forward the item to the Executive Committee to be placed on the agenda at the first available time. Initiatives for the Faculty Senate also originate with the Executive Committee itself. The Executive Committee may refer an item to a standing committee for clarification or input prior to including it on a meeting agenda. Finally, Faculty Senate committees may, themselves, initiate agenda items.

Often the Senate is asked to respond to requests, initiatives, or action by the University

administration. Every effort will be made to provide Faculty Senators with the maximum amount of time to reflect on or study the issues brought to us by the administration. Finally, there are some routine or regular items which the Faculty Senate must respond to according to the Bylaws. Thus, certain meetings will have action items which must be attended to so that other Faculty Senate business can proceed.

Once you review the agenda material if, in your judgement, an action item requires an amendment or some other alteration, please come to the meeting prepared to provide a clear explanation of the change you deem desirable. For instance, if it is your intention to amend an action item, it is helpful if you can duplicate your amendment for circulation prior to the meeting or at the time of the discussion.

Most business is brought to the Senate via the meeting agenda. However, on occasion a Senator may wish to introduce an action item via a motion under New Business. If you choose to do so, we strongly recommend that you have your motion well prepared and duplicated for circulation at the meeting and for inclusion in the minutes.

4) Communication with Administrators –

From time to time, members of the Faculty or Faculty Senators wish to communicate a concern to an administrator or to the administration in general while maintaining anonymity. If you have a concern, a complaint, or an inquiry with a particular administrator or with the administration of the University which you would like to have handled through the Faculty Senate Office, please contact the Faculty Senate President, President-Elect, a member of the Executive Committee, or the Faculty Senate Office itself. We will attempt to handle your communication or concern and respond back to you in the most efficient and effective manner.

As a Faculty Senator, you represent colleagues in your apportionment unit in the important matters of faculty governance. It is essential, then, that you participate in the Faculty Senate, or provide a representative in your absence, and are proactive on issues which are important to you, your colleagues, and the faculty as a whole. The policies, procedures and customs of the Senate are in place to maximize the impact of your participation as a Senator. They should not inhibit your effectiveness as a participant in Faculty Senate decisions and Faculty Senate policy. If, at any time, you have a concern about the conduct of Faculty Senate meetings, or the activities of its members, you are invited to discuss your concerns with the President, the President-Elect, or members of the Executive Committee.

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Handbook

HOW THE SENATE FUNCTIONS

Role of the President

Presiding Officer
 Information Source
 Link with the Administration
 General Custodian of Faculty Interests

Role of the Committees and Councils (Standing and Special)

Provide reports for Senate agenda

Reports should cover:

1. Charge to committee/how committee generated task
2. Report of data collected
3. Findings/conclusions drawn
4. Recommendations/resolutions
 - Senate usually considers for adoption only recommendations and resolutions

Committee chair (or designated representative; typically not an ex-officio) should present reports.

Role of Senators in Conducting Senate Business

1. Enhance quality of deliberations by pre-meeting planning
 - Acquaintance with the agenda and its documents
 - Caucuses/consultations with colleagues and fellow senators
2. Listen to a proposal, debate it and make a decision
3. Improve quality of decision-making by acquiring procedural savvy
 - Main motions are the basis of decision-making
 - Usually main motions come from committee reports
 - They may, however, originate on the floor of the Senate
 - These motions may be disposed of by applying subsidiary motions
 - Changes of mind are addressed through motions that bring a matter again before the assembly

If in doubt, exercise these options:

- "Parliamentary Inquiry" to the President
 - "Point of Information" to the President
- Or, DO IT and let the chips fall where they may.

Role of Senate

1. Serve as the ultimate authority of the Faculty
2. Receive all reports from committees and councils
3. Report Senate decisions to the administration

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History of the Faculty Senate

The current one hundred thirty-two member Oregon State University Faculty Senate represents approximately 4,000 Faculty, with Senator apportionment being split between faculty FTE (75%) and student credit hours (25%). This Senate operates according to the provisions of its Bylaws, which were first adopted in 1956, but have undergone considerable revision since then. Senators are elected by the several Colleges and support units on campus, and off-campus Extension personnel.

The elected officers are a President and President-Elect. A campus-wide election is held yearly with balloting among the faculty who are eligible to be represented in the Senate. After serving as President-Elect for one year, that person automatically becomes President. The Parliamentarian is an appointed officer who is nominated by the Executive Committee and confirmed by the Senate. Prior to 1978, the Senate was administered through the Office of the Dean of Faculty. In 1978, the Faculty Senate Office was established with its present administrative arrangement.

A six-member Executive Committee is elected by the Senate. Three members are elected each year, upon recommendation of the Senate's Bylaws and Nominations Committee, to serve two-year terms. Also serving on the Executive Committee is the senior Interinstitutional Faculty Senate Senator. The Executive Committee, with the Senate Officers, produces the monthly agendas for the Senate.

The Bylaws and Nominations Committee is one of 27 University-level standing Committees and Councils authorized by the Bylaws and appointed by the Executive Committee. Chairs of these Committees and Councils are also appointed by the Executive Committee. Committees and Councils are created by the Senate, which approves their Standing Rules. Normally, their membership is appointed so that approximately one-third are replaced each year. The Committees and Councils are governed by Standing Rules that are drafted by the Executive Committee and the Committee on Committees, and approved by the Senate. Several Committees, such as the Committee on Academic Standing, are empowered to perform certain functions which are reported annually to the Senate. Others, such as the Curriculum Council, meet regularly and periodically make recommendations to the Senate. A third group, such as the Faculty Economic Welfare and Retirement Committee, works primarily in response to charges given to them by the Senate or the Executive Committee. They report to the Senate through the Executive Committee. Ad Hoc Committees, appointed by the Senate or the Executive Committee, address special questions or concerns and are terminated upon presentation of their reports.

Business of the Faculty Senate is administered by the Office of the Faculty Senate, which is managed by the Special Assistant to the Faculty Senate President in concert with the President of the Senate. The Office operates continuously in receiving the various data generated by committees and councils, university administration, and off-campus groups such as the Oregon University System, the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate, and the State Legislature. The Senate Office performs the administrative work required to produce the Executive Committee meeting agendas, Faculty Senate monthly meeting agendas, Senate meeting minutes, campus-wide Senate elections, Faculty Sabbatical Housing List and the various and sundry tasks of record keeping, bookkeeping, maintaining liaison with Committees and Councils, and producing correspondence.

The Faculty Senate Office operates on funds made available by the Provost's Office. The Special Assistant to the Faculty Senate President is a full-time employee and the President is .50 FTE; all cited FTE is for 12 months. The total FTE, classified and unclassified, is 1.50.

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Roots of the Faculty Senate

The College Council

The following statement is found on page 20 of the Catalogue of The Oregon Agricultural College for 1908-1909 (William Jasper Kerr, President):

"The College Council is composed of the President of the College, the professors, and assistant professors. This body considers all general questions relating to the educational work and policy of the College; arranges and correlates the courses of study, and determines the requirements for admission and graduation. The different committees of the College Council, representing the several schools of instruction, have charge of the enrollment and progress of students in the respective schools, and investigate the records of all candidates for graduation."

Similar but shorter statements regarding the College Council appear in later catalogs up to about 1932 when Kerr's term as President ended. By 1929-30, the Council's statement of function was to "consider such matters of general policy and institutional interest, particularly those involving the welfare of the institution as a whole, as may be referred to it by the President or the Administrative Council.

The Administrative Council

The 1908-1909 OAC Catalogue also described the Administrative Council as follows:

"The Administrative Council consists of the President of the College, the Director of the Experiment Station, and the Deans of the different schools. The function of this council is to consider and determine the larger questions of policy and administration."

Similar but longer statements regarding this council appeared in later catalogs, but also disappeared in about 1932.

Starting in about 1938-39, a pamphlet was published annually on 'Faculty Organizations and Committees.' It lists the twenty-four members, deans and other officers of administration under President George Peavy, of the Administrative Council, described as "the legislative body of the faculty of Oregon State College."

The Administrative Council Minutes of March 21, 1944, report that "President Strand announced that for some time he has had in mind to propose a study of the plan of faculty organization now in operation together with possible improvements...the Council requested the President to appoint a committee to study the problem..." A Committee on resident Faculty Organization was appointed on March 30, 1944, and was charged to study the problem of "placing faculty deliberative action on a broader base..." After extensive study, the committee reported its findings and recommendations to the President in a report dated December 1, 1944.

The Faculty Council

At its meeting on January 12, 1945, the Administrative Council approved the establishment of the Faculty Council whose functions and structure were reported to the faculty in the January 20, 1945, issue of the OSU Faculty Bulletin:

"The Faculty Council is composed of the Administrative Council and elected members from the various schools and divisions. Educational policies of long-term, general interest affecting the College as a whole are passed by the Faculty Council. It has general legislative powers only; all administrative functions are reserved to the President and his administrative appointees. The term 'general legislative powers' is defined to mean the power to determine policy in fields in which faculties have traditionally determined policy. The Council has complete freedom, however, to discuss any matter concerning the welfare of the institution. The President may

veto measures passed by the Council."

President Strand presided at the first meeting of the new Faculty Council on March 9, 1945, and noted that "the Faculty Council as now constituted is perhaps the first faculty body at Oregon State College including elected representatives..."

The minutes of February 11, 1954, reported that "the Executive Committee had decided to recommend some consideration to possible enlargement of the Faculty Council..." President Strand appointed a committee (C.E. Maser, Chairman) to "consider and recommend possible changes in the Faculty Council." The special committee reported on April 14, 1955, with recommendations to adopt new Bylaws, and to study and redefine the objectives of the Council and of its relationship to the general Council and Committee structure of the institution. Some changes in Bylaws were adopted on May 19 which included the creation of a new Committee on Committees. This body was appointed on June 9, 1955, and with two other, Committee on Bylaws and Committee on Objectives of the Faculty Council, began intensive studies. On November 9, 1956, the Bylaws Committee (Ralph Bogart, Chairman) reported and recommended new Bylaws for the Council's consideration.

The Faculty Senate

New Bylaws were adopted by the Faculty Council on December 13, 1956, which resulted in a change in name to the Faculty Senate of Oregon State University. Other changes included significant changes in apportionment, particularly in the representation from the School of Agriculture which had previously been limited to one representative each for the on-campus Experiment Station and Extension faculty. The first meeting of the Faculty Senate was held on January 10, 1957.

The current Bylaws of the Faculty Senate which are published in the October 1978 edition of the Faculty Handbook show a first date of approval by the Faculty Senate on November 12, 1964, and with many subsequent revisions. Principal revisions in the new Bylaws, which took effect in 1965, were to include only elected members and only four ex-officio members (later increased to five but soon dropped to two), and to transfer the chairmanship of the Senate to the Dean of Faculty. Representation by the combined ROTC departments was also added.

On September 15, 1976, President MacVicar visited informally with members of the Faculty Senate and others, and suggested and encouraged the Senate to consider any changes in its structure or operation which might enhance its effectiveness as a representative body of the faculty. In February 1977, the Executive Committee appointed a special task force to assist the Senate and the Bylaws Committee to develop proposed revision in the Bylaws for the Senate's consideration.

The current Bylaws reflecting the present organization of the Faculty Senate were approved in principle in May 1977 and formally adopted in October 1977. The new Senate President, Warren Hovland, elected by the resident faculty of the Oregon State University, took office on January 12, 1978. The new office of the Faculty Senate, with its own staff and operating budget, was in full operation by Spring, 1978.

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DBN

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Apportionment History

Presiding Officer	COLLEGE COUNCIL		FACULTY COUNCIL		FACULTY SENATE									
	OAC President		OAC President		OSC President		Dean of Faculty		Senate President					
	1909	1929	1945	1956	1957	1964	1965	1973	1978	1985	1989	1996	2004	2011
Elected Members														
Agricultural Sciences			5	5	17	17	17	21	21	19	26	24	21	19
*Associated Faculty										4	13	14	18	21
Business			2	2	2	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	5	6
Cascades														1
#Education			1	2	2	2	3	6	6	3	3		2	3
Engineering			3	6	6	6	6	7	7	7	7	9	9	10
Extension											11	10	6	5
Forestry			1	1	2	4	4	6	6	5	6	8	7	6
Health & Human Sciences			2	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	8	11
~ Information Services												4	1	
Liberal Arts			5	8	9	10	13	16	16	15	14	14	17	16
Library			1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	-	-	1
Oceanic & Atmospheric Sciences								4	4	4	5	6	6	6
Pharmacy			1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2
ROTC								2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Science			5	7	7	14	14	17	17	17	17	15	19	14
^ Student Affairs												4	7	7
Veterinary Medicine			--	--	--	--	--	--	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
			29	39	54	65	71	95	97	93	121	125	132	132
<u>Elected Officers</u>			Vice Chairman Secretary		Vice Chairman Secretary		Vice Chairman		Senate President President-Elect					
<u>Ex-Officio Members</u>	All Professors (26)		<u>The Administrative Council</u>				OSU President Deans of Adm./ Fac./Stu./Res.		OSU President Deans of Fac./ Provost					
	All Asst. Profs. (3)		21	24	26	27								
<u>Executive Committee</u>														
Elected Members			2	3	3	3	4	4	6	6	6	6	6	6
Elected Officers			Vice Chairman Secretary		Vice Chrm, Sec. Past Vice Chrm.		Vice Chairman Past Vice Chrm.		President President-Elect					
Ex-Officio			OSC President		OSC President		OSU President Dean of Fac.		Dean of Fac./ Provost					

* Formerly Unassociated
^ This unit was created in 1990 by removing Student Affairs faculty from the Associated Unit
Education was merged with Home Economics in 1993
~ Information Services was created in 1996 by combining the Library, CMC, University Computing Services, and Telecommunications

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Handbook

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY FTE REDUCTIONS* UNDER FINANCIAL EMERGENCY January 4, 1982

As stated in the Budgets & Fiscal Planning Committee's "Guidelines for Possible Budget Cuts," which was adopted by the Senate in May 1981 and reaffirmed unanimously on December 3, 1981, the Faculty are opposed to layoffs or furloughs as a means of reducing the budget. Nevertheless, it appears that if the actions of the State Board of Higher Education on December 11 are accepted, a three- or four-day layoff will be required in the 1981-82 academic year. It is less clear whether or not an estimated 12-1/2 day layoff for 9-month Faculty and a 16-1/2 day layoff for 12-month Faculty suggested by the Board will be required in 1982-83. The Committee is aware of the complexities in the implementation of any partial reduction of FTE plan and, for that reason, will not propose detailed mechanisms for the layoffs. However, should the administration resort to layoffs, we recommend that the following Guidelines be adhered to as closely as feasible:

As general Guidelines, the layoffs should provide for:

1. Successive full days, not partial days.
2. Layoff days for instructional Faculty during regularly scheduled class days at the beginning or end of a term.
3. Flexibility in administration to the school, college, program, or experiment station level, but with Faculty consultation and Presidential approval (once items 1. and 2. are taken into account).

If such layoffs should be mandated, it is recommended that they occur during the Spring of 1983, thus postponing the layoff period as long as possible. Such a scheme would enable students, faculty, and administrators maximum time in which to plan alternative uses of their time. This would have the further advantage of maintaining two normal terms.

For 12-month Faculty, including those whose duties may not involve instruction, a more flexible timing of the layoff may be required due to the broad range and sometimes specialized nature of their work. In general, however, it is urged that the layoffs follow the suggestions outlined above, that is, blocks of time should be used wherever possible.

It should be possible through the use of outside finds (e.g., gifts, grants, or contracts) to replace lost compensation due to the layoffs. Sources for such compensation should be actively sought, and used for this purpose when possible.

The Committee reiterates its **STRONG OPPOSITION** to layoffs as a method of budget reduction. The Ad Hoc Committee on Guidelines for Faculty Layoffs is composed of R. Becker, R. McMahon, D. Faulkenberry, & R. Scanlan.

** The commonly used terms "layoff," "furlough," "reduced FTE," and "pay reductions" are considered to have the same meaning.*

3/18/82

Faculty Senate, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331-6203 · 541.737.4344

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Faculty Senate

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Handbook

How to Write to an Elected Official

Keep your letter to a single page. If you must exceed one page, make the second page an attachment which elaborates on your one-page summary. Be absolutely sure you spell the legislator's name correctly and have the right address. If you don't, you may have lost your audience.

If you're writing to several legislators on the same subject, don't send copies of the same letter. Individualize them, and use your own words. Form letters just don't have the same impact as a personal note; consider your own reaction to "junk mail." Don't use mailing labels.

Clearly identify the issue (or bill) you are writing about, and only discuss one issue or bill per letter. Give definite and concise reasons for your position. Be specific. A few facts and figures supporting your position will be more effective than just stating your opinion.

Explain the impact of the legislation or issue on you and other constituents. What needs are being met, or unmet? Provide facts.

Suggest, don't demand, a course of action. Don't promise rewards or offer threats, and don't knock the opposition. Legislators, like other humans, don't respond well to threats.

Be constructive. If you have expert knowledge or wide experience on the subject of your letter, let the legislator know of your expertise. Don't be condescending - be forthright and helpful. Ask, tactfully, for a response, and provide a return address. Express your appreciation - say thank you.

Oregon State Senators and House of Representatives - Up-to-date information, including Senator/ Representative, district, address, and phone number, can be found by accessing the following Web site:

- Senators - <http://www.leg.state.or.us/senate/>
- Representatives - <http://www.leg.state.or.us/house/>

Below are appropriate forms of address and salutation:

For the Governor:

The Honorable (full name)
Governor, State of Oregon
254 State Capitol
Salem OR 97310

Dear Governor (last name)

For a Senator:

The Honorable (full name)
State Senator
(if to President, use President of the Senate)
Home address if legislature not in session;
if in session, State Capitol (room number)

Dear Senator (last name)

For a Representative:

The Honorable (full name)
State Representative (if to Speaker, use Speaker of the House)
Home address if legislature not in session; if in session,
State Capitol (room number)
Salem OR 97310

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