

Dear Senate Education Committee:

My name is Kim Colantino. I'm the English program chair who recommends part-time faculty for hire to teach writing courses at Chemeketa.

Right now, our program employs about 50 part-time instructors and only 17 full-time instructors. In other words, about 75% of our faculty, including all outreach/satellite campuses and online, have part-time status.

I say part-time "status" because a significant majority of those instructors work at other Oregon system campuses, patching together full-time employment.

Part-Time Salaries

To understand how critical health coverage is for our part-timers, we must first understand what they gross and net when piecing together full-time work between two, three, and sometimes four different Oregon schools.

At Chemeketa, our part-time writing instructors can teach a maximum of 5 classes per year since we are unable to offer most of them summer term courses.

- Maximum gross pay, the first year of employment then is \$14,425
- If an instructor managed to teach his or her maximum at another Oregon school (as many do), equaling a full-time load, he or she would gross about \$28,850 (this number would be lower at some schools, slightly higher at others)
- According to the American Data Processing Research Institute, in Oregon, an average take home income from \$28,850 = \$1,935 monthly

Here's a breakdown of monthly income and expenses for one of our first-year instructors working a full-time load split between two Oregon system colleges:

Income and Expenses, Salem			
Income		Expenses	
Chemeketa	\$967.50	Rent	\$1,044*
School #2	\$967.50	Healthcare	\$ 735**
Total	\$1,935	Total before all other expenses	\$1,779

*Average cost of a *one*-bedroom apartment in Salem, OR in 2017 according to the *Statesman's Journal*.

**Out-of-pocket healthcare costs for a real Chemeketa instructor and his family.

An Example Instructor

The first instructor I recommended for hire at Chemeketa (called "David" here) was a veteran of the Middle East conflicts, holds an almost complete PhD, has years of teaching experience, and has a huge heart for community college students. He and his wife had just relocated to Oregon with their one-year-old child. David worked at another Oregon system school in addition to Chemeketa.

About a year into teaching for us, David told me he began working a third part-time job, this time for the Air National Guard, specifically so he could afford health coverage. Even with the insurance exchange, he said he was paying about \$735 a month, out-of-pocket.

After about two-years successfully serving our students, David called me expressing great sadness over having to quit teaching altogether. His wife was pregnant with their second child, and he had to make a real salary. He needed healthcare. Full-time instructors within the Oregon system shouldn't find themselves in this situation.

Institutional and Student-Impact

David's story is common. At Chemeketa, I've noticed very, very few part-time instructors remain with us more than 2-3 years. In fact, the ones who stay the longest either have spouses who provide their health coverage or are young enough and dependent-less enough to eke by hoping they don't experience a sudden illness or accident. We routinely lose the instructors who don't fit those very narrow life-stage parameters.

Imagine if you owned a business, and 75% of your workforce were hourly temps, hired for three-month contracts, with no healthcare. How bad would your turnover be?

Not surprisingly, I find myself helping to hire new instructors every year, sometimes two-three times a year, no matter how much enrollment has dropped because we shed instructors constantly, and it's hard to keep their morale high.

Please, help our students to have instructors with higher morale because it shows in the classroom. Please help our students to have instructors who can grade their work on-time, comment on it thoughtfully, and prepare engaging lessons. These things can't happen when our teachers work two, three, and sometimes four jobs trying to pay for healthcare.

Please recognize these instructors are full-time college professors in the Oregon system, whether that full-time load is split between Lane Community College and Chemeketa, or just consolidated at one campus.

Respectfully,

Kim Colantino