

November 13, 2023

The University of Oregon Senate

1208 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403

Dear UO Senators,

Senate leadership had provided a survey to Senators to gauge their perceptions of the Academic Council's "Fall Academic Disruption Recommendations." I reviewed the survey to identify the key issues, sticking points, and emerging themes. I want to share these impressions with UO Senators in this letter. I have already shared the survey responses with the Senate Executive Committee and the Senate Academic Council.

Thank you to those Senators who took the time to fill out the survey and provide your feedback.

Question 1: Helpful aspects of guidelines

Mainly, there was a positive general sense in the feedback supporting the draft new guidelines. There were no comments that said the Senate should reform the Academic Continuity Plan policy because the new guidelines went beyond the boundaries of that policy. Most Senators appreciated the work that went into producing the new guidelines and the clarity that the guidelines provide. Respondents appreciated the faculty's control and input over the plan and the modality and flexibility of the plan.

Question 2: Not-so-helpful aspects of guidelines

The critical hang-up or sticking point is how some Senators see the guidelines as a political strategy to make it easier for administrators to weather the potential strike. Another key criticism is the UO's President's ability to call an emergency – as he is not a neutral party in a labor dispute - this sticking point was mentioned several times. There were questions and negative comments about replacing teaching GEs - who are instructors of record - with other instructors. There was also a mention of the pressure junior faculty might feel during the strike and their ability to say no to covering courses.

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Question 3: Worries your constituents might have about the guidelines.

A Senator mentioned how the principles laid out at the beginning of the document aren't mentioned throughout most of the guidelines. For example, they commented on the unclarity of how the principles balance out – or relate - to the emergency grades. There seems to be a general lack of understanding of the role of emergency grades. Most of the other comments for this question related to clarifying questions, such as what happens if the strike goes into the Winter term or how the reassignment of graders will work in practice.

My overall impression:

Senators who responded to the survey (12) seem to support the key aspects of the new guidelines. Senators appreciate that faculty have a lot of input into the plan and aren't calling for revisiting the Academic Continuity Plan – at least not at this point. Most of the concerns seem ideological – in support of GEs – and how the new guidelines undermine the disruption of a labor strike. In other words, a few Senators want to support a potential GE strike and see the new guidelines to lessen pressure on administrators. They are also against the President calling the emergency since he is not a neutral party.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Attached are the survey responses so that you can make your interpretations.

Best regards,



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