



Faculty and Staff Newsletter of the University of Oregon

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University's accreditation reaffirmed

The University of Oregon's leadership in implementing new technologies, its "creative and entrepreneurial response to the state budget reductions" and its positive sense of community earned it high praise along with full accreditation from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.

Those commendations and others are part of the final report of the 15-member site visit team, approved during a June 23 formal hearing of the accrediting body's Commission on Colleges in Ogden, Utah. Evaluators spent three days on campus in April.

President Dave Frohnmayer gives full credit for achieving the 10-year reaccreditation to the many faculty and staff involved in the accreditation self-study. The steering committee and others across campus worked diligently the past two years to make it happen.

"The positive findings of the Northwest Association are gratifying but not surprising," he says. "We have a wonderful institution with a marvelous story to tell."

Dave Hubin, executive assistant president, served as accreditation liaison officer. Assistant Vice Provost Susan Plass and Chemistry Professor Robert Mazo co-chaired the self-study steering committee. Committee leadership included Associate Vice Provost Anne Leavitt, Research Assistant Jim McChesney and Hubin.

The evaluation committee's final report found "an attractive and aesthetically pleasing campus"

with new and renovated facilities that are "attractive and functional in carrying out the university's mission."

They especially praised the university's success in private fund raising since launching The Oregon Campaign in 1994.

In addition, the evaluation team commended the university for its "exemplary achievement in optimizing resources and facilitating collaboration through its interdisciplinary centers and institutes."

The regional accrediting body also recommended improvement in four areas:

- Continuing and consistent review of faculty performance, especially of tenured faculty.
- Coordination and improvement of educational assessment processes whose results should directly influence future planning and decision-making.
- Continue giving priority attention to increasing faculty and staff salaries.
- Consideration of modifications to the university's general education program to bring more coherency to it.

Frohnmayr says the university appreciates the very positive report on its status and will take steps to address the accrediting association's recommendations.

Contract bargaining explained

As *News & Views* goes to press, representatives of the Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) and the Oregon Public Employees Union (OPEU) were scheduled to meet Aug. 4 with state mediator Wendy Greenwald. The effort will try to resolve their differences on contract provisions regarding salaries, wage differentials and health benefits.

Monday's meeting is the fourth session since mediation began in June after the union declared an impasse in negotiations which had been underway since December 1996.

OSSHE is bargaining directly with the union representing higher education classified employees as authorized in 1995 by SB 271, the Higher Education Administration Efficiency Act. Before then, OPEU had bargained with the state Department of Administrative Services.

According to collective bargaining law, if mediation doesn't produce an agreement, either party or the mediator can declare an impasse. Then OPEU and OSSHE have seven days in which

to submit their final offers (including costs) to the mediator for public release.

At that point, a mandatory 30-day cooling-off period begins. If the parties agree to it, negotiations may continue.

When the cooling-off period ends, OSSHE has the option of implementing its final offer and the union has the option of calling a strike. The union must, however, give 10 days notice before a walkout.

OPEU has set a strike vote for Sept. 9. After giving the required 10 days' notice, the earliest a strike could start is Sept. 19, 10 days before fall term classes begin.

While campus officials are confident that mediation will prevent a walkout, they are preparing for that possibility by making plans to continue essential activities and services.

OPEU represents about 3,500 OSSHE employees in professional, paraprofessional, clerical, skilled trades and service positions. Nearly 1,100 UO classified workers are part of the bargaining unit, Local 085.

Currently, the university is bargaining directly with two other unions. The Graphic Communications International Union (GCIU), Local 213-B, represents 21 University Printing employees whose contract expired June 30. The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation represents 1,300 GTFs whose contract expires Sept. 30.

UO faculty are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement.

Reduced-tuition procedure revised

Employees planning to enroll in classes this fall at staff reduced-tuition rates will need to submit a newly revised approval form to Human Resources by Aug. 6 for law classes and by Sept. 15 for all other classes.

Those requirements represent three significant changes in the program which enables faculty and staff employees appointed at halftime (0.5 FTE) or more to enroll in up to 10 credits each term, paying just \$15 per quarter hour or \$22 per semester credit. Employees may audit classes for free.

New this year is a revised Staff Rate for Tuition Approval Form, dated September 1997-August 1998, which employees must submit each term. Old forms will no longer be accepted.

Return completed forms to Human Resources, not to the Registrar's Office.

The new deadline for submitting approval forms is two weeks before the first day of classes for each term. If you don't turn in your form by that deadline, you will be responsible for any accrued billing and interest charges.

If you submit the form after the fourth week of classes, you will not be eligible for staff reduced rates.

Copies of the revised approval form for use this fall have been sent to all employees who enrolled in classes during the 1996-97 academic year. Those enrolling during subsequent terms may get additional copies of the revised form from Human Resources.

For information about applying for staff rates, call Miki Powers at Human Resources, 6-2950 or 4-3159.

Electrical shutdown set Sept. 6

Power to all parts of the main campus, except the Quonsets and offices on the north side of Franklin Boulevard, will be shut off from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 6.

The electrical shutdown is planned so that Facilities Services utilities workers can make repairs and installations. Power will be off multiple times in different sections of campus for no more than 30 minutes at a time.

"We'll be sending a reminder memo via campus distribution approximately two weeks prior to the shutdown," says Director George Hecht, Facilities Services. "In the meantime, we ask you to let others in your department know of this impending campus-wide electrical shutdown."

Hecht urges everyone to make sure that all sensitive electronic equipment, including computers and printers, are turned off and disconnected prior to the shutdown.

He says elevators, air handling systems and refrigeration units also will be affected.

For information related to the planned power outage, call Utilities Superintendent Ron Neet, 6-5255.

UO joins Pacific Rim research consortium

The University of Oregon has accepted an invitation to join a consortium of 36 top research universities on the West Coast of the United States and in Asia, South America and Australia.

Vice Provost Richard Steers, International Affairs, says membership in the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) "will provide greater opportunities to forge links between UO faculty and students and their counterparts at other premier universities in the Pacific Basin."

President Dave Frohnmayer attended the consortium's first meeting June 1-3 at the University of Southern California, which will serve as APRU headquarters. Other U.S. participants include the University of California at Berkeley and at Los Angeles and the California Institute of Technology. The University of Washington was the only other Northwest university invited to join APRU.

APRU will work on issues of major importance to the Pacific Rim such as urbanization, economic development and technology transfer.

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