

Task force charge:

Investigate free borrowing privileges for the general public. Consider financial, practical, political costs/benefits. Identify affected groups on campus and within the broader community.

Task force recommendation:

Establish a new category of service called "the Oregon Card" which is available to Oregon residents 18 years or older, free of charge. Borrowers are eligible for two-week checkouts with one renewal.

Primary Benefits:

- Establishes the UO Library as **the** research library for the State of Oregon.
- Creates excellent public relations by increasing outreach to the community.
- Creates a new constituent base of potential library supporters.
- Provides public service for the Oregon community in line with recent discussion in the Faculty Senate. (See: [Faculty senate goals concerning "community participation"](#): section "IV. The Meaning of "Public" for Public Institutions").
- Reduces staffing costs. (Staff currently spent 10 to 20 hours per month managing multiple groups of eligible borrowers).

Concerns/Potential Costs:

- Eliminates current incentives offered by the Alumni Association, i.e. library privileges for membership.
- Increased "competition" for high-use resources.
- Loss of revenue from card sales, approximately \$18,000 per year.
- Greater potential for lost and overdue items.

Response to concerns:

- The Alumni Association would continue to offer its current program, which provides more privileges to members compared to the Oregon Card.
- Only 1.5% of those currently eligible for free privileges actually resister. The library currently has 700 registered public borrowers (including 415 paying borrowers). Those borrowers account for only 4% of the lending activity.
- The Oregon Card will carry new limitations, e.g., up to 20 items checked at one time, 5 items from selected locations, ILL charges, penalties for overdues, immediate blocks on delinquent borrowers.
- Public borrowers have a lower rate of fines and lost materials than the UO community.
- Normal fine rates will help to offset the loss of sales revenue, e.g., if the number of checkouts double, it will generate an additional \$4200 in fines. Savings in staff costs could average another \$2,000/year.