

# NEWS FROM YOUR WOU STAFF SENATE

February 2009

Volume 3 issue 3

## STAFF SENATE UPCOMING EVENTS

All WOU staff, faculty & administration are invited to attend. We meet in the Hamersly Library the third Thursday of each month at 8:30am.

<i>Information sessions</i>	
Library Services	4/16
Health & Wellness	4/16
New WOU in Salem	5/21
New housing project	5/21
SAFE Zone information with Angie Barry	6/18
<i>Staff Development</i>	
Budgeting Basics Hamersly Library 107	4/8
Campus Wellness Challenge-WUC: Santiam	4/30
Intergenerational Working Relationships	May
<i>Campus Public Safety Course</i>	
Self-Defense for Women	5/9

## OHSU NURSING PROGRAM: Jennifer Hansen & Lori Davidson Hilary Holman-Kidd and Michael LeMaster ~ Presenters

Mike LeMaster (WOU) and Hillary Holman-Kidd (OHSU) (co-presenters) clarified that WOU's four year pre-nursing program and OHSU's three year nursing program are two separate entities. Pre-nursing belongs to WOU and Nursing belongs to OHSU. How does WOU benefit from OHSU having a nursing program on campus? While students are enrolled with OHSU they are also dually enrolled with WOU, which entitles them to WOU privileges, such as borrowing materials from the Hamersly Library, therefore nursing students pay WOU fees and OHSU pays WOU to lease Maaske Hall.

Due to the record jump in enrollment of pre-nursing students (24 to 180 in one academic year) WOU has developed a two-tier academic advising structure to assist students achieve their goal of entering a nursing program. The exponential increase in enrollment is believed to be directly related to OHSU having a nursing program located on the WOU campus. First level advising includes general academics. Once completed, Mike becomes the pre-nursing student's second level advisor. His advising focuses on guiding students to complete their nursing pre-requisites, BS degree and the nursing school application process.

In addition to OHSU, Mike stays in close contact with nursing programs at University of Portland and Linfield College's Portland Campus ensuring that WOU's pre-nursing program meets or exceeds the admission requirements for these schools. Additionally, Mike monitors nursing schools nationally where he has assisted several WOU students attain placement. Currently, because the number of applicants far exceeds the number of available seats, students who wish to be admitted to an Oregon nursing program need to maintain a cumulative 3.8 G.P.A.

At WOU OHSU accepted 27 of 96 applicants this academic year. Next academic year they will accept 32 students out of 150 applicants. During their first year nursing students complete additional course work, move onto "clinicals" their second year and during their third year students are enrolled in practicum's. Once they have passed OHSU's requirements nursing students are eligible to take, up to three times, the NCLEX-Registered Nurse exam.

Hillary said the limited number of seats at OHSU, to a certain extent, is due to limited physical space as well as their desire to maintain a high quality nursing program. At present, OHSU has locations at Southern Oregon University, Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology and Marquam Hill. To address the nursing shortage OHSU joined the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE). This consortium has permitted Oregon nursing schools to expand their enrollment numbers while preparing graduates to address evolving health care needs.

Currently, OHSU's nursing program is ranked #1 nationally, consistently recognized by US News and World Report as one of the top 10 of nursing schools in America, and is the primary supplier of nurse practitioners in Oregon.

## SEIU Bargaining

Jennifer Hansen, Staff Senate President

I don't know about each of you, but I'm feeling confused by what all is going on with bargaining and the language that's been put in front of us, therefore I thought that maybe a dedicated attempt to explain a little of what we are seeing right now with the contract and with the campus might be in order. Recently I attended two different meetings that shed some light on the issues and helped to explain things a little clearer (with a little help from my online dictionary, the current contract, and the HR Dept.) here is what I hear to be facts.

Every two years (biennium) the contract that the staff holds with the Oregon University System (OUS) has to be renewed. This allows for changes to be made. There are a multitude of changes that have been proposed from the OUS Board for the staff to consider.

Right now changes appear in this form:

- No COLA

What is a COLA? Legislation enacted in 1973 provides for automatic cost-of-living adjustments, or COLAs. With COLAs, Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits keep pace with inflation. The latest COLA is 5.8 percent for Social Security benefits and SSI payments.

- No Vacation cash out

Currently if you have a vacation balance of more than 80 hours, you are eligible to request a "cash out" in which you can receive up to 40 hours of vacation leave annually in cash.

- All holidays unpaid

Currently 15 holidays are recognized and paid for at the regular straight time rate of pay.

- Future unpaid furloughs could be at management discretion

A furlough is a temporary unpaid leave of absence from employment. This may be voluntary or involuntary. Management may be able to decide if, and when, you are needed to take further furloughs beyond your unpaid holidays.

- No 10<sup>th</sup> step
- Full step freeze

Basically, where you are on the step salary range right now is where you will stay for the next biennium.

I do not know the exact wording, but I will give you what was given to me. This is in regards to lay-off and bumping rights.

- An employee who has been disciplined in the last three years could not displace (bump) another employee, if laid off.
- Employees that do not pass trial service following a promotion would have all layoff rights except displacing (bumping) other employees.

The state of the University is another item of interest lately and I will share with you here what I have learned recently. I feel it's important for all of us to be as informed as possible so that's why all of this is included here.

For those of you that have heard rumors about Senate Bill 442 (Senate Bill 442 calls for a study on the benefits and drawbacks of consolidating the state's regional universities, in a process similar to an analysis already completed by the Oregon University System in July.) You don't need to worry any more – President Minahan has removed Western as a "regional university" and there are no plans to have the University officially merged with anyone. Some technology resources may be merged throughout the entire OUS system, but our University will remain individual.

At this point in time, WOU has taken some significant cuts in the fiscal budget (\$440,000 in December and a total of over 1 million being returned to the state by the end of June 09), but the President is confident in keeping all current people intact on campus. Between the increases in the student population on campus, the reserve fund set aside and the 5% salary cut the upper administration has voluntarily taken, we have enough in our financial ability to keep all employees. Future state and economy actions will determine how long this stays in place. President Minahan is determined however not to loose a single employee.

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Students are starting to share an increased anxiety over talk of tuition hikes (possibly even 22% at some schools over the next two years beginning next academic year). A tuition increase will not be affecting our current students on the Tuition Promise Program. These students will not see the increase because their tuition is locked in. WOU will possibly be raising their tuition, but not as high as some of our neighbors. A WOU tuition increase will be in single digits and affect only incoming freshmen students, out-of-state, international, and graduate students.

So folks, there you have it. This is what I know. This is what I have gathered from WOU HR, SEIU Bargaining meeting, and President Minahan's Shared Communication Meeting.

I hope as staff we can continue to do our best to support the university mission to create personalized learning opportunities, support the advancement of knowledge for the public good and maximize individual and professional development. Our environment is open to the exchange of ideas, where discovery, creativity and critical thinking flourish, and students succeed.

I appreciate all that everyone does for the university, and the students, and am, and have for many years now been proud to say "I am a member of the Western Oregon University team".

Take care all!!  
Jennifer Hansen  
Staff Senate President

## **QUESTIONS TO CAMPUS PUBLIC SAFETY**

*Questions submitted by staff and answered by CPS*

*I am wondering why students are not contacted or aware when there is a gun on campus? It is dependent upon the circumstances of the person having the weapon. If it is a law enforcement officer here on business we don't alert the campus. If there is an issue that is a potential threat to the campus community we would use the WOU Alert system to notify the students, faculty and staff based on the circumstances at the time.*

*Why do you always turn on your lights, even when just parked to the side of the road? We use the lights for traffic safety. If we are on an emergency call we use the emergency lights to alert other drivers and to signal responding units as to where we are at.*

*Why do you have to have a Dodge Charger? We purchased the Dodges when the previous vehicles had reached the end of their serviceable life and were costing more to upkeep and repair. The Dodges we purchased are not hi-performance pursuit vehicles instead they are designed for use in urban environments and have V6 engines.*

*How much does it cost for upkeep and gas on your patrol cars? As the vehicles were purchased in 2007, the maintenance cost have been very low and primarily for routine upkeep such as oil changes and the like. The yearly gas cost (of course depends on the cost per gallon) for both vehicles combined is under \$5000.00.*

*What is the criteria of when someone has parked on a line, when do they get a ticket for it? It is based on how far over the line they are and if they are blocking the other drivers ability to access their vehicle.*

*Why are there some parking lots in which you cannot pull all the through the space, considering the van safety course teaches you to do this? It is done for traffic safety. If you pull thru an angled spot then in order to drive out you must go against the directional flow of traffic and can cause a head-on collision. In lots where the parking is not slanted then you can pull through since traffic flow is in both directions.*

*Why are you always driving around in the car? I see you on Main St. in the campus car, what are you doing? We use the vehicle as well as bicycles and foot patrols to cover the campus and respond to calls for assistance. There are many times that we have to drop off documents and paperwork in town. We have meetings with City staff and officials at various locations around Main St as well as we travel to meetings, training and official events where we represent the University.*

## MESSAGE FROM STAFF SENATE

2008-2009  
*Staff Senate*

Jennifer Hansen  
Amanda Rodino  
Jerrie-Lee  
Parpart  
Joe Hutchinson  
Lauren Smith  
Lori Davidson  
LouAnn Vickers  
Mark Lane  
Rhawn Krogh  
Tina Palmer  
Yulia  
Kharitonova

By: Lori Davidson

This morning, as I prepared this Staff Senate message I was reminded of campus incidents over the previous year; our individual reactions, our condemnation or praise of how WOU Campus Public Safety (CPS) responded. What many of us may be unaware of is in the spring of 2008 the Staff Senate created a Task Force on Campus Response. This small group of WOU people worked with CPS, with guidance from the Portland Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Team leaders, to hone, and CPS continues to hone, their policy and procedures on how to respond to campus incidents. One way CPS is doing this is by openly responding to questions from the campus community and you will see their some of responses to these questions in this newsletter.

This positive evolution of CPS, of WOU, to make WOU truly universal is something that has impressed me. For example, since 2006 we have seen the introduction of an annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration, WOU Safe Zone, Vagina Monologues and drafting of a university wide diversity policy. All of this has been possible because WOU staff, faculty and administration care enough to make the change, to be involved and evolve.

As staff we are people of substance, who contribute and have assisted with or led these evolutions. We are one leg that makes WOU function. Let's remember our capabilities as our bargaining team is immersed in negotiating our next Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract). They require our input to negotiate our preferences. Oregon University System (OUS) and Governor Kulongoski need to hear our voices as well. Let us believe in and stand up for ourselves, advise our bargaining team, OUS and Governor Kulongoski what we believe would be a fair contract.

Just as members of the Staff Senate Task Force on Campus Response influenced CPS we can influence WOU's evolution and the language of our next contract. Today, together and individually, let's go make a difference.

## HEALTH & WELLNESS TIPS

Springtime is fast approaching in the Mid-Willamette Valley, which means beautiful, blooming native wildflowers, shrubs, ferns, grasses... and rolling, looming pollen clouds. Some coughing and sneezing, noses stuffed and running, sore eyes, fatigue and malaise.

The area is regarded as one of the worst in the nation for seasonal allergies. Run 'grass seed capital of the world' through Google, and the results won't be surprising. The warmth and humidity of spring and summer also see high levels of other allergy triggers, such as dust mites and molds.

Many heavy sufferers find allergy relief through over-the-counter products, prescription medication, and immunotherapy. There are other remedies available to reduce the severity of symptoms. The key is finding the combination that works well for the individual while not substituting for medical advice.

One of the most effective things you can do is to simply avoid or limit exposure to allergens. If you're planning a trip or an outdoor event, visit [pollen.com](http://pollen.com) for a four-day allergy forecast (it also lists the predominant pollens by zip code, which is useful if you have been tested for allergies or know your triggers).

The best thing to do when pollen levels are high is to stay indoors with the windows closed. If you need the windows open for circulation, consider installing window filters (visit [achooallergy.com](http://achooallergy.com) for filters and other product ideas). Similarly, if you need to drive anywhere, keep the windows closed and use the air conditioner to beat the heat and clear any pollen (it may not help your mileage, but it'll help your head).

If you need to head outdoors, try to make trips in the mid to late afternoon as pollen levels are usually at their highest in the morning (5am to 10am) and early evening. After returning indoors on a high-pollen-count day, change your clothes, take a shower, and wash your hair, to reduce the pollen you bring into the home.

In addition to limiting exposure to allergens, there are other natural remedies that may provide relief. One common remedy is the regular use of a sinus rinse or Neti pot. This, at its essence, is nasal irrigation with a saline solution, though there are a variety of bottles, pots, and solutions available for purchase.

Dietary supplements can also potentially provide relief for allergy sufferers, though be sure to check for contraindications. Some foods and supplements to research are: butterbur, stinging nettle, quercetin, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin C, and local honey.