



Chair Neil Bryant and Commissioners
c/o Ben Cannon, Executive Director
Higher Education Coordinating Commission
255 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97310

May 24, 2017

Dear Chair Bryant and Commissioners,

My name is Chris Sinclair and I am an associate professor of mathematics at the University of Oregon and the incoming President of the University Senate. I am writing because I am worried about the future of our university in light of state disinvestment from public education. Decisions of the state legislature have placed additional unfunded financial obligations on the university which cannot be met within the constraints of our current revenue stream. This situation is untenable, and in order to meet the needs of our students the university must raise additional money.

No one likes the idea of raising tuition and we respect and share commissioners' concerns about the increase and the overall price for public higher education.

Faculty are all too well aware that the price of tuition increases fall on the backs of our students, especially on low-income and underrepresented student populations. We wish it were not so. We wish the state prioritized higher education so that we could provide affordable, high quality education to Oregonians without unduly burdening those in challenging economic situations.

Unfortunately, we must work with the financial situation as it exists, and ask students to pay more for their education, and I ask you to support the University's proposed tuition increase. To not do so would result in additional layoffs of faculty (on top of the approximately 75 faculty who were non-renewed due to budget cuts this year), more limited course offerings, and larger class sizes. Indeed, even with the proposed tuition increase, we expect an almost 9 million dollar shortfall. We owe our students robust services that help them on their path to graduation AND to have high-quality instructors and access to research that expand knowledge. Failure to act will ultimately reduce access to higher education in Oregon, as well as impact our ability to prepare Oregonians for the types of jobs which are the fuel for our state's economy.

Department of Mathematics

1222 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-1222

OFFICE 541-346-4705 | FAX 541-346-0987

As incoming University Senate president, I am committed to working with faculty, students, the university administration and state government to ensure that the University maintains access to high quality education for all Oregonians, as well as continues to rise among the ranks of the best research universities in the world.

Thank you for your time,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Sinclair', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Christopher D. Sinclair
Associate professor
University Senate VP and President Elect