

NOTICES

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"These notices were not based on performance, but rather on the contract date," said Lorraine Davis, vice provost for academic affairs.

Despite this, many who received the notices say it's hard not to take it personally, especially because employees in the student services area received most of the notices.

"Sometimes it feels like we're a target," said Anne Leavitt, the associate vice provost for Academic Support and Student Services. "It feels as though the work we do here is being devalued."

Patty Scott, a counselor in Academic Advising and Student Services for four years, also said she was hurt and angered by the letter.

"I felt like the letter was written with a bunch of legal mumbo-jumbo that made you feel you had no value to the University," Scott said. "I felt crummy and as though the University thought I am indispensable."

Leavitt, who has worked at the University for eight years, said she is uncertain about the near future. Her husband, who works for the Forest Service, may be out of a job at the end of the year due to the cutbacks in the woods products industry.

"I've worked in higher education all my life and to change now would be a major departure from my career," Leavitt said. "The hardest part, besides the economic risk for my family, is that I believe in my work and it's hard to leave when I made a professional commitment to be an educator."

Although he understands the University's position, Knight Librarian George Shipman said his staff is very close to both students and faculty.

"Nobody supports students and faculty more than librarians because of the instruction and research that results in library use," Shipman said. "It's frustrating not to be considered with faculty, but instead to be lumped in with a larger group whose missions may not be as directly related to instruction and research as librarians."

"We are closer to being faculty than any other of the other support functions on campus," he said.

Many, although apprehensive about the uncertainty of their jobs, said they fear most for students who will be faced with fewer services while paying increased tuition.

"The bottom line is that students are going to be hurt by this," Scott said. "What's going to happen when students are paying more money and there are less people around?"

Beth Swank, a counselor in Career Planning and Placement, said her work is valuable to students especially because students are "scared about the job market right now."

Although administrators are defined by the University as non-teaching staff, many do teach classes and said they are offended that the University doesn't acknowledge this.

Shipman, who also received a letter, said it is frustrating to be categorized as non-teaching when librarians teach various classes such as Introduction to the Library, Legal Research and Business Research.

Some administrators who received the notices said they are keeping their eyes open for job opportunities elsewhere, and others are merely waiting to see what the Oregon Legislature decides next year.

"It's ironic, being a career counselor, that I may be on my own soon," Swank said. "But I love this job and I'm not really looking for anything else right now. I'm waiting for the Legislature to convene and I'm just sitting back and still doing my job."

The Legislature will convene in January, and the agenda is likely to include consideration of a permanent tax-restructuring plan for referral to voters.

Some administrators who received these notices work in the computing center, library, the EMU, Registrars Office, Counseling Center, Business Affairs, Career Placement and Planning and University Housing.

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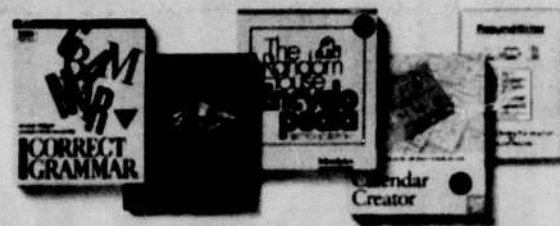


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