

# Faculty

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## At the UO

At the University last year, 18 professors resigned their positions and an above-average number of faculty retired, according to Lorraine Davis, vice provost for academic affairs. While that number might not seem high, it's much higher than the school's yearly average, Davis said.

"My guess is that we'll see a few more resignations than has been the pattern," Davis said.

Though the University has a good record overall in retaining professors, Davis said she does anticipate that up to a quarter of the assistant professors she hires will use their jobs at the University as a stepping-stone to larger schools.

"That's not to say that we wouldn't hope they'd stay here for their entire academic careers," she said. "But face it — we all have different kinds of aspirations. So I really don't expect that everybody that we hire, or even a large majority of those we hire, would come here and stay for their entire academic career."

Professors who choose to leave typically move to universities that are in the University's peer group, or larger, Davis said, such as University of California schools, the University of Washington, Michigan State University and Duke University.

## Quality of education

A school's reputation for academic excellence is tied to the quality of its faculty, and some students are worried that an exodus of faculty could lessen the quality of their education.

"We're having excellent professors leave campus," ASUO President Wylie Chen said. "And it's going to be very difficult for us to hire good professors, especially when we're competing with other universities that have more re-

sources available to them."

All OUS schools and their quality of education are affected by the trend, said John Wykoff, Oregon Students Association spokesman.

"You have to have good faculty or the quality of education suffers," he said. "It hurts the students; it hurts the reputation of the state and of the institutions. If the school doesn't have a good reputation, it can't attract students."

Faculty searches are a major indicator of a school's ability to recruit quality applicants. But more often, OUS schools are watching applicants slip through their fingers once they find out how low the salaries are.

Such is the dilemma at Western Oregon University, where nine faculty searches have failed in the past year, faculty union president Dean Braa said.

"Our biggest problem is recruitment," he said. "We lose professors, and we can't replace them."

That is what many in the University community fear could happen if faculty salaries aren't brought up to the industry average.

"We operate in a market economy," said Wayne Westling, a law professor and member of the University Senate Budget Committee, which is looking at ways to increase faculty salaries. "We have to keep our salaries in line with the ones at other schools."

## The bottom line

Members of the State Board of Higher Education and University President Dave Frohnmayer have indicated that increasing funding for faculty salaries is one of their priorities in the next few years, a move that's designed to help stop the flow of faculty to other universities.

"It would be to our liking if those that we have mentored would stay here," Davis said. "But we've served them well to put them in a position to be recruited, so it's not as if we should feel embarrassed about that at all."

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