

ing originally was to be built without a conditional use permit — a permit that would require more public input and clarity around issues like parking — but the Fairmount Neighborhood Association appealed that decision, and the UO had to apply for the permit, according to reporting by *The Daily Emerald*. The arena was also originally supposed to be totally privately funded, but ended up being paid for by a \$200 million bond by the state, according to *The Oregonian*.

Although his name is not at the forefront, Slusher's help in leading Knight and Nike construction projects has af-

ected not only the UO, but also Oregon at large.

In 2013, a few years after Matthew Knight Arena opened, the Oregon Senate passed House Bill 2646A — “a bill to ensure that more workers on state projects receive the appropriate level of compensation and benefits,” according to a news release. The bill specifically “ensures that contractors for construction projects in the Oregon University System use prevailing wage laws that benefit workers and Oregon’s economy.” Knight’s Phit LLC has leased land from the UO, built on it as a private company, then returned it.

Even though the bill did not directly address Knight-funded construction projects, according to *The Oregonian*, a Nike lobbyist called a Democratic lawmaker to attempt to get the bill pulled from its scheduled vote. The vote went forward without interruption and passed.

As long as news stories about Nike and Knight keep coming to the forefront, Slusher seems to be just below the surface, out of view. Even attempting to find a photo of him online proved impossible. But it seems that’s exactly how Slusher wants it.

NEWS

BY MEERAH POWELL

LCC INSTRUCTOR ACCUSED OF ALT-RIGHT TIES

Social media screenshots from LCC’s sole philosophy instructor include re-posted memes and quotes with alt-right ideology

On May 28, a Twitter thread published screenshots some have denounced as sexist, racist and holding alt-right ideology from the public social media profiles of Lane Community College instructor Jeffrey Borrowdale.

Borrowdale is the sole instructor remaining in LCC’s philosophy department after budget cuts last year.

He is also the faculty advisor for LCC’s chapter of Young Americans for Liberty, a campus group mostly associated with libertarianism, “dedicated to spreading the ideals of individual rights, personal responsibility, limited government and a voluntary society,” according to its Org-Sync campus engagement webpage.

The screenshots posted were of Borrowdale’s public Twitter page and Gab page. Gab is a social networking site, sometimes referred to as the “right-wing” or “alt-right” Twitter. The site’s logo is a frog, stylistically similar to the Pepe the Frog meme appropriated by alt-right groups.

The screenshots of Borrowdale’s profiles included his Gab bio, in which he states he is “fighting for a free society against” social justice warriors, socialists and Black Lives Matter among other groups.

An example a meme Borrowdale re-posted reads: “Let’s discuss what Islam offers: rape, beheadings, burning people alive ...”

Borrowdale’s Twitter bio states that he is “Not a Nazi.”

The Twitter thread posted by an LCC student under the name @cruciverberella has gained more than 300 retweets and almost a thousand likes, as well as comments both chastising and defending Borrowdale. The poster’s Twitter profile also links to the Democratic Socialist Party.

This isn’t Borrowdale’s first run-in with online conflict. In November Eugene Antifa posted a photo with Borrowdale standing next to Milo Yiannopoulos, former writer for the far-right *Breitbart News*, before a discussion on free speech Borrowdale was helping to facilitate.

“Let him know it’s time for him to go!” the Eugene Antifa post reads, directing people to go to the discussion.

Borrowdale tells *EW* the social media profiles are indeed his, and he was not attempting to hide them, as they both have his real name and photo attached to them.

He says the reason people might think he’s “alt-right” is because he likes President Trump and the Pepe the Frog meme (though he says he doesn’t appreciate the appropriation of the meme by hate groups — “I refuse to let a few fringe lunatics ruin one of my favorite memes,” he says.)

“I’m not alt-right, a racist or a fascist,” Borrowdale tells *EW* via email. “I’m a libertarian, which is the opposite of a fascist. I believe in free thought, free speech and free enterprise, along with a healthy dose of tolerance and compassion.”

In regard to his social media posts, Borrowdale says, “I follow the news and politics. I share and comment on

things that interest me on social media. Just because I share something doesn’t necessarily mean I agree with it or with everything in the piece or clip.”

Neve Hewitt is a current student at LCC. Hewitt says she’s never taken a class with Borrowdale; she considered it once, only to be discouraged when she found his Twitter.

“For a while I was considering becoming a religious studies major,” Hewitt says. “He offered a class on Abrahamic religions,” an area Hewitt says she’s interested in.

Hewitt signed up for the class and then Googled Borrowdale; she says she Googles all of her teachers before taking their classes.

“Near the very top of the results was his very public Twitter feed,” Hewitt says. “I’m not opposed to having professors who have conservative viewpoints. I’ve had many. That’s not the problem.”

Hewitt says she came across Borrowdale’s profile before the presidential election and said his Twitter feed had a lot of anti-Hillary Clinton memes, “including some that were very sexist,” she says.

“He was also posting a lot of very negative things about Black Lives Matter and some Islamophobic things, so I immediately dropped the class,” Hewitt says. “I didn’t want to learn anything from this professor.”

Hewitt says she talked to another instructor to ask if there was anything to be done about the content Borrowdale was posting on his Twitter.

Hewitt was told there was nothing that could be done “unless there was a threat of violence toward students or faculty,” she says. But, she says, “You can’t have a professor as a role model speaking the way he does without the threat of violence.”

Canaan Staley is the chapter president of Young Americans for Liberty (YAL), the campus group Borrowdale advises.

Staley says Borrowdale advises the group on important decisions and helps them with outreach. He says his initial reaction to the Twitter thread was that there was not any evidence of Borrowdale’s affiliation with the alt-right.

Staley says a recurring argument he’s seen online of Borrowdale’s ties to the alt-right, specifically from Eugene Antifa, is that photo of Borrowdale with Yiannopoulos.

“That proves nothing; that proves the exact opposite,” Staley says. “Milo is a gay, Jewish man married to a black man. I’m pretty sure that if Professor Borrowdale was an alt-right racist, he wouldn’t be putting his arm around him.”

Caroline Lundquist was also a philosophy instructor at LCC, though she was laid off during last year’s budget cuts. She now works as a philosophy instructor at UO. She worked with Borrowdale at LCC the five years she was at the college.

“His political views are pretty out there,” Lundquist says of Borrowdale. “But one of the things I love about Lane is



that all views are genuinely welcome.”

“I am of the school that professors should feel open to express their views, but there is a line that shouldn’t be crossed — where students are made to feel unwelcome,” Lundquist says.

“I have had students raise concerns,” she says.

Lundquist says Borrowdale was known to express his views openly during classes. She says during her time teaching at LCC, some of Borrowdale’s students approached her with comments that suggested they felt “unsafe in the learning environment.”

“I had students that were concerned about his behaviors towards students,” she says. Lundquist says some students complained to her about Borrowdale calling only on male students or not calling on students of color during lectures.

Lundquist says she directed the students to talk to the interim dean of social sciences, Phil Martinez.

EW contacted Martinez as well as LCC’s public information officer for comment, but got no response before press time.

“As a private citizen, I have a right to free speech, especially political speech,” Borrowdale says. “I don’t give that up when I take a job at a public institution.”

“I also have a union contract which affords me additional job protections. I haven’t violated any college policies or procedures and should be free to speak my mind outside of work,” he says.

“It’s tough when someone is slinging accusations at you. Anything you say is going to look defensive,” Borrowdale says. “What do I say to prove I’m not a racist? That I was married to a Latina for three years? That we have a black guy and two Jews involved with YAL, all of whom love Pepe? That I use MLK’s ‘Letter from a Birmingham Jail’ in my ethics class? When Milo Yiannopoulos, a gay Jew married to a black man advocating for free speech on campus can be called a Nazi, I suppose anyone can.”