

Statement to University Senate

N. Tublitz

27 May 2009

I want to begin by stating my deep appreciation for Prof Coles-Bjerre's enthusiasm and willingness to stand for VP. The VP and Senate Pres positions are not easy jobs and the Senate should be honored that someone of her caliber has stepped forward.

I also want to acknowledge that, as a former Senate President and member of the Senate for over 10 years, it is an unusual situation to have two candidates running for Senate VP. However these are not usual times. We are in the midst of a very serious budget crisis affecting all aspects of university activities. We need to work together as never before to develop solutions to the problems facing us.

As if the fiscal crisis is not a serious enough problem, we are struggling with our governance system. There is a crisis of faith in this body, the Senate, across the breadth and depth of our University. Many believe our governance system is broken and unworkable. Those people, many whom I consider close friends, think we are employees of a large corporation run by a CEO and management team.

I respectfully beg to differ. We are not a corporation, we are a university. We do not run on a business model. We do not have customers or clients. We are an educational institution, of some repute in fact. We run on a different set of rules than a business. Our goals are to teach our students how to live in the complex world of today and to give them the skills to navigate through the world of tomorrow. We are all part of this effort and by we I mean every single person who works here from our outstanding classified staff to the incredibly dedicated teachers I have pleasure to work with. Western academia has an 800 year history of a horizontal governance system where the members of the academy make consensus decisions about the direction of the University.

Unfortunately, we have lost that process here at the University of Oregon and it is time to get it back and working again. We have real hope in the form of a new academically oriented President, an open and accessible Provost, and several well respected Deans. We must work with them to renew our University. Success will only come however by re-establishing the cornerstone of our University, which is our system of shared governance and its centerpiece, this body, the University Senate. This body walks the talk of egalitarianism and democracy. We have librarians, students, officers of administration, classified staff and faculty in this body. This is the only Senate at any major academic institution with such a broad and inclusive membership and we should be proud of this heritage. We engage in respectful dialog and treat

each other with honor not matter what the view. We have however failed to be included in most of the serious decisions being made on this campus and as a result we have lost the respect of our colleagues and co-workers across campus. It is time to reverse that trend and re-establish that respect by re-affirming the primacy of our shared governance system at the University of Oregon.

Shared governance means including all stakeholder groups.

Shared governance means listening to all points of view with respect.

Share governance means working together to solve the difficult problems in front of us.

With the advent of a new administration, we have a unique opportunity to develop a governance structure worthy of the name of shared governance. My years of experience in campus governance from FAC chair to Senate President provide the background and knowledge necessary to speak for all campus groups from tenure related faculty to NTTIF, from classified staff and officers of administration to students.

Everyone on this campus works incredibly hard and deserves to be heard. It is time to work for the benefit of everyone here at the University and to again make this institution a place we can proud of. If elected as VP, I pledge to work tireless to reach those goals and to turn the concept of shared governance into a reality here at the University of Oregon.