

Political Diversity at UO

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In order to get some basic data on the political diversity of the UO faculty I obtained the Lane County voter registration file and merged it with a list of UO faculty. The voter registration file includes self-reported political affiliation. The exact procedures used are described in the Procedures section.

Results:

I only report data for people with the words Professor, Dean, Provost or President in their title. People with the word Professor who also had the word Visiting, Adjunct or Acting in the description of that job title were not included. These criteria, which are undoubtedly imperfect, gave me 746 "faculty."

I was able to match 506 of these people with the voter registration file. Eight were registered as Pacific Green, 389 as Democrats, 78 as no party, and 25 as Republicans. The rest were members of minor parties. As Table 1 shows, UO faculty are about twice as likely to register Democratic as the population of the state, and about one-seventh as likely to register Republican.

TABLE 1: Political Affiliation of the State, County, and University.

	OREGON	LANE COUNTY	UO
Pacific Green	0.6%	0.8%	1.6%
Democratic	39%	42%	77%
None	22%	22%	15%
Republican	36%	32%	5%

(Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding and the omission of minor parties)

To look at political diversity by academic unit, I counted people with multiple appointments listed in the directory once for each appointment. By college, AAA has one matched Republican. Business has five, CAS has 11, and Law, Education, and Music two each. Table 2 shows the

percentages. No college has even half the proportion of Republicans as does the state as a whole. Most UO departments have no faculty that can be identified as registered Republicans using my procedure.

TABLE 2: Political Affiliation by UO College.

	AAA	Business	CAS	Education	Law	Music
Pacific Green	0%	0%	2%	3%	5%	0%
Democratic	85%	50%	79%	84%	74%	63%
None	13%	31%	14%	3%	11%	30%
Republican	2%	17%	4%	6%	11%	7%

(Columns may not add to 100% because of rounding and the omission of minor parties)

Political diversity is lowest in those departments that deal with political or cultural issues. For example, Economics, Political Science, and PPM have a total of zero Republicans. Anthropology, Classics, Comparative Literature, English, Environmental Studies, Ethnic Studies, History, International Studies, Religious studies, Women's Studies, and the Honors College have a total of 3 Republicans.

Procedure:

I obtained the Lane County voter registration file and merged it with a list of UO faculty. Both sources are public information. These data, along with this report, the code used to do the analysis, (in Stata) and an explanatory readme file, are available from me on request.

In Oregon, the Democratic and Republican parties restrict their primaries to party members. Voters declare what party they are members of on the voter registration form. In general, this gives voters an incentive to accurately report which party they most identify with in terms of political orientation. People can also report "not a member of any party." Each Oregon county has an elections office which maintains the file on individual voters for their county. This file is

public record and can be accessed in the county election office or purchased by anyone. I bought the Lane County voter registration file and merged it with the UO Faculty Staff directory, obtained in electronic format from UO Human Resources. This is the same data that is available online through the UO web site.

The UO directory identifies staff by name, department, and title. Administrators have departments that apparently refer to their administrative units - e.g. "College of Arts & Sciences." Some people have a name and title for multiple departments, for example a dean would likely also have their home department listed.

I matched the files on last names and the first three letters of the first name. I only report data for people for whom there was an exact unique match. So, for example, someone listed as Bill Harbaugh in one file, and William Harbaugh in another, was not counted as a match. If the voter file contained multiple people with the same names (by this criteria), I did not match, unless all those people had the same party affiliation. I also tried matching by last name, first name, and middle initial, with essentially identical results.

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The first matching method gave 506 matches or 68%, the second 414 or 56%. Complete matching would not be expected even if both files were error free and if everyone in Lane County had a unique name, since there are many reasons faculty might not be registered in Lane County.

Sources:

Oregon voter registration card: <http://www.co.lane.or.us/Elections/VoterRegForm.htm>

Lane County voter registration file: <http://www.co.lane.or.us/elections/>

Oregon voter FAQ:

http://www.co.lane.or.us/Elections/Voter_Registration_FAQ.htm#Register_by_party

Jan 2006 Statewide Voter registration numbers, by county and affiliation:

<http://www.sos.state.or.us/elections/votreg/06mvr.htm>

UO Phonebook: Provided as a flat file by UO Human Resources.

