

SOU helping lead Oregon's reading science work

On Thursday, September 10, SOU Dean of Education Dr. Jesse Longhurst brought SOU's expertise in educator preparation directly to the Oregon Legislature, testifying before the House Higher Education Committee about the university's work to implement the state's "science of reading" requirements. Dean Longhurst described how SOU and other public universities are preparing future teachers to use evidence-based approaches to reading instruction and helping ensure that graduates enter Oregon classrooms ready to put that knowledge into practice. Her testimony was well received by the Committee and highlighted an important way SOU is contributing to a statewide priority: preparing the educators Oregon needs to help every student become a successful reader.

Dean Longhurst also offered legislators an important perspective on what it will take to make this initiative successful. She reminded the committee members that Oregon's public universities are implementing the new curriculum, but collectively prepare less than half of Oregon's teacher workforce—meaning that the state's success will depend on coordination and investment across the entire educator preparation system. SOU and its public university partners have taken on this work without additional resources, demonstrating their commitment to the state's goals. But, as Dean Longhurst emphasized, if Oregon wants to do this work well and sustain it over time, the state will need to invest in both the Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) doing the work and the Teacher Standards and Practices Commission (TSPC) providing statewide oversight and implementation. SOU is proud to be part of this work—and proud to bring its expertise, experience and commitment to the table as Oregon builds a stronger educator workforce.