



# Why I am running for the Portland Community College Board of Directors (Zone 3) in the May, 2015 election.

**Michael Sonnleitner**

PCC Board of Directors  
www.zone3pcc.com  
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- **Affordable Classes** with low to no tuition increases, as we risk losing access to educational opportunities needed to secure Family-Wage Jobs & Lifelong Learning.
- **Embracing Diversity** throughout PCC & the Portland area, while building bridges of of understanding with underserved communities which reflect both Empathy & Action.
- **Board Transparency** including a new student board member, and increased participation in decision-making by all communities impacted by PCC Board Policies.

The raising of Portland Community College (PCC) tuition and fees reflects the defunding of K -12 and other public education happening in Oregon. **Since 1988 PCC tuition costs have increased from \$23.50 to \$92 per course credit.** Recently tuition was raised to \$99, effective in June, 2016! The portion of the PCC budget provided by state sources declined from 77% in 1999, to 61% in 2006, to just 31% now.

PCC policies are made by an elected Board of Directors, accountable to registered voters. The PCC Board must lobby the Legislature to make education a much higher priority. **Oregon is one of only three states spending more on prisons than on higher education.**

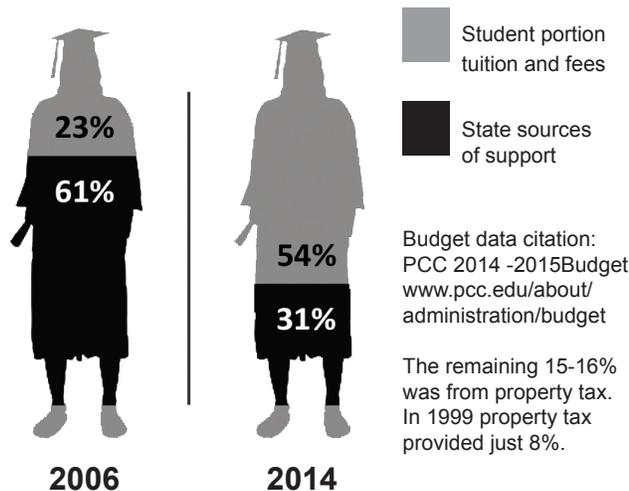
**As a Political Science teacher at PCC for over 26 years, Dr. Sonnleitner** thinks increased and stable funding for education in Oregon needs comprehensive tax reform including personal income tax relief for many, a progressive corporate income tax favoring small businesses, and replacing the “kicker” law with a rainy day fund for hard times. **Currently, Oregon ranks 47th out of 50 states in funding for higher education.**

**As a community activist in the area served by Zone 3 for over 12 years, Michael** has volunteered with the Daybreak Homeless Shelter Network and various human rights groups, while currently serving on the SE Uplift Board (a coalition of 20 Neighborhood Associations) & as Montavilla Vice Chair. **He believes a student delegate to the PCC Board, selected by the PCC District Student Council, would help insure that students will be heard in all PCC Board deliberations.**

For many, PCC provides the last chance to complete high school or improve skills needed in today’s workforce. As a member of the PCC community, Michael recalls how voters have generously approved 3 large bond measures, including \$374 million in 2008 which dramatically expanded PCC’s capacity to serve students. Sadly, this generosity, is being negated by inadequate state budget allocations and increased costs to students, resulting in record student debts (larger than all U,S. credit card debt combined). As a result, enrollments continue to decline and society is left with an increasingly underserved and discouraged population.

In this election, an experienced educator and community activist with a personal understanding of PCC can best help the PCC Board cope with the many challenges ahead. **A VOTE for Michael Sonnleitner will be a vote for the first PCC teacher to be elected to the PCC Board.**

## State Support and Student Share at PCC, 2006 & 2014



The percentage of former PCC students who are defaulting on student loans by missing payments now hovers around 16-19%, near the level that could trigger a cut off of federal funding. **Over the last 3 years, those taking at least one course a year at PCC has declined by about 8,000 students.**

Increasing minimum PCC class size targets, alongside declining enrollment, led to over 1,000 course cancellations last year. This harms faculty, including 60% of PCC’s 1,500 part-time instructors who lost courses during that time. Students suffer from having fewer courses available, often taking unneeded classes to keep their financial aid status.



*You must be the **Change** you wish to see in the **World**.*

Gandhi

**Michael Sonnleitner**  
PCC Board of Directors



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