

University of Oregon Law School Professor Back on Campus after Scandal



Summary: After donning an insensitive costume for Halloween, a UO Law professor took time off and then quietly made her back way to campus.

After over a year away from campus, a [University of Oregon Law School](#) professor is back on the roster to teach fall classes. Professor Nancy Shurtz was photographed in blackface, a form of theatrical make-up that was used by non-black performers to represent a black person. She donned the makeup as part of her Halloween costume in 2016, according to KEZI.com.

Shurtz went on sabbatical shortly after the incident drew criticism by the students. The school claims her sabbatical was already planned and was not related to the incident. Regardless, Shurtz will be teaching classes for the fall session.

During a town hall meeting held by the law school, students expressed their concern about allowing the professor to return. Many students were upset that they were not informed that Shurtz was going to be teaching again and only learned when they saw her name on the fall 2018 course list. The students felt that the school should have told them, suggesting that the university swept her return under the rug. University officials explained that they don't announce when professors return from sabbatical to the student body. The students felt this circumstance warranted special treatment.

The students were particularly upset with how the school handled the incident. Law student Fernanda Douglas said, "For me, it's really the accountability. I just have a concern being in a university where a professor may have made a mistake but no accountability was really shown for the small percentage of the students of color here."

Some of these students claimed they won't take her classes and others stated that she doesn't represent the university properly. They particularly wish they could share their feelings and thoughts with Shurtz directly since she was not at the town hall.

Other students felt that Shurtz made a mistake but it wasn't a deal breaker. Law student Aaron Haynes explained, "She has decades of incredible legal experience and I think students still have a lot to learn from her and the areas that she teaches. It's just a matter of whether the school and university can move on from what happened."

Do you think Shurtz's mistake was such a big deal or should she have been fired? Share your thoughts with us in the comments below.

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