

II. KEY MEASURE ANALYSIS

Agency Mission: ORS 351.009 – The Legislative Assembly declares that the mission of all higher education in Oregon is to: 1) Enable students to extend prior educational experiences in order to reach their full potential as participating and contributing citizens by helping them develop scientific, professional, and technological expertise, together with heightened intellectual, cultural, and humane sensitivities and a sense of purpose; 2) Create, collect, evaluate, store, and pass on the body of knowledge necessary to educate future generations; 3) Provide appropriate instructional, research, and public service programs to enrich the cultural life of Oregon and to support and maintain a healthy state economy.

KPM #3	FIRST-TIME FRESHMEN – Number of entering first-time freshmen	Measure since: 1997
Goal	Access: Expand access to students who meet admission standards – entering freshmen	
Oregon Context	OBM24 – Some college completion, OBM26 – College completion, OBM11 – Per capita income	
Data source	OUS Institutional Research Services, fall fourth-week enrollment reports	
Owner	OUS Strategic Programs and Planning, Kimberly Rambo (541) 346-5777	

1. OUR STRATEGY

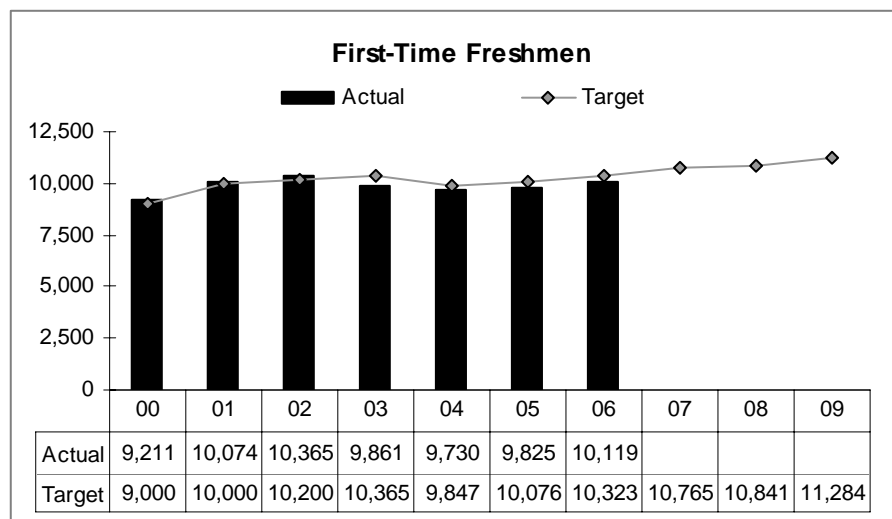
Strengthen collaborative efforts with ODE to enhance college preparation and alignment and streamline process.

2. ABOUT THE TARGETS

Since 2003, enrollment of first-time freshman has fallen below the anticipated number of students. Targets for the upcoming biennium reflect the number of Oregon high school graduates and projected enrollment trends at all OUS universities.

3. HOW WE ARE DOING

Enrollment at OUS institutions continues to increase; however, the growth rate has declined since 2003. This trend is also reflected in the number of first-time freshmen entering Oregon public universities. In fall 2006, enrollment of first-time freshmen increased substantially, returning to numbers observed in the early part of the decade. However, targets for this measure had anticipated stronger growth.



4. HOW WE COMPARE

While there are no national norms for this measure, efforts are underway to identify appropriate standards or comparators.

5. FACTORS AFFECTING RESULTS

College enrollment is influenced by a number of factors including real and perceived college costs, the availability of need-based financial aid, state and regional economic outlooks and job markets, postsecondary educational opportunities, and the aspirations of high school graduates and adult learners. The decline may signal, in part, a loss of enrollment to competition from out-of-state institutions as noted in a 2005 survey of Oregon high school graduates (*Where Have Oregon’s Graduates Gone?*).

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6. WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

In addition to cross-sector alignment initiatives, OUS is strengthening efforts to communicate the importance of a college education for personal fulfillment, for Oregon’s workforce, and for securing a family-wage job. As the demographic character of Oregon’s population shifts, a subcommittee of the State Board’s Strategic Initiatives Committee is exploring means to make higher education an attainable ambition for all citizens, and to provide the necessary programs to support the unique needs of future students. Finally, the capacity of Oregon’s public universities to accept and retain new students must be supported through funding for faculty, facilities, and student support. In order to provide additional data on this topic, OUS conducts a survey biennially to understand the behaviors and choices of Oregon’s high school graduates and to monitor in-coming students’ needs and perceptions.

7. ABOUT THE DATA

Data are collected in the fourth week of fall term and represent one academic year. Each university provides data along prescribed parameters to a central OUS database; following the implementation of validation programs, enrollment reports are generated for consistent reporting across the system. Additional and disaggregated enrollment data are presented in the OUS Fact Book, available online at www.ous.edu.