



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Phone: 503-378-5690 | Email: Cheryl.L.Myers@state.or.us
775 Court Street NE | Salem, OR 97301
oregon.gov/HigherEd

Ben Cannon, Executive Director; Cheryl Myers, Chief of Staff, cheryl.l.myers@state.or.us

Agency Update:

July, 2016 | Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) has formally released the 2016-20 Strategic Plan for higher education after a year of work and collaboration. The plan provides a foundation and scaffolding for preparing more Oregonians with the degrees, certificates, and training they need to succeed in their goals and careers.

- [Download the full HECC 2016-20 Strategic Plan Here](#)
- [Read the Executive Summary Here](#)

The plan defines six key priorities that will guide higher education funding and policy decisions within the HECC authority, including:

- **Goal-setting:** sharpening state higher education goals in specific areas, including for working-age adults, and better reporting our progress towards meeting them.
- **Public College and University Funding:** supporting sustainable state funding linked to student success.
- **Pathways:** simplifying and aligning student pathways from cradle to career.
- **Student Support:** enhancing student success, safety, and completion.
- **College Affordability:** limiting student costs for attending college in Oregon.
- **Economic and Community Impact:** contributing to prosperous workforce, economy, and communities.

Oregon has made progress toward the state's 40-40-20 goal, yet not all of the state's populations have experienced equally the benefits of improving completion rates. The HECC will take a lead role in convening partners to further align programming and supports to close achievement and opportunity gaps for low-income students, students of

Our Commission

The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is dedicated to fostering and sustaining the best, most rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond a high school diploma. Oregon's higher education and workforce system serves hundreds of thousands of learners through seven public universities, 17 public community colleges, private and independent colleges and universities, workforce programs, and private career and trade schools., who oversees the work of the HECC agency.

Established in 2011, HECC is a 14-member volunteer commission responsible for advising the Oregon Legislature, the Governor, and the Chief Education Office on higher education policy. The Commission is supported by an executive director who oversees the HECC agency. For more information, see About Us on the HECC website.

July 21, 2016: Funding and Achievement Subcommittee, Salem

August 10, 2016: Funding and Achievement Subcommittee, The Dalles

August 10, 2016, Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee, The Dalles

August 11, 2016, Full Higher Education Coordinating Commission Meeting, The Dalles

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color, and recent high school graduates—and to improve connections between Oregon’s education and workforce systems.

The strategic plan is anchored by the Commission’s [Equity Lens](#), which commits the HECC to ensuring that its policy and resource allocation decisions advance equity. It also builds on the Commission’s [Strategic Plan 2014-15](#), which set a foundation for the Commission’s efforts to “steer and cheer” the higher education enterprise. The plan will provide the framework for policy and funding decisions through 2020, and HECC staff have already started developing implementation plans.

Commissioner appointment: In June, HECC welcomed new commissioner Enrique Farrera, who has been appointed to the non-voting, institutional staff board member position on the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Mr. Farrera is Academic Advisor and Career Coach at Clackamas Community College (CCC), where he also serves as Association President of the Classified Association of CCC, as well as on the Presidents Council and Budgetary Advisory Group. In May, Commissioners David Rives, Duncan Wyse, and Ramon Ramirez were reappointed to continue their service as voting members on the HECC.

Funding and Coordination to Achieve Oregon’s Goals

Commission reviews major higher education funding items for 2017-19 budget recommendation: At its June meetings, the Commission closely reviewed the major funding items in its Agency Request Budget (ARB), after reviewing staff recommendations and budget presentations and hearing public testimony over numerous previous meetings. For the 2017-2019 ARB, HECC staff identified [new funding requests proposed in discrete policy option packages](#) (POPs), including significant increases to sufficiently fund and sustain institutional operations of the public colleges and universities, key state financial aid programs, and strategic investments, including:

- Community College Support Fund (CCSF): a total of \$795M including a proposed increase of \$244.8 M in order to support campus operations and improve the ability of colleges to invest in affordability, quality and student success.
- Public University Support Fund (PUSF): a total of \$943M including a [proposed increase of \\$278M](#) in order to support campus operations, mitigate tuition increases and improve the ability of universities to invest in quality and student success.
- Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG): a total of \$200M including a [proposed increase of \\$60.6M](#) to help approximately 31,000 additional low-income students afford and complete college through need-based grant support of the OOG.
- Oregon Promise: a [proposed increase of \\$34M](#) including \$30M in additional funding to continue the existing funding level, and \$4M for possible enhancements to the program to promote degree completion.
- Workforce Investment: [proposed funding at current service level for HECC workforce activities](#), as well as a proposed policy option package of \$15M in new funds for youth employment.
- HECC agency information technology and infrastructure needs: a proposal of \$1.7M for HECC infrastructure, staffing, and information technology needs.
- Other Policy Option Packages (POPs): in addition to the funding items above, Executive Director Ben Cannon noted other new state investments, ranging from \$15K to \$1M, and focused on reporting and tracking of state goals, simplifying and enhancing student pathways, fostering student success, improving affordability, and strengthening community and economic impact.

The complete ARB will be presented to the full Commission for final approval at its August meeting, to be held at Columbia Gorge Community College in The Dalles.

Legislative update: recent policy reports: The Oregon Legislature in 2015 charged the HECC with research on a number of higher education policy questions of critical interest to the state. After months of work group discussions, collaborative activity and agency research, the HECC approved the following three reports at its May and June meeting, and submitted the following legislative reports:

- [House Bill 3308 \(2015\)](#) focusing on addressing disparities in higher education through continuing education.
- [House Bill 3335 \(2015\)](#) updating information on college completion initiatives and Oregonians with “some college, no degree”.
- [Senate Bill 473 \(2015\)](#) regarding collecting sexual orientation information and preferred names at Oregon’s community colleges.
- [House Bill 2525 \(2015\)](#): Oregon transfer student success (see detailed description below)

Affordability and Financial Aid

Oregon #1 for FAFSA completion improvement. Over the last year, Oregon has seen the nation’s highest percent increase in FAFSA completion by high school seniors. By successfully completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), over a thousand more Oregon students have gained access to federal and state financial aid. According to a [recent analysis of FAFSA completion data](#), as of April, 2016, approximately 8.8% more Oregon high school seniors had completed a FAFSA than at the same point in 2015. This increase is particularly notable given that nationally, the number of FAFSA completions dropped 3.2% over the same period. Oregon’s improvements correspond with this year’s launch of the highly publicized Oregon Promise program, which requires the FAFSA as a component of the grant application, as well as the success of numerous proactive outreach efforts. Oregon’s recent outreach efforts include the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion’s (OSAC’s) innovative and growing [FAFSA](#)

[Plus+ initiative which has received national attention for fostering improvements](#) in FAFSA completion of high school seniors at participating sites, OSAC's longstanding College Goal Oregon events statewide, as well as initiatives and programs led by college access organizations, K-12 schools and districts, and numerous other partners.

Dramatic Rise in Valid Scholarship Applications: In other good news for college affordability, we're proud to report that valid OSAC scholarship applications increased by 40% from 2015 to 2016 (17,343 from 12,400)! OSAC administers more than 500 private scholarships for Oregon students.

FAFSA Plus+ Outreach Effort Expands, Seeks New Partners: The FAFSA Plus+ program currently operates at more than 110 sites across the state, providing schools and other entities with key data and resources they need to target outreach efforts and proactively support students in completing the FAFSA. On average, FAFSA Plus+ sites have a FAFSA completion rate among high school seniors that is 12% higher than the statewide average. OSAC is currently accepting applications for new FAFSA Plus+ sites, and encourages school districts, high schools, TRIO programs, Tribal Education Agencies, Indian Organizations, and community-based organizations to [complete the non-competitive application here](#).

Oregon Opportunity Grant Awarding Update: Effective for the 2016-2017 academic year, Oregon Opportunity Grants will be awarded first to students with the greatest financial need, and OSAC is busy notifying students of these awards. OSAC is using the federally calculated Expected Family Contribution (EFC) to determine financial need and will award grants based on students' EFCs, starting with EFCs of \$0. This is a change in policy resulting from the Legislative Assembly's passage of House Bill 2407 during the 2015 Legislative session. OSAC will continue to make awards until funds are exhausted. A fixed amount of \$2,250 is available for full-time, full-year attendance at any eligible Oregon-based postsecondary institution. Students' financial need must be at or above \$2,250 to be considered. OSAC releases a portion of the award to the student's school account at the start of each academic term (quarter or semester) and prorates awards for students enrolled at least half time.

Oregon Promise: As of July 2016, more than 9,200 students have received notice of their eligibility for grants under Oregon Promise; awards are still in process. The minimum grant per eligible student is \$1,000. High school graduates across the state—from Ontario to Portland and beyond—have received notice of their eligibility for the Oregon Promise, as many prepare to enter community college next year.

Textbook affordability through Open Education Resources: The high cost of textbooks is a significant factor in college affordability. The Oregon Legislature and Governor invested in improving textbook affordability through House Bill 2871 (2015), with a specific focus on open educational resources (OERs), that can serve as low or no-cost replacements for textbooks. HECC has launched the OER Grant Program, and recently awarded grants to support the development and adoption of OERS in course at the following institutions: Blue Mountain Community College, Linn Benton CC, Mt Hood CC, Oregon State University, Portland CC, Southern Oregon University, Treasure Valley CC, University of Oregon, and Western Oregon University.

Supporting Pathways and Student Success

Summer Bridge Program Starts Soon: The ASPIRE summer Bridge provides eMentoring to graduating high school seniors who plan on attending an ASPIRE college; the program is held at Blue Mountain Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Tillamook Bay Community College or the University of Oregon. During the summer, students receive 1:1 eMentoring, specific information on their college choice, and informational emails about registration, housing orientation, and more. To find out more about the Summer Bridge Program and other ASPIRE activities, contact lorianne.m.ellis@state.or.us.

STEM grants support pathways for underserved students: The HECC is pleased to announce award of nearly \$2M in grants to recruit, retain and support underserved students for programs offered at community colleges and public universities that lead to high wage and high demand jobs related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The 2015 Oregon Legislature provided start-up funding for this grant program. Awardees include: Portland Community College; Oregon State University; Oregon Health & Science University; Clackamas Community College; Rogue Community College; Western Oregon University; Oregon Institute of Technology; Klamath Community College; and Chemeketa Community College.

Facilitating transfer student pathways: At its June meeting, the HECC voted unanimously to accept and submit to the Legislature a report on the Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities pursuant to House Bill 2525 (2015). The report reviews historical efforts in Oregon to address barriers to transfer efficiency, including previous legislation, and surveys the current state of the community college to university transfer system. The report concludes with a set of principles and recommendations for funding to re-align the state's community colleges and universities' transfer degree requirements as they are implemented in the statewide degrees such as the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer. [A copy of the final report and corresponding recommendations can be found here.](#)

Accelerated Learning Standards: Last spring the HECC requested that a workgroup of representatives from the University Provosts Council and the Community College Chief Academic Officers review the topic of accelerated learning. The workgroup met monthly for over a year and as a result of collaborative efforts, recommended the adoption of new accelerated learning standards. The Commission reviewed the Standards and voted unanimously to adopt the standards as presented by staff. [A copy of the Standards can be found here.](#)

New Programs Approved: At its March-June commission meetings, the Commission approved the following academic programs (and new program location) at Oregon community colleges and universities: Oregon Institute of Technology—MS in Allied Health; Oregon State University—M.Eng/M.S./Ph.D, Bioengineering; M.S., Data Analytics; Southern Oregon University—Bachelor of Music; University of Oregon—B.A./B.S. Arts Management; M.S. Sports Product Design; Central Oregon Community College—Certificate of Completion, Nursing Assisting; Chemeketa Community College—A.S., Robotics Oregon Coast Community College: A.A.S, Accounting, A.A.S., Administrative Assistant; Portland Community College—Certificate, Healthcare Careers; Certificate, Sterile Process Technology; Certificate, Medical Administrative Assistant; Certificate, Pharmacy Technician; Rogue Community College—Certificate, Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder; Certificate: Sterile Processing Technician; Southwestern Oregon Community College—Certificate of Completion, Dental Assisting.

Economic and Community Impact

Oregon's Dislocated Worker (DW) Team continues to deliver our new Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) Rapid Response training to statewide participants. So far, they have trained Local Board directors and staff, WIOA service provider managers and staff, Oregon Employment Department managers, WorkSource front-line staff, Trade Act Navigators and Business Team members. The audience has continued to expand as individuals and agencies/organizations learn about their role in the new Rapid Response system. In response to requests from the Department of Labor, the team is also beginning to offer support and training to other states within Region 6, including Washington, Idaho, and possibly Hawaii. The DW Team is also in the process of developing and revising Rapid Response Policies and Procedures that are required under WIOA, and revising the Oregon Dislocated Worker Guide for 2016-2017. This comprehensive guide is used by our local boards/service providers as the foundational informational piece for laid-off workers in Oregon.

Other Updates

HECC Leadership changes: Bob Brew hired as Deputy Executive Director: Bob Brew, current director of the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion, has been hired as Deputy Executive Director for the HECC. The position of Deputy Executive Director was developed to fill important internal leadership and administrative roles within the agency, expanding the current responsibilities of the Chief of Staff. In the new role, Brew will lead the agency's internal operations and administration, including processes designed to improve internal communications, inter-office collaborations, and organizational efficiency. Cheryl Myers hired as Chief Culture, Diversity, & Inclusion Director: Cheryl Myers, who has served the HECC as Chief of Staff since early 2014, will transition to a new position of Chief Culture, Diversity, & Inclusion Officer in July. Ms. Myers has served as Chief of Staff since the first year of the agency and Commission's full authorities, and has played a foundational role in supporting the Commission and agency. Dr. Amy Cox hired as new Director of Research and Data: Dr. Amy Cox has been hired as the new Director of Research and Data for the HECC. Dr. Cox joins the HECC after serving more than a decade in research and social science positions for the RAND Corporation, where she has led teams conducting research and analysis on public policy and governmental services.

HECC Leadership participated in several recent events: Community conversations surrounding the updated Oregon American Indian/Alaskan Native State Education Plan on March 10th in Warm Springs and April 27th in Pendleton; the Legislative Commission on Indian Services Spring Gathering on May 19th in Florence.

C Expanded Website coming soon: The HECC is currently developing a new and expanded website to fully represent the mission and scope of the Commission and agency work. Thanks to all partners who have helped us with feedback through our recent tests and surveys!

College and Career Readiness Event Calendar: OSAC is pleased to share the College and Career Readiness Event Calendar and welcomes submissions of events for students, parents, and educators. To submit an event for consideration, please email us.

HECC News Clips service: The HECC provides a regular email service including a selection of news clips primarily related to Oregon postsecondary education. If you wish to sign up for this email, please [subscribe to news clips here](#).

For more on current work of the HECC, please see recent meeting materials, or go to oregon.gov/HigherEd.