

NEWS RELEASE

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## HECC Executive Director Announces Key Appointment

Ben Cannon, Executive Director of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission, announced today the appointment of Dr. Jim Middleton to a key leadership position.

Beginning this October, Jim Middleton will join the statewide postsecondary leadership as Commissioner for Community College Services and Director of the Department for Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD). Dr. Middleton is currently president of Central Oregon Community College (COCC), and has served more than 30 years as a community college administrator and 10 years teaching in high schools and community colleges. Dr. Middleton is officially retiring as COCC's President in July 2014, after 10 years of service of leadership to the college. As COCC's President, Dr. Middleton has helped lead the college through nationally distinctive enrollment growth, coordinated transformational changes in the college's instructional facilities, and expanded public/private partnerships.

As Commissioner, Dr. Middleton's responsibilities will be to support the HECC's work on budget, funding, support, and coordination issues for Oregon's 17 community colleges. He will provide policy leadership for the CCWD as it transitions to becoming a department within the HECC on July 1, 2015, with Deputy Commissioner Krissa Caldwell continuing to provide operational and day-to-day oversight of CCWD through the transition. Dr. Middleton will succeed Gerald Hamilton, who leads CCWD as its Interim Executive Director until June 30, 2014.

Ben Cannon says, "Jim Middleton is an extraordinary leader, who intricately understands the community college system and workforce opportunities. We are thrilled to have the benefit of his deep experience and thoughtful leadership at the state level. We are also grateful for the service that Gerald Hamilton provided to Oregon and to the HECC at a critical juncture for higher education in Oregon."

Prior to coming to COCC, Dr. Middleton served for 10 years as president of the College of Marin in California, and subsequently, as visiting scholar at the Community College Leadership Development Initiatives at Claremont Graduate University. Prior to Marin, he spent 11 years at Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, where he helped guide the college in its transformation from a local community college to a regional four-year college while retaining a strong community college program.

Dr. Middleton is currently a member of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, and previously served on the Executive Board of the Oregon Community College Association. He holds a bachelor's degree in European literature and thought from the University of Iowa; a master's degree in English literature from the University of Leeds in England; a master's degree in English and an educational specialist degree in community college education from the University of Iowa; and a doctorate of arts in English language and literature from the University of Michigan.

Dr. Middleton will serve as Commissioner on a part-time basis beginning October 13, 2014. His service will conclude no later than

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*The Mission of the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development is to contribute leadership and resources to increase the skills, knowledge and career opportunities of Oregonians.*

<http://www.oregon.gov/CCWD/> 503-947-2401

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