



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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Agency Update:

June, 2015 | The work of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's (HECC) is focused on four key functions described in the 2014 [HECC Strategic Plan](#): 1) broaden the pathways to our 40/40/20 goals, 2) make the pathways accessible, affordable and supportive for students, 3) steer the higher education enterprise, and 4) cheer the promotion of college completion and career readiness. Recent work includes a focus on the reporting and analysis for the 2015 Legislative Session, approval of an outcomes-based funding model for Oregon's public universities, and numerous policy and program initiatives described here.

The commencement season is in full swing, and we send congratulations to the tens of thousands of students who are expected to complete certificate and degree programs at a public Oregon college or university this month and next. Here at the HECC we're looking forward to another milestone as we anticipate the Oregon Legislature's final decisions on budgets and bills that will have a significant impact on postsecondary education, and we're grateful for the high level of engagement and collaboration we've had from our campus partners. The HECC reported extensively to the Oregon Legislature in March and April on a proposed consolidated postsecondary budget including state investment in Oregon's 17 community colleges, 7 public universities, the Oregon Health & Science University, and state need-based aid and student access programs administered by the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC), workforce programs, and funding for Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD), Private Postsecondary education and HECC agency operations. We expect the Legislature to make decisions in the near future on funding levels and key bills.

Our Commission

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is dedicated to fostering and sustaining pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond a high school diploma. HECC's statutory authorities include development of biennial budget recommendations, funding allocations to community colleges and public universities, approval of new academic programs in the public system, the Oregon Opportunity Grant (state need-based student aid), authorization of degrees proposed by private and out-of-state distance providers, licensing private career and trade schools, and oversight of programs for veterans.

NOTE: The Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) will be renamed the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development due to the enactment of HB 2408 (2015), recently signed by the Governor. The bill also changes the title of the department's head from "Commissioner" to "Director." These changes create consistency with other offices of the HECC, including the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) and the Office of University Coordination. *The HECC update includes information from OSAC, private postsecondary and from CCWD.*

Future Funding Opportunities

Not at this time.

Upcoming Events

August 5, 2015, Funding and Achievement Subcommittee, Portland

August 12, 2015, Student and Institutional Success Subcommittee, Bend

August 13, 2015, Full Higher Education Coordinating Commission Meeting, Bend

Note: The Commission is not meeting in July, 2015.

The HECC has started a monthly newsletter and welcomes you to join our mailing list. Sign up at www.oregon.gov/HigherEd. HECC is also on Twitter Find us at **OregonHECC**.

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission is a 14-member, volunteer board, and all meetings are public. For email notices of upcoming public HECC meetings, sign up at www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

On June 16, the Education Subcommittee of Ways and Means passed out the HECC's budget bill (HB 5024) and it will be considered by the full Ways and Means committee and both chambers. The bill contains 20-30% biennium-over-biennium increases for the Community College Support Fund (to \$550M), the Public University Support Fund (to \$665M), and the Oregon Opportunity Grant (to \$141M); if adopted it would represent the largest single-biennium reinvestment in Oregon higher education in at least two decades. Although the status is changing fast on bills as the session progresses, click [here for the HECC legislative update](#) reported at our June 11 Commission meeting. There has been extensive discussion concerning Senate Bill 81 that would implement a free community college program. The questions identified by the Commission in its study of a program of this sort remain front and center in legislative discussions around this bill. The HECC study is available on our [reports page here](#).

In April, the [Commission approved a new Student Success and Completion Model for the seven Oregon public universities](#). This approach shifts the basis for state funding distribution from enrollment—seats in a class— to access *and* successful completion of degrees for resident students. Tim Nesbitt, chair of the Higher Education Coordination Commission, said, "Our current funding model fails to recognize the investments needed to ensure student success. Our new model will direct more resources to supporting students and promoting the timely completion of programs and degrees, with extra attention to the needs of historically under-served college students. Universities will be rewarded for implementing strategies that achieve these goals and encouraged to continue the innovation and investment needed to serve an increasingly diverse student population who are coming of age in an increasingly challenging knowledge economy." A link to the [HECC's April press release is here](#). This model aligns state funding to advance toward Oregon's 40-40-20 educational attainment goal, and directs more resources to supporting students and promoting completion of programs and degrees, with extra attention to the needs of historically under-served college students. The approved model applies only to Oregon's 7 public universities, with phase-in beginning in fall 2015. Adding outcomes-based components to the community college funding distribution system remains a work in progress. A community college technical work group is being formed, and a fall 2015 dialogue with stakeholders is anticipated.

At its [June meeting in Salem](#), the Commission completed an informational series on key issues in higher education with a final presentation on research and innovation, approved mission statements for Oregon State University, Portland State University, and University of Oregon, and initiated the planning for the development of an updated 2015-2020 strategic plan, among other actions. The meeting materials and agendas for all public HECC meetings can be found on our website at www.oregon.gov/highered.

New leadership: Governor Brown announced her appointment of [Dr. Salam Noor, currently HECC Director of Academic Planning and Policy, to be Oregon's next Deputy Superintendent and head of the Oregon Department of Education](#). We appreciate Dr. Noor's service to the HECC, where he has brought a nuanced understanding of the K-12 -higher education connection, expertise in supporting learners throughout their educational journeys, and a commitment to equity and inclusive leadership. Three Oregon public universities have had exciting announcements this spring of new presidents to lead their campuses. HECC welcomes incoming presidents [Rex Fuller of Western Oregon University](#), [Tom Insko of Eastern Oregon University](#), and [Michael H. Schill of University of Oregon](#). See campus websites for more information.

The HECC recently announced the hiring of [Dr. Daniel E. Findley as Director of the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development \(CCWD\)](#). Dr. Findley joins the HECC from Portland Community College, where he has served as Division Dean for Math and Industry Technology since 2007, most recently at the Sylvania Campus. A community college leader and respected voice in career and technical education (CTE) and innovation, Findley has contributed widely to CTE and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives and innovations statewide, and brings a wide spectrum of experience in education and industry. [Dr. Jim Middleton, will retire this month as Interim Commissioner at CCWD](#), and was recognized at the June HECC meeting for his service. [Krissa Caldwell, Deputy Commissioner at CCWD, will also retire this month after many years](#) of dedicated service to Oregonians.

Supporting Accessible, Affordable Pathways

[Oregon Opportunity Grants:](#) House Bill 2407 A would redesign the Oregon Opportunity Grant to promote affordability for Oregon students. It has been the HECC's top priority for the 2015 Legislative Session. It would target state grants to the thousands of Oregon's high-need, high-promise students who are on track to succeed academically but struggling with college costs. The redesign is intended to improve predictability by creating an extended application period and guarantee the grant in the second year to eligible students who receive it their first year.

The Oregon Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) is conducting a FAFSA Completion Pilot Project to encourage Oregon students to submit their Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). An increase in FAFSA submissions will result in higher Pell grant funding coming into the state to help Oregonians pay for their college education. Through a data-sharing agreement, the current participating sites receive a list of their graduating senior class or current college students letting them know whether or not the student has completed and submitted a FAFSA. After receiving this list, OSAC will help each of the sites reach these students through 1:1 mentoring, classroom activities and presentations, FAFSA workshops, and FAFSA webinars. These sites will also receive technical support, training, resources, and materials around filling out the FAFSA. Please contact Lori Ellis, ASPIRE and Outreach Administrator, if your site is interested in participating! Contact info: Lorianne.m.ellis@state.or.us or 541-687-7471.

Textbook affordability: At its May meeting, a workgroup of the HECC presented to the Commission a [Final Report and Recommendations on Textbook Affordability](#), featuring an assessment of the significant challenge of rising textbook costs for Oregon students, as well as recommendations on promising tools, approaches, and programs to help alleviate this challenge.

Salem-Keizer expansion of ASPIRE: Oregon ASPIRE is expanding its program by bringing on the very first district-wide program in the state. Oregon ASPIRE matches trained and supportive adult volunteer mentors with middle school, high school and college students to develop a plan for college and career readiness, and to help them meet their education goals beyond high school. The Salem-Keizer School District (SKSD) and the Salem-Keizer Education Foundation (SKEF) are partnering to bring ASPIRE into 11 middle schools and 9 high schools. Click [here for a map of all ASPIRE locations](#).

Supporting Pathways toward 40/40/20

The HECC is developing accessible, affordable, and supportive student pathways, and implementation strategies for the state's 40/40/20 goals.

Colleges and universities agree to use Smarter Balanced scores and senior coursework rigor in course placement: Results from the new Smarter Balanced tests tell Oregon students (and their parents and educators) whether they are on track learning the skills and knowledge needed for success in college. Agreements adopted by Oregon's public colleges and universities will allow students who score well to use the results to enroll directly in credit-bearing courses once they get to college. Students in the class of 2016 are the first to be eligible to take advantage of the agreements when they get to college, should technical requirements be resolved as expected in the coming months. The agreements allow high school juniors who score a 3 or 4 on the Smarter Balanced tests and meet additional requirements for academic rigor in classes during grade 12 to enroll directly in college credit-bearing classes. For more information, see the [Core to College website](#).

Noncredit training certificates approved: The Governor recently signed [HB 2410](#) that allows Oregon community colleges to offer noncredit training certificates, which will help meet needs of employers and employees. Access to education and workforce preparation are the strengths of Oregon's community colleges, which are poised to better meet the needs of their communities.

The Legislature has also approved bills which direct the HECC on work related to successful transitions between educational sectors. [HB 2681-A](#) directs the HECC and State Board of Education to oversee a work group to examine and recommend effective processes and strategies for placing students in courses at community colleges. [HB 2525-A](#) directs HECC to develop standards related to transferability of credits for community colleges and public universities.

GED Update: In partnership with GED Testing Service, the state GED® program has adopted a Homeless Youth Policy for homeless youth who do not have formal Government-issued identification. As of April 21, 2015 Homeless youth who qualify under the McKinney-Vento Act/Title X Program are now eligible to test under the new testing policy. Homeless youth who qualify must present two forms of documents to a testing center, including a student school ID and a letter from the school district on district letter head, signed by an administrator or the school district liaison. The letter must also have a clear photo of the student, student date of birth, and the student signature. School districts may request a copy of a sample letter by contacting the State GED Administrator Teresa Alonso Leon at teresa.alonsoleon@state.or.us. To learn more about the McKinney-Vento Act/Title X Program, contact the State Coordinator on Homeless Education Programs, Dona Bolt, at dona.bolt@state.or.us or 503 947-5781.

Other Updates:

With for-profit college Heald-Portland's closure, HECC provides bridge for former students: After a decision by the national Corinthian Colleges group to abruptly close local college Heald-Portland last month, the HECC Office of Private Postsecondary Education shifted its role from authorization of programs to direct support for the 306 students who were enrolled at the time. HECC staff has worked to help students navigate their path forward academically and financially, including

coordinating transfer options, providing information on the possibility of tuition refunds through a surety bond, communicating transcript processes, and more. Former students of Heald can find resources on our website where we have posted an [information sheet for students](#), and students are encouraged to ask continuing questions of the HECC, which stands ready to provide assistance.

With the dissolution of the Oregon University System (OUS), the [OUS Chancellor's Office website resources](#) at www.ous.edu will no longer be live to the public after July 1, 2015; there will be information posted there on how to access key information through campuses, the HECC, or other entities, such as information on past State Board of Higher education records, data and research, and more.

[For more on current work of the HECC, please see recent meeting materials, or go to \[oregon.gov/HigherEd\]\(http://oregon.gov/HigherEd\).](#)