

**DRAFT Summary Points**  
**Southern Oregon Institutional Evaluation**  
**December 2017**

*ORS 352.061 requires the HECC to conduct annual evaluations of public universities in Oregon according to specific statutory criteria. Overall, the HECC's approach is to assess the university's contributions to statewide goals for higher education. We do not purport to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the university against its own mission. A summary of key findings follows:*

1. **Accreditation:** SOU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), and is fully on track with the 7-year NWCCU cycle for accreditation. It was last accredited following its Year Seven evaluation in 2017. SOU is working on recommendations made during that evaluation including the establishment and assessment of their previously defined core themes as they related to the definition of mission fulfillment. SOU is also preparing the next report (Year One) in the cycle, written from the perspective of their recently defined vision, mission, values, strategic directions, and new core themes.
2. **Economic impact:** The 2015 Institutional Review Report estimates the economic impact of the SOU in 2013-14 as \$237 million.
3. **Student access and student success:** SOU's enrollment of underrepresented students has been steadily increasing year-over-year, representing a 33% growth since 2011. SOU's enrollment has increased 20.8% since Fall, 2008, but is down 9.0% from its post-recession peak in 2011. Growth since 2008 has been driven by non-resident students, who are up almost 78% over that time period. Resident student enrollment peaked in 2011 and, despite an 18% decline from 2011 and 2016, remains 4.7% higher today than in 2008. In Fall, 2017 resident students account for roughly 68% of SOU's student body. SOU awarded 3.1% more degrees in 2016-17 than the prior year, continuing a growth trend that has increased by 5.7% since 2013. The most recent six-year graduation rate is 37.5% for Pell Grant recipients, 44.6% for underrepresented minority students, and 46.1% for all students. SOU is steadily increasing the number of degrees awarded to underrepresented minority students.
4. **Affordability:** For 2017-18, SOU's resident undergraduate tuition increased by 9.0%, and the estimated total cost of attendance increased by 6.3% to \$26,971. For SOU students who leave the university with federal government-backed debt, their average federal government-backed debt load is \$23,492.
5. **Academic Quality and Research:** SOU maintains good standing with its regional accreditor. For 2016-17, SOU reported total research expenditures of approximately \$600,000.
6. **Collaboration:** SOU contributes to a host of collaborative activities with other post-secondary institutions. Significant among them is its partnership with OHSU School of Nursing and co-enrollment agreements and shared facilities with Rogue Community College. About 46.3% of SOU's Fall 2017 newly admitted undergraduates were transfer students, most of them from RCC.
7. **Shared administrative services:** SOU participates in all of the appropriate services offered by the University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE).

8. **Financial Metrics:** Presented both with and without the impact of GASB 68, although only the ratios with GASB 68 are analyzed in the full evaluation:

<b>SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY RATIOS WITH GASB 68</b>				
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
Viability Ratio	29.00%	19.00%	21.00%	>125%
Primary Reserve Ratio	18.80%	9.20%	10.50%	>40%
Net Operating Revenues Ratio	-2.00%	-14.70%	-5.40%	>4%
Return on Net Assets Ratio	32.40%	88.40%	11.20%	>6%
Debt Burden Ratio	4.10%	3.60%	4.10%	<5%

<b>SOUTHERN OREGON UNIVERSITY RATIOS WITHOUT GASB 68</b>				
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
Viability Ratio	34.00%	43.00%	52.00%	>125%
Primary Reserve Ratio	20.60%	22.40%	26.30%	>40%
Net Operating Revenues Ratio	-9.10%	-4.80%	-2.10%	>4%
Return on Net Assets Ratio	14.90%	100.00%	12.70%	>6%
Debt Burden Ratio	3.80%	4.00%	4.30%	<5%

Displayed benchmarks for public universities from NACUBO publications.

9. **Board of Trustees:** In 2017, the SOU Board of Trustees appears to have met its legal responsibilities for providing public notice, accessibility, and records. In 2017, the Board exercised many of the powers reserved for it under law, including presidential oversight, budget adoption, tuition adoption, debt issuance, and program approval (for HECC consideration).