
Docket Item:

October 2018 Legislative Update

Summary:

Legislative Concept Details

Continuing until the Commission approves the 2019 legislative package near the end of 2018, legislative concepts will be previewed for the Commission. To date, the Commission has received updates on the following concepts, which are reviewable in past meeting packets:

- eTranscripts Feasibility Workgroup – June meeting
- Accelerated learning credit definitions – June meeting
- Race conscious private scholarships – June meeting
- Oregon Promise Program modifications – August meeting
- Increased support for the Oregon Youth Conservation Corps – August meeting
- Removing restrictions on implied authority – August meeting

Since providing an update on race conscious private scholarships, staff has worked with the Department of Justice to clarify the agency's authority to list and administer privately funded scholarship opportunities that have race conscious criteria. This concept is being withdrawn because the agency can, under current statutory authority, administer such scholarships and is likely to begin to do so in the near future.

Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities Modifications

With the passage of HB 2998 (2017), HECC staff, led by Patrick Crane and Veronica Dujon, have been coordinating the efforts of colleges and universities to develop a unified transfer system, has made substantial progress in developing a foundational core of transferable courses, and is working on the first set of major-specific course maps.

When HB 2998 was passed, it left untouched ORS 350.395, commonly known as the Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. This statute requires the Commission to develop standards related to the Oregon Transfer Module and the AAOT degrees, but does not provide HECC the authority to develop standards pertaining to the new transfer pathways being established.

With the work of establishing transfer pathways well underway, a shift must be made toward mechanisms to sustain these pathways over time. This proposed legislative concept provides a route toward sustainability and maintenance by:

- Incorporating the HB 2998 transfer system into the Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities
- Requiring HECC to consult a representative group of college and university faculty and staff in developing maintenance standards
- Establishing a mandate for a transfer portal
- Updating reporting requirements

Native American Student Grant

This concept establishes a new financial aid program for certain students attending a community college, public university, or private non-profit university if the student:

- Is a member of a federally recognized Native American tribe or band or formerly recognized tribe or band
- Is a member of a Native American tribe that is historically based in Oregon
- Is a first or second generation descendent of the above categories
- Is a Native Alaskan or a Native Hawaiian

The grant is available to any Oregon resident meeting one of the above criteria, and any Oregon non-resident meeting the second criterion. The grant is available to any student that enrolls in the program for the first time at or under the age of 25, attends at least half-time, and who has not yet attained a Bachelor's degree.

The grant pays tuition costs for eligible students, and does not affect the ability of students to participate in other state, federal, or tribal student aid programs.

Lastly, because it is difficult to model the program, the legislation includes mechanisms to prioritize awards in the event the program experiences high-demand.

This LC connects to POP 305, a \$28 million funding request.

Adult Attainment

This concept proposes the creation of two programs: An individual grant program for returning adult learners and an institutional grant program for implementing adult friendly programs and strategies on campus. It operationalizes POP 206, which requests \$7m for each of these two initiatives.

The individual grant program proposed to award students a to be determined grant if the student has attended an institution in the past but has not received a degree, provided a minimum of two years have passed since the student's prior enrollment. The grant is targeted at students participating in programs that lead to in-demand, living wage jobs.

Additionally, the concept proposes a grant to institutions to expand credit for prior learning, expand schedules to accommodate adult students, provide individualized advising and career coaching to all returning adults, develop adult-specific communication tools, or to develop other adult-specific strategies that are designed to increase enrollment, retention and degree and certificate completion.

Legislative Days

The legislature convened for legislative days during the final week of September. HECC staff participated in a number of meetings and presentations, including:

- Presentations to the House and Senate revenue committees detailing the results of the College Opportunity Grant Tax Credit Auction, which raised \$14.5m in additional funds for the Opportunity Grant.
- A presentation to the House Higher Education Committee, delivered by Amy Hofer of Linn-Benton Community College, on Open Educational Resources.

The Emergency Board took action on two HECC items. By unanimous consent, the Board accepted the HECC report on university capital project process submitted in response to a budget note. The Board also consented to an application from Oregon Volunteers to apply for a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service for \$180,000 for training and technical assistance of AmeriCorps subgrantees.

Staff Recommendation:

This is an informational item and no action is required.