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**Docket Item:**

University Tuition Setting – Process Summary

**Summary:**

The following is a summary of the tuition setting process at all institutions, highlighting their committee process and outreach efforts, pursuant to HB 4141.

**Docket Material:**

The following is a summary of the tuition process at all seven institutions, including those whose tuition increases do not exceed five percent and therefore are not subject to HECC review. We are also highlighting at least one aspect of each process that is uniquely important or beneficial to the resulting outcomes and the final outcomes of each process including their final tuition and fees increase (excluding incidental fees), budget cuts, and any impact on an institution's reserves (fund balance).

**Eastern Oregon University**

EOU's tuition committee consisted of eight members, of which three were students. It met seven times and held two open forums. EOU was especially proactive, publishing its tuition process a month and a half ahead of final adoption and providing two board funding and administration committee meetings and one full board meeting for discussion. It's important to note that EOU did not have an existing committee prior to this year as their previous process was a largely informal negotiation between the administration and the student government and credit to them for producing a robust process. EOU's proposal increased resident undergraduate tuition and fees by 4.99%<sup>1</sup> and will result in a combined \$3.0 million cuts and use of fund balance. [EOU produced the required tuition submittal document in early April and published it on its website.](#)

**Oregon Tech**

OIT's tuition committee consisted of thirteen members, of which six were students. This group met eight times, streamed between both campuses; and held four public forums, two at each campus. OIT put a particular focus this year on underscoring the importance of maintaining its high cost, high value programs, including discussion of the need for additional equipment purchases to maintain such programs. OIT, more than any other institution, also focused directly on encouraging students to lobby

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that this total excludes incidental fee increases that are exempt from HECC review per ORS 352.105 and therefore differs from the increase published by the institutions.

the Oregon Legislature for increased funding. OIT's proposal would increase resident undergraduate tuition and fees by 5.66%, result in \$2 million in cuts and use \$1.3 million in fund balance. [OIT produced its formal tuition recommendation in late May and has posted it on its website.](#)

### **Oregon State University**

OSU utilized their existing university budget committee, which consists of eighteen members, of which five were students, as its tuition-setting body. This group met biweekly since November and has held multiple forums to gather student input. OSU placed a particular focus this year on balancing tuition increases with maintaining as many key programs as possible, although they emphasized throughout the process that their decision to remain below 5% would necessarily involve significant cuts. Oregon State University's proposal increased resident undergraduate tuition and fees by 4.43% resulting in \$18 million in budget cuts absent additional state support as well as using \$595,000 in fund balance. [OSU published the required document on its website in late February](#) and also produced a letter to legislative leaders on the impact this limited increase would have on their core services.

### **Portland State University**

PSU's tuition committee consisted of fourteen members, of which seven were students. It met ten times throughout the tuition-setting process and held four public forums (three student focused and one faculty/staff focused) as part of their tuition review process. PSU's administration proactively provided key training in a number of areas around their budget and produced several documents such as a [budget summary document](#) and a [financial dashboard](#). PSU also structured content of their meetings to discuss topics students took particular interest in, such as investments in student success, academic advising, and the operations of the University Place hotel (which PSU owns). They worked with the existing student government to try and increase student input into the process. Portland State University's proposal would result in a tuition and fees increase of 6.69%, cuts of \$10 million, and use \$7 million in fund balance. [PSU produced the required document and published it on its website in late April](#). The university discussed in this document how they complied with the various aspects of HB 4141.

### **Southern Oregon University**

SOU's tuition committee consisted of eight members, of which four were students. It met twelve times during the process and also held seven public forum. SOU was particularly proactive throughout the process in ensuring full compliance with HB 4141, including creation of a checklist for compliance, which they checked in during every meeting. SOU also did an effective job training its committee members on the institution's budget and the associated processes. Additionally, SOU's administration shared multiple scenarios for potential tuition increases throughout the process and made clear the impact that various budget and tuition decisions would have on programs, students, financial aid and institutional reserves. SOU's proposal would increase resident undergraduate tuition and fees by

9.87%, result in budget cuts of \$2 million, and would not use fund balance. [SOU published the required tuition report on its website in early May.](#)

### **University of Oregon**

UO's tuition committee consisted of eighteen members, of which five were students. It met twelve times and held three public forums. UO had a very extensive website (linked above) highlighting every aspect of the process and providing easily accessible data on relative costs, tuition and enrollment compared to a number of peer groups over an extended period of time. UO also had the longest tuition process, beginning in October and lasting through early May, and spent the first four meetings, in particular, providing extensive training on the university's budget structure and operations. The UO also proactively communicated with the entire campus community via the University's "Around the O" blog and other online channels. The university proposal would increase tuition and fees by 7.13%, result in \$11.6 million in cuts and use \$5.6 million in fund balance. They produced the required tuition committee report and [published it on its website in early May.](#)

### **Western Oregon University**

WOU's tuition committee consisted of nine members, of which five were students. It met four times, held four public forums and presented to the ASWOU (student government) senate. WOU focused in particular this year on limiting the increase in student costs and increasing student retention and graduation rates. The result of higher graduation rates would be an increase in the funding per student from the state. WOU acknowledged that their low increase will result in cuts to programs but accepted this given the alternative of a substantial tuition increase. WOU's proposal increased resident undergraduate tuition and fees by 2.39% and will result in combined budget cuts and a use of fund reserves totaling \$3 million. [WOU published the required document on its website in early April.](#)

To remind you of the requirements of HB 4141, we include the below compliance checklist ([adapted from SOU's HB 4141 checklist](#)):

1. Creation of a tuition advisory body, which must create a written document describing its role and consist of at least the following members:
  - Two Administrators
  - Two Faculty
  - Two Students representing Student Government
  - Two Students representing historically underserved students
2. The university must provide training on the following:
  - The budget of the university
  - The legislative appropriation process
  - Data showing the relationship between tuition and fees to state appropriations
  - The university must provide the council with:

- A plan for managing costs
  - A plan for how tuition and fees could be decreased if the university receives extra appropriations
3. The council must also provide the following opportunities:
    - Provide opportunities for students to actively participate in the process and deliberations
    - Provide a written report to the president with recommendations, deliberations and observations about tuition and fees for the upcoming academic year including any sub-reports requested by members of the council or other documentation produced or received by the council
  4. The university must ensure that the process is described on the University's website and include downloadable materials such as:
    - The council's role and relationship to the Board
    - Any documentation, agendas, and data considered during deliberations
  5. If the council feels a recommendation greater than 5% annually is necessary, the council must document it's consideration of:
    - The impact of that increase on students, especially historically underserved students
    - The impact of that increase on the mission of the university
    - Alternative scenarios involving smaller increases

**Staff Recommendation:**

Discussion only.