

October 8, 2020

Dear Chair Rives and Members of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission,

As the new academic year approaches, I want to provide you an update on the public universities' planning for the upcoming academic year as it relates to access, instruction, equity and the health and safety of our students, faculty and staff.

In preparation for Fall, we have reflected on last Spring and the lessons learned during that quick transition to remote instruction. These lessons are guiding our work individually and collectively for the new academic year. Our priority remains the health and safety of all on our campuses while ensuring that we do not create greater barriers to access than already systemically exist. So, as important as the health and safety of faculty, staff and students is, the continuity of education for students, especially first-generation, lower-income and underrepresented students is vital.

Given that each public university is located in a different region of the state, our plans for in-person instruction during Fall term will correspond to local health conditions and community circumstances, as well as physical infrastructure and the demographics of our student population. The attached provides links for more information on each campuses' operations all of which are guided by the following overarching themes.

- The health and safety of our university community – students, faculty and staff – is our highest priority.
- Each university is planning for phased reopening and resumption of classes, events and activities in accordance with guidance from local health authorities, the Oregon Health Authority and the Centers for Disease Control.
- Reopening/resumption plans are designed to tailored to the situation in our respective communities.
- Faculty, staff and students are involved in the reopening/resumption planning at each university with an eye on equity and ensuring access for students of diversity and low income.
- Each university is actively communicating its plans with its campus community and larger communities as well.

With classes now underway, all of Oregon's public universities are watching their Fall enrollments carefully. Given the significant impacts on students from COVID-19, and now the fires, providing an accurate picture of enrollments is difficult. We are planning to issue Fall enrollment numbers during the fourth week of classes and will share that information as soon as it is available.

We appreciate the support of our partnership with the state and will continue to work with private colleges and public community colleges and local public health authorities to assure we continue to carry out our mission of access and educational excellence in a way that protects the health of our campuses while contributing to our local and state economy.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dana Richardson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dana Richardson  
Executive Director  
Oregon Council of Presidents

## University COVID-19 Links

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1. [University of Oregon](#)
2. [Western Oregon University](#)
3. [Southern Oregon University](#)
4. [Eastern Oregon University](#)
5. [Oregon Institute of Technology](#)
6. [Portland State University](#)
7. [Oregon State University](#)
8. [Oregon Health and Sciences University](#)