
Docket Item:

Discussion of Process to Evaluate the Student Success and Completion Model (SSCM) for Public University Funding

Summary:

Under the HECC's administrative rule governing distributions of the Public University Support Fund, the Commission shall review its distribution formula (the "Student Success and Completion Model," or SSCM) in 2020. In order to ensure the formula is consistent with the strategic priorities of the state, a review will be conducted by a formula advisory workgroup to consider evidence of success, to consider other states' experiences, and to make any recommendations for improvement.

Docket Material:

By HECC rule, during the even-numbered year of every third biennium the Executive Director of the HECC will convene a workgroup of stakeholders and HECC staff to recommend changes to the SSCM to match the strategic priorities of the State of Oregon and the HECC as appropriate.

The SSCM was adopted by the Commission in April, 2015. It represented a significant overhaul of the prior, enrollment-based formula that had governed the distribution of state resources to public universities for the previous several decades. After a four-year transition period, the new formula was fully implemented for state funding distributions in 2018-19.

It is staff's view that it is too soon for the Commission to consider shifting fundamentally away from the principles that undergird the SSCM, including the major priority that it places on student outcomes and equity. Nevertheless it is important, even at this early point in the formula's implementation, to begin to try to understand whether or not the formula is working as intended. With that in mind, staff proposes three lines of inquiry for the review.

One section will include staff work using collected data to review the Oregon experience. Collaborating with the research and data staff, while controlling for other variables (tuition increases, enrollment fluctuations, etc), we seek to understand whether or not more completions were produced under the revised formula.

Another section will include a review of existing work related to outcomes funding (OBF) in general relative to the national experience. We will consider what evidence exists that OBF works in other states and the success that other state models have had in the time since adoption.

The final section will include gathering stakeholder input via a formula advisory workgroup. The workgroup will be tasked with considering specific elements of the existing formula. It will be asked to consider if there are changes, improvements, or technical corrections that could be implemented to further refine the mechanisms of the formula in the pursuit of the state's strategic priorities.

Timeline

Any potential changes to the formula would need to be adopted via the rulemaking process. The June 2020 commission meeting would be targeted for the adoption of any rule changes, in order for them to begin to apply to 2020-21 funding distributions. In order to meet that timeframe, the following will serve as appropriate guideposts:

Before October 2019 – Oregon/national experience staff work
Late summer 2019 – appointment of the formula advisory committee
October 2019 through March 2020 – formula advisory committee meetings
April 2020 – file proposed rules as needed
June 2020 – Commission considers revised formula as needed

Formula Advisory Workgroup Membership

The membership of the workgroup should include representation from the institutions, appropriate input from stakeholders, and input from consulting experts as appropriate. The consulting experts will not be voting members but will participate to offer guidance and advice. The membership as listed below includes 13 total members with 9 voting members.

Universities – one member each as appointed by the university president
Oregon Student Association – one member
Inter-institutional Faculty Senate – one member

Consulting Experts – two, non-voting members
Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP) Representative – non-voting
Business/Workforce Representative – non-voting

Staff Recommendation:

No action recommended, for discussion only.