



March 20, 2020

Guidance for In-Person Program Offerings at Colleges and Universities during COVID-19 Outbreak

Per Executive Order No. 20-09:¹

2....it is ordered that colleges and universities shall be prohibited from conducting in-person classroom, laboratory, and other instruction from March 21, 2020, through April 28, 2020 (“effective period”), unless that period is extended or terminated earlier by the governor.

3. Colleges and universities are exempt from the requirements of paragraph 2 of this Executive Order for the purpose of providing clinical, laboratory, or other in-person instruction associated with courses required for the completion of a health care-related certificate, license, or degree or other certificates, licenses, or degree that are essential to emergency response and resiliency efforts, where no remote or online alternative is practicable. When conducting any in-person instruction permitted under this paragraph, colleges and universities should employ social distancing measures, consistent with guidance from the Oregon Health Authority.

This guidance applies due the duration of Executive Order 20-09 (through April 28, 2020) and will be updated as needed.

While recognizing that decision-making authority around what programs are “essential to emergency response and resiliency effort” resides with individual colleges and universities and their boards, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission is providing the following guidance about face-to-face program offerings during the COVID-19 outbreak to help inform decision making.

If you cannot answer “yes” to the questions below, the program should not be offered face to face.

1. Are skilled workers in the field essential to maintaining the health and safety of Oregonians? In addition to the provision of direct medical and public health services, are skilled workers in this field providing direct support to individual Oregonians or businesses to help people meet essential needs such as food, access to medical or other critical supplies, shelter?
2. Is the program in a high demand field with an immediate or projected need in your region for graduates between today and July 31, 2020? Have you identified and documented the need with support letters from employers, local or state workforce boards, guidance from state agencies, other?²

¹ https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/executive_orders/eo_20-09.pdf

² The Oregon Employment Department is identifying in-demand jobs and that list will be made available as soon as possible and updated as new information is available.

3. Many testing centers are closed. Are the certification exams required to enter employment available for students?
4. If you are enrolling new students, can you ensure they will complete their credential by July 31, 2020?
5. Are you able to provide face-to-face training that conforms to guidelines from the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) around mitigation and social distancing?

Students conducting supervised research in laboratories, observing proper social distancing measures, is not considered in-person classroom, laboratory or other instruction under paragraph 2 of the Executive Order.

The safety of students and instructors and reduction of COVID-19 transmission are of paramount importance. No program should operate that cannot protect the safety of students and instructors.