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### **“Oregon Transfer Compass” Expands with HECC Approval of Three New Community College Transfer Degrees**

*The new Associate of Art or Science Transfer degrees are part of a growing set of tools to streamline pathways from community colleges to public universities*

*Salem, OR* – The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is pleased to announce the approval of three new statewide major-specific transfer degrees designed to simplify and clarify the transfer process for students who plan to transfer from Oregon’s 17 community colleges to Oregon’s seven public universities. At their [June 11 public meeting](#), the HECC approved an [Associate of Arts Transfer \(AAT\) degree in English Literature](#), an [Associate of Science Transfer \(AST\) degree in Biology](#), and an [Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer \(AAOT\) degree in Elementary Education](#) to be launched at Oregon’s community colleges. With the Commission’s statewide approval, the local boards of the community colleges can now approve and make available these degrees for their students without seeking individual institution approval at the state level. The degrees are designed to help students who know they plan to major in these areas of study at an Oregon public university to make the most of their community college credits, and to save time and money as they work toward their four-year degrees.

The HECC approval of these major-specific degrees is a significant step forward in the expansion of the Oregon Transfer Compass, a growing set of statewide tools designed to streamline the transfer process from Oregon’s public two-year and four-year institutions. The HECC has also developed student-facing communications materials to help the colleges that offer these degrees to market these opportunities and give students clearly mapped guidance to achieve a successful transfer. Students who successfully complete these new two-year associate’s degrees in the future and meet admissions requirements will be guaranteed transfer to an Oregon four-year public university with junior standing, and their coursework will count toward a bachelor’s degree in that specific major.

Veronica Dujon, HECC Director of Academic Policy and Authorization, said, “The clarity of the transfer process is more important than ever as students work to achieve their educational and career goals during the disruptions of this pandemic and beyond. While transfer students come from all backgrounds, we know that they are more often than

not first-generation students, working parents, rural students and students of color, and we have an ethical, economic and social responsibility to better support equitable, affordable pathways that meet their needs. We are thankful for all the incredible student-centered collaboration that went into the design of these transfer degrees and we encourage students to talk to their advisors about these opportunities.”

Given that students begin to plan transfer at many different points in their college experience, the Oregon Transfer Compass includes guidance to give learners clarity at numerous points, whether they are just planning to start at a community college this fall, have attended off and on for years while working, or are already pursuing a community college degree. In addition to the Associate of Arts or Science Transfer degrees approved today, the tools include Core Transfer Maps and Major Transfer Maps. The Major Transfer Maps can be used at community colleges offering the new Associate of Arts or Science Transfer degrees to give a streamlined course plan to *students who know their intended major*. The Core Transfer Maps, available at all Oregon’s 17 community colleges, allow students *who do not yet know their major* to identify which credits are guaranteed to transfer toward their General Education requirements at a four-year university. These maps can be used to guide student decisions at any point in their degree planning process.

The development of these tools stems from legislation passed in 2017 (House Bill 2998) aimed to address numerous structural barriers that community college students face in the transfer process—including financial concerns, limited information, and the lack of coordination between 2-year and 4-year institutions. House Bill 2998 specifically directed the HECC to bring together community colleges and universities to streamline this transfer process. The state’s work to develop a well-coordinated credit transfer system is intended to foster equitable, affordable pathways to higher education success for all.

Jessica Howard, President of Chemeketa Community College said, “Faculty members at Chemeketa worked hard with their colleagues from around the state to develop these first transfer agreements. At Oregon's community colleges that have more than one primary public university partner in terms of where students transfer, students may be particularly assisted by the new Core Transfer and Major Transfer Maps. They represent a step forward in improving transfer for Oregon students.”

In addition to the development of the three new transfer degrees, there are three more high demand degrees in the process of development to make transferring easier for students who intend to major in Business, Computer Science, and Criminal Justice.

Students interested in pursuing the new Associate of Arts or Science Transfer Degrees should contact their campus advisor to check about plans for availability at their institution. For more information about the Core Transfer Maps visit the [Transfer Compass web page here](#). Additional background for college and university partners implementing this work can be found on our [transfer policy website here](#).

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*The State of Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future in which all Oregonians—and especially those whom our systems have underserved and marginalized—benefit from the transformational power of high-quality postsecondary education and training. For more information, go to [www.Oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.Oregon.gov/HigherEd)*