



# Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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## December Agency Update:

December 2021 | Our partners can find previous quarterly Government to Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in the [Coordination with Tribes](#) section of our website.

Strategic Roadmap: Oregon's [Strategic Roadmap for Postsecondary Education and Training](#) was finalized in August, 2021 after an extensive public engagement and development process that commenced in 2019. The Roadmap sets an ambitious path forward by describing how postsecondary systems, policies, and practices need to change in order to achieve Oregon's [goals for educational attainment and equity](#). **The HECC is now in the process of developing and seeking input from partners on potential actions and initiatives for realizing the Strategic Roadmap, and invites input from Tribes and other partners.** At its November meeting, the Commission began discussion on [a non-comprehensive set of options for potential HECC-led or HECC-supported initiatives](#) that could help advance the Strategic Roadmap. The Roadmap is intended to guide not only HECC initiatives, but also those of Oregon's postsecondary education and training partners statewide. The Roadmap sets the following five categories for strategic action as major areas of focus, with specific examples described in the document: 1) transform and innovate to serve students and learners best; 2) center higher education and workforce training capacity on current and future state needs; 3) ensure that postsecondary learners can afford to meet their basic needs; 4) create and support a continuum of pathways from education and training to career; and 5) increase public investment to meet postsecondary goals.

### Our Commission

#### OUR VISION:

*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. [Learn more about our vision and Strategic Plan here.](#)*

The HECC is the state entity responsible for ensuring pathways to higher education success for Oregonians statewide, and serves as a convener of institutions and partners working across the public and private higher education arena. Established in 2011, HECC is a 14-member volunteer commission responsible for advising the Oregon Legislature and the Governor on higher education policy. The Commission is supported by an executive director who oversees eight offices of the agency. To learn more about the HECC go to: [www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc.aspx)

### Upcoming Meetings:

**Higher Education Coordinating Commission,**  
December 9, 2021 (tentative)

**HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee:**  
December 8, 2021 (tentative)

For other [upcoming public meetings of the HECC, see our website here](#). For [Affiliated Boards \(WTDB, others, see here\)](#). For email notices of upcoming public Commission meetings, or to sign up for our newsletter, go to [www.oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://www.oregon.gov/HigherEd)

HECC Encourages Participation in the Legislature's Joint Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education: The HECC encourages postsecondary students and community members to participate in public meetings of the Oregon Legislature's Joint Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education (HB 2590, 2021), which has just commenced a historic statewide public engagement process. In recognition of the [deep disparities in access to and success](#) in Oregon postsecondary education, Oregon established this task force, charged with visiting postsecondary institutions and meeting with students and other stakeholders to examine issues of access, retention, graduation, and entry into the workforce. The HECC looks forward to supporting legislators as they tour sites around Oregon and develop student success policy proposals for the 2023 session. [Find information on the Task Force public meetings and members, or subscribe to email updates here.](#)

Recent HECC presentations to legislative committees include: November 15 presentation on Prison and Reentry Education Programs to the interim [Senate Interim Committee on Education](#), a November 15 presentation to the [Ways and Means Joint Interim Subcommittee on Education](#), a November 16 presentation on financial aid to the interim [House Interim Committee on Education](#), a November 18<sup>th</sup> grounding presentation for the Student Success for Underrepresented Students, and a November 18 presentation to the [Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education](#).

For additional background on the results of legislative outcomes of the 2021 Legislative Session for Oregon postsecondary education and workforce training, see [Fact Sheet: Legislatively Adopted Budget for Higher Education 2021-23](#), or for a longer comprehensive overview of key legislative investments and bills,, see the [HECC Legislative Summary, 2021-23 Postsecondary Budget and Key Policy Bills](#).

### **Recent Research and Reports:**

Fall 4<sup>th</sup> Week Enrollment Reports: The HECC collects data on 4<sup>th</sup> week fall enrollment at the public institutions, and recently posted [2021 enrollment data on our website here](#). The number of community college learners in 2021 is similar to the number in 2020 (88,247), falling just 0.4%. Compared to pre-pandemic levels, the number of students, or headcount, remains low: 23.7% lower than the 115,104 learners in 2019. FTE is 24.6% lower than in 2019. The number of public university learners in 2021 is similar to the number in 2020 (96,920), falling just 0.5%. Compared to pre-pandemic levels, the number of students, or headcount, is 4.3% lower than the 100,704 learners in 2019. FTE is 4.9% lower than in 2019 (81,520).

Fourth Annual "Statewide Higher Education Snapshots" Highlight Key Metrics on Oregon Institutions and Students: Over 397,000 students were enrolled at public community colleges and universities in 2019-20, and completion rates for students at the state's public institutions continued to rise. However, large percentages of Oregon learners face affordability challenges and serious inequities in education and training, including in graduation. These and other insights are evident in the HECC's [fourth annual Statewide Higher Education Snapshots](#), a set of 27 one-page reader-friendly summaries on Oregon's postsecondary learners in 2019-20. The Snapshots answer frequently asked data questions on enrollment, affordability, and outcomes regarding Oregon public postsecondary students—with break-outs by race/ethnicity and first-generation status, among others. By clicking on the locations of interest on the [Oregon map here](#), readers can explore all Snapshots, including statewide data summaries (the [statewide summary](#), [community college summary](#), and [public university summary](#)), as well as 24 individual Snapshots for each of Oregon's public postsecondary education institutions.

### **Affordability and Financial Aid:**

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) continues to encourage Oregonians to pursue grants and scholarships at [OregonStudentAid.gov](#).

OSAC Scholarship and Grant Applications Open for 2022-23 School Year: OSAC has [officially opened its OSAC Scholarship Application for the 2022-2023 academic year](#). As of November 1, students can now apply for OSAC Scholarships, the Oregon Promise Grant, the Oregon Child Care Grant, and even more state grant programs. OSAC administers more than \$130 million in state-funded grants and privately-funded scholarships to help Oregon students meet their college expenses. New and current postsecondary students can find links to applications at [OregonStudentAid.gov](#). [Read more in our press release here.](#)

With Increased Funding, State Plans to Award Oregon Opportunity Grants to Thousands More Students, Encourages Applications: The 2021 Legislative Session approval of an additional \$28.8 million to the state's need-based college financial aid program, the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG), will allow the

HECC to award more financial aid to current and future Oregon students to support college affordability statewide. HECC invites partners to spread the word about the increased funding and to encourage Oregonians who may enroll in an Oregon college this year to [file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\) or the Oregon Student Aid Application \(ORSAA\) as soon as possible](#) if they have not already done so. [Read more here.](#)

OSAC offers the **FAFSA Plus+** program for schools, community-based organizations, and other sites that work with a specific student population. Becoming a FAFSA Plus+ site allows an organization to upload a roster of students and then be able to see the FAFSA filing status for those students. Learn more and [sign up to become a FAFSA Plus+ site](#) for free.

Due to the current state of COVID-19 in Oregon, OSAC is going to continue our **outreach and presentations across the state digitally**. Go online to [request support](#) from OSAC at an upcoming event, in a classroom, or providing training to your students/communities. Here are a few key outreach materials:

- [OSAC Update](#): Key deadlines, financial aid and access programs, and changes for the coming 21/22 academic year.
- [Free Publications and Posters](#): Order or download free posters and brochures here including the OSAC Poster, a quick reminder for students to apply for financial aid, including the FAFSA/ORSAA, grants, and scholarships. English and Spanish versions available.
- [Student Budgets](#): Lists the common expected costs from Oregon's public universities, community colleges, and independent colleges.
- [Oregon Promise Grant Handout](#): Updated handout for the Oregon Promise Grant
- [OR Public University Requirements](#): List of the admissions requirements across the Oregon Public Universities

Tribal Access to Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver: HECC-OSAC continues to be available to ensure tribal foster youth have access to the Oregon Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver program, which waives tuition and fees for the equivalent of 4 years of undergraduate studies after other public grants and any school aid are applied. Learn more about eligibility at [www.oregonstudentaid.gov](http://www.oregonstudentaid.gov). OSAC in 2019 developed a solution to ensure that information on eligible tribal foster youth are provided to college financial aid offices to be considered for the Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver. Tribes who administer their own Foster Youth programs can now upload lists of eligible students into the OSAC Partner Portal. OSAC representatives would be pleased to help any tribal staff who utilize this option (contact [Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us](mailto:Kristin.Vreeland@state.or.us)).

## **Supporting Pathways and Student Success**

Newly Appointed Transfer Council Focused on Streamlining Transfer Pathways: The HECC announced in a [press release](#) the formation and appointment of the Transfer Council, established by Senate Bill 233 (2021) and the Council started meeting public in October, 2021. The [Transfer Council](#)—comprised of representatives from Oregon public universities, community colleges, and high schools— will develop and advance work to streamline student transfer pathways between institutions. This work is intended to simplify transfer and reduce the time and cost of earning a degree. All meetings are public, with details on the [HECC website here](#).

Dual Credit Partnership in Nez Perce Language Learning: The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) expressed an interest in developing a dual credit partnership program in Nez Perce language learning with the Lewis & Clark State College in Idaho for high school students in the Pendleton area. As a result, the HECC modified the admission requirements in [OAR 583-030-0035](#) (see 9b) to allow authorized postsecondary institutions to offer academic credit to high school students by allowing an exemption to the high school diploma or equivalent requirement for admission. In addition, the HECC adopted a new rule pertaining to these activities, [OAR 583-030-0048](#), that specifically allows Commission authorized postsecondary institutions to offer and award academic credits in partnership with a high school in Oregon. Education partners should be aware that there is an application process with requirements for higher education partners to support student success, including the requirement that each Commission authorized institution have current National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships ([NACEP](#)) accreditation.

Oregon Apprenticeship Website: To learn more about apprenticeship or explore apprenticeship opportunities please visit [www.oregonapprenticeship.org](http://www.oregonapprenticeship.org). Registered Apprenticeship provides individuals with a job, education, and an entry point into a lifelong career. Registered Apprenticeship helps employers develop and cultivate a skilled, certified, and engaged workforce.

SB 234 Adults in Custody Workgroup: Pursuant to SB 234 (2021) HECC has been convening a group of stakeholders to conduct a study and develop recommendations on how to establish a coordinated, statewide approach to best serve Oregon adults currently in custody who will soon become eligible for federal Pell grants due to 2020 changes in federal law. Public meeting materials for this Workgroup are posted under [Current HECC Public Meetings](#) here.

Recent Equity and Student Success Initiatives and Activities: The HECC's commitment to equity informs policy decision making, funding recommendations, ongoing programs as well as special initiatives. The HECC [Equity and Student Success initiatives web page](#) has recently been updated to describe recent agency efforts to support institutions and partners in equitably serving historically underrepresented populations. The Commission at its [November public meeting](#) discussed [potential updates to the Equity Lens](#); these updates will be considered for adoption at the upcoming December public meeting. Featured Resource: Real Opportunity video: We continue to encourage viewing and sharing video on the need to improve racial equity in higher education and workforce training. [Real Opportunity: Supporting College Success for Underserved Students of Color will Move Oregon Forward](#).

Oregon's Adult Outreach Marketing Toolkit Now Available in Nine Languages: In early 2021, HECC released a toolkit of marketing resources to help Oregon postsecondary education institutions and partners to engage adult learners of color in their postsecondary education and workforce training goals: Oregon Adult Learner Outreach toolkit. We are pleased to report that [this toolkit is now translated into eight languages](#) in addition to English.

Academic Program Approvals: At its June and August Commission meetings, the Commission approved the following new academic programs. For details on these programs, see the [October 6-7, 2021 public meeting materials here](#). [Community college programs](#) -- Portland Community College, Associate of Applied Science in Video Production and Emerging Media. [Public University Programs](#) -- Western Oregon University, Doctorate in Physical Therapy

## **Economic and Community Impact**

AmeriCorps Program Recruitment: Oregon Volunteers' AmeriCorps programs are actively recruiting for the next cohort of members eager to meet community's pressing needs and earn an education award for college – now state-tax free in Oregon! [Positions are still open](#) in education, conservation, health programs and more. Partners are invited to raise awareness about [AmeriCorps opportunities](#) with the new [What's at your core?](#) marketing campaign.

Upcoming Oregon Volunteers Grant Opportunities: Coming Spring 2022, Oregon Volunteers will be announcing new planning grant opportunities for the first time. Planning Grants are grants, up to \$75,000, and for up to a period of 12 months, that support the planning and development for local community organizations, tribes, schools, and public agencies to apply for a full AmeriCorps program in the following grant cycle. Planning grant priorities will include focus areas: climate action, public health, response and recovery, and program models serving communities marginalized by systemic oppression, in addition to the AmeriCorps focus areas for education, environmental stewardship, Veterans and military families, healthy futures, economic opportunity, and disaster.

PARTNER EVENT NOTICE: Building Opportunity, 2021 Oregon Business Plan Leadership Summit, December 6, 2021: At the 2021 Leadership Summit, Ben Cannon, Executive Director of the Higher Education Coordination Commission, will discuss strategies to create more equitable access to higher education and training. Executive Director Cannon will lay out a framework and priorities for tangible steps in achieving this goal, as well as federal and state funding resources. [Learn more and register here](#).

SAVE THE DATE: Save the Date for April 12 for the Oregon Talent Summit: We are pleased to share that the Oregon Talent Summit will be held April 12, 2022, co-hosted by the Workforce and Talent Development Board and HECC. The event will be at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland, 8:30am - 4:00pm. Mark your calendars now and watch for updates as we unveil the speaker line up.

## **Other Updates**

EVENT NOTICE: College Opportunity Grant Tax Credit Auction, December 6-10, 2021: The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is pleased to announce the [College Opportunity Grant Tax Credit Auction](#) for tax year 2021 will run on December 6-10, 2021. The auction gives Oregon taxpayers the opportunity to benefit from state tax credits while supporting a state financial aid program for Oregon students. [Read our full announcement here](#).