



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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June Agency Update:

June 2020 | Our partners can find former quarterly Government to Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in the [Coordination with Oregon Tribes](#) section of our website.

Message from Director Cannon on Racial Equity and Higher Education and the Governor's Equity Framework for Pandemic Response: Last week we shared with our audiences a [message from Executive Director Ben Cannon](#), including reflections on recent events and the agency's response, as well as the need to utilize the [Governor's Equity Framework for Pandemic Response](#). He writes, "It is heartbreakingly clear that our postsecondary education system too often perpetuates systemic racial injustice, even as it holds such enormous potential for dismantling it. While the HECC cannot solve these problems alone, it is more important now than ever to directly confront the racial inequities that pervade our postsecondary education and training systems and to take proactive and anti-racist measures." Governor Brown has directed state agencies to employ the new Oregon Equity Framework during and after the pandemic. HECC has strongly encouraged Oregon higher education institutions to read, adapt, adopt, and employ the Governor's Framework as they undertake their COVID response and recovery efforts.

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

Upcoming HECC Meetings:

Higher Education Coordinating Commission,
August 13, 2020 (tentative)

HECC Funding and Achievement Subcommittee Meeting:

August 12, 2020 (tentative)

Oregon Volunteers Commission: June 15, June 27, 2020 (tentative)

Workforce and Talent Development Board:
July 15, 2020 (tentative)

For other [upcoming public meetings](#), see our [website here](#). For email notices of upcoming public Commission meetings, or to sign up for our newsletter, go to www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

Strategic Roadmap Leads to Interim Guiding Principles During Pandemic: Since late 2019 the HECC has worked with partners on developing a Strategic Roadmap for the future of postsecondary education in Oregon. Much great work has been accomplished so far (see the [Insights Report here](#)), and the engagement of institutional leaders, students, faculty, legislators, trustees and other stakeholders has been impressive. Given that our context has shifted dramatically over the recent few months, and the impact of COVID-19 on postsecondary education has been and will continue to be significant, the strategic roadmap planning team has decided to pause the current Roadmap Development effort until Fall 2020. In the meantime, we offer a [few interim guiding principles](#) which have emerged from our initial work. We are asking all stakeholders to keep these guiding principles in mind as they take steps towards navigating the current crisis.

1. Postsecondary education and training are central to Oregon's return to strength and prosperity
2. Affordability and access to postsecondary education and training require investments of the state funding
3. Equity must be central to all we do
4. To achieve our shared goals, we must all commit to collaborate and work together in new ways

Response to the Pandemic: Since our last update, much of our work has involved response to the coronavirus pandemic. Our most recent effort on this front has been our [announcement on June 12, 2020](#) of new [HECC OHA Public Health Guidelines for the Conduct of In-person Instructional, Residential, and Research Activities at Oregon Colleges and Universities](#). For months now, the public and private colleges and universities have been operating using almost entirely remote platforms. Under previous executive orders, institutions were directed to refrain from in-person instruction through June 13, with exceptions only for some programs critical to the emergency or resiliency effort. This required a quick and major transformation of delivery channels. With the new guidance effective June 14, each college and university will have the flexibility to determine how and when students return to campus, but must meet, at a minimum, the public health requirements contained in the guidance. Postsecondary education institutions and partners are encouraged to regularly check the HECC [COVID-10 website page here](#) for information and guidance related to the pandemic.

Budget Development Process for 2021-2023: As part of the state budget process, HECC develops a comprehensive and integrated Agency Budget Request (ARB) for higher education and training in Oregon in close collaboration with Oregon's public campuses and partners. The first step in a multi-year budget process resulting in Oregon's 2021-2023 biennial investments in the postsecondary education enterprise. Over several public meetings which began in February and will extend through August, the HECC will continue to consider analysis and presentations on key budget components, to develop the recommended budget. Most recently, at its [June 10 and 11 public meetings](#), Commissioners reviewed the biennial budget proposals related to 2021-2023 operational funding and capital projects at Oregon's public institutions, proposals related to financial aid, and new initiatives (policy option packages). All [the public materials on these proposals are on our website](#) under Commission materials. The next step will be at the August public meetings of the Commission, when they will consider the ARB for approval in preparation for the required submission to the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) in September.

Flexibility for Students: In the midst of the massive change in higher education in response to statewide public health measures necessitated by COVID-19, tens of thousands of college students and college-bound students are facing significant uncertainty. In April, the associations representing Oregon's 17 community colleges; seven public universities and OHSU; and 15 private non-profit colleges and universities have issued a [joint message of assurance to current and future students](#) including specific commitments they have made collectively to help students navigate the crisis, achieve their goals, and plan for their future. In addition, the HECC is working with the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) and other states across the West to help ensure that Oregon residents can attend college in other states without disruption, and that those coming to Oregon can know they are in good hands. In May, the WICHE commission, which oversees WICHE's strategic direction and includes higher education leaders from the 15 western states and two U.S. territories, from the Dakotas to Guam, [approved a resolution](#) encouraging the Western states, systems, and postsecondary institutions to consider flexibilities so that disruptions due to COVID-19 will not threaten students' ability to pursue and attain a high-quality education in the West.

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.

Outreach and Presentations: To help students understand the programs detailed here, and the application processes, OSAC offers numerous [videos and resources for students, counselors, parents, and educators](#). Schools and organizations may [request a financial aid presentation by OSAC speakers](#) to their students, and Oregon tribal partners are encouraged and welcomed to make such requests.

5 things Oregonians should know about Financial Aid: Whether Oregonians are going to college for the first time, already enrolled, or returning after time off, they should know how financial aid can help them succeed. OSAC has provided five key tips on financial aid for Oregonians planning for college, and encourages sharing this list. Read the full [article on the My Oregon News website here](#).

1st Step for Financial Aid is FAFSA or ORSAA: Students should complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) or the [Oregon Student Aid Application](#) (ORSAA) to be considered for federal and/or state financial aid. The FAFSA is the primary application for federal and state financial aid, and the ORSAA is Oregon's alternative for undocumented students, including students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status.

Learn more about Financial Aid Programs Administered by the HECC at www.oregonstudentaid.gov

FAFSA Plus+: OSAC continues to invite applicants for FAFSA Plus+. FAFSA Plus+ is a year-round program that includes Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion support, FAFSA completion events, and other college access resources. OSAC shares information about FAFSA completions with participating sites, allowing site staff to provide targeted assistance to high school seniors and their families. School districts, high schools, TRIO programs, Tribal education agencies, Indian organizations, or community-based organizations are invited to complete the non-competitive [FAFSA Plus+ Application](#).

Supporting Pathways and Student Success

"Oregon Transfer Compass" Expands with HECC Approval of Three New Community College Transfer Degrees: On June 15, HECC announced 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 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.

Talent, Innovation, and Equity (TIE) partnership convenes Equity Council: The Oregon HECC Talent, Innovation, and Equity Partnership grant continues to build momentum from our statewide equity roundtable listening tour. The Leadership Council for Equity, comprising of leaders from various postsecondary institutions and cultural community organizations, are developing culturally relevant and responsive tangible tools aimed to disrupt systemic practices in Oregon's postsecondary landscape that have created disproportionate educational achievement gaps amongst Black/African Americans, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Alaskan Native, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders learners. The Leadership Council for Equity efforts are focusing on three themes: Community and Professional Relationships, Cultural Responsiveness and Diverse Inclusion within Institutions, and Academic Systems and Accountability Transformations. They are in the first stages in developing a range of culturally responsive practices ranging from tools to assess institutional practices and pedagogy, a best practices tool kit embedded with culturally relevant competencies, and communication resources for indigenous and students of color.

Talent, Innovation, and Equity (TIE) Sub-grants deadline June 30, 2020. REMINDER: The Request for Applications for HECC Talent, Innovation and Equity (TIE) Sub-Grants is open for applications until June 30, 2020. The sub-grants will provide resources to postsecondary institutions in Oregon to expand funding for or to facilitate the formation of a collaborative partnership with Cultural Community-based Organizations (CBOs). The sub-grants will support partnerships that undertake promising practices in support of the completion of postsecondary credentials for indigenous students and students of color who are from historically underrepresented populations, specifically: Hispanic/Latinx, Black/African Americans, Native American /Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders. The [application and supplemental materials are available on our website](#). With questions, please email Osvaldo.avila@state.or.us

Academic Program Approvals: At its April, May, and June Commission meetings, the Commission approved the following academic programs at Oregon's public colleges and universities.

Community College programs:

Chemeketa CC: [Dental Assisting, Certificate of Completion](#);

LCC: [Paramedic, AAS](#); [Educational Assistant, Certificate of Completion](#).

PCC: [Mechatronics, Certificate of Completion](#); [ASL/English Interpreting Program, AAS](#); [Creative Coding and Immersive Technologies, AASC](#)

Clackamas CC: [Industrial Mechanics Maintenance Technology Apprenticeship, AAS](#); [Emergency Management Professional, AAS](#)

SOCC: [Cybersecurity, AAS](#); [Medical Assistant, AAS](#)

Treasure Valley CC: [Billing and Coding Specialist, Certificate of Completion](#)

University programs:

OSU: [History, MA/MS](#); [Engineering Science, BS](#); [Creative Writing, BA](#); [Outdoor Products, BS](#)

SOU: [Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, BA/BS](#)

UO: [Bioengineering, BS](#) EOU: [Cyber Security, Bachelor of Arts/BS/BAS](#)

PSU: [Applied Data Science for Business, MS](#); [Emergency Management and Community Resilience, MS](#); [Data Science, BS](#); [Cultural History of the Arts, BA/BS](#)

The Oregon Transfer degrees described above and in our [press release here](#).

Economic and Community Impact

Impact of Public Higher Education Funding Decisions Highlighted in 2019 SHEF Report: A recently issued national report on the state of higher education finances offers a comprehensive look at where states stand as they enter a complex funding environment during the pandemic. The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association (SHEEO)'s [2019 annual State Higher Education Finance \(SHEF\) report](#), examines trends, context, and consequences of state higher education funding decisions through fiscal year 2019. The HECC Office of Postsecondary Finance and Capital has highlighted [key trends in this important report for Oregon, detailed in the attached HECC summary](#).

Workforce Initiatives during COVID-19: In addition to the resources already noted, the HECC Office of Workforce Investments (OWI), with agency and community partners, has undertaken extensive work to mitigate challenges for workers and employers impacted by COVID-19. The OWI works with the Oregon Employment Department, partner agencies, and community-based organizations to coordinate Rapid Response services supporting affected workers and businesses during reported layoffs. Recently, this team issued [bilingual videos and communications](#) on topics important to workers experiencing layoffs: unemployment insurance, health insurance, and WorkSource Oregon resources.

The OWI has also recently supported businesses and Oregon's nine [Local Workforce Development Boards](#) in their service by securing \$6M in new federal grant dollars to support dislocated workers, keeping local boards and workforce partners informed of opportunities, distributing \$1.1 million in layoff aversion funds to help businesses stay open or minimize the length of time employees are out of work, and more. The agency recently received \$6M dollar federal grants from the U.S. Department of Labor for Disaster and Employment Recovery to support temporary jobs and training for dislocated workers affected by the pandemic. In addition, OWI will be working in collaboration with the Oregon Business Council (OBC) and ECONorthwest to update the recently released 2020 Oregon Talent Assessment, to address the outlook for dislocated workers from industries affected by the pandemic – identifying the current

skill/education gap will be important to aiding in statewide economic recovery and could inform Oregonians on the ways they could reskill to meet pressing need.

Talent Assessment: In March, the Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) released the [Oregon Talent Assessment 2020 Update](#), developed by ECONorthwest, a Portland-based economic consulting firm. This report revisits and expands upon the [2018 Oregon Talent Assessment](#) to analyze business and industry's determination of in-demand occupations, in-demand skills, talent gaps, and trends in Oregon.

Other Updates

HECC has submitted the following reports to the Oregon Legislature.

- [Cover Letter, HECC Evaluations of Public Universities with Governing Boards \(2019\)](#)
- [HECC 2019 Evaluation of Eastern Oregon University](#)
- [HECC 2019 Evaluation of Western Oregon University](#)
- [HECC 2019 Evaluation of Southern Oregon University](#)
- [HECC 2019 Evaluation of Oregon Institute of Technology](#)

Commission Membership Update: Commissioner Tayo Akins resigned his position as a voting member of the HECC in April 2020, and his position remains vacant at this time. Governor Brown requested that Commissioners Duncan Wyse, Ramon Ramirez, and David Rives continue to serve in their current positions at least through September, 2020. Their terms were scheduled to conclude on June 30, but the Senate isn't expected to consider new HECC appointments until after that date.