



# Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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## March Agency Update:

March 2019 | 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.

**Recent Work:** The HECC continues to implement a [Strategic Framework 2017-21](#) that will guide its strategic action in the coming years. The Strategic Framework describes the Commission's vision, mission, values and beliefs, and four key areas of activity that are used by the Commission to prioritize initiatives: 1) REPORTING to Steer Progress 2) FUNDING for Success, 3) Streamlining Learner PATHWAYS, and 4) Expanding Opportunity through OUTREACH. These four Action Areas are aimed to achieve the Commission's Strategic Goals for STUDENT SUCCESS, EQUITY, AFFORDABILITY, and ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY IMPACT. [At each Commission meeting](#), the executive director presents recent progress in each of the four strategic action areas.

**2019 Legislative Session:** As the State of Oregon's single, comprehensive portal to all sectors of higher education, each session, the HECC presents to the Oregon Legislature policy and budget proposals to strategically invest in Oregon's postsecondary institutions and the students and communities they serve. HECC posts [key legislative resources for the Session on our website here](#).

**Budget Presentations:** On March 12, HECC began its three-week budget presentation to the Legislature's Education Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Ways & Means. The HECC budget includes all state-approved funding for post-secondary activities including operational and capital for community colleges and public universities, student aid and access programs, workforce initiatives, and other programs that we fund or administer – a total of almost \$3 Billion biennially. The final presentation materials are available on the [committee website](#) and on the [HECC Legislative Resources site here](#).

## 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, the Governor, and the Chief Education Office 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](http://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/hecc).

## Events

### Higher Education Coordinating Commission Meeting:

April 11, 2019

### Higher Education Coordinating Commission Funding and Achievement Subcommittee Meeting:

April 10, 2019

*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 Receives \$689K Grant from Lumina Foundation to Improve Postsecondary Success for Oregon Students of Color: The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) announced in December, 2018 that Oregon has been awarded a \$689,000 [Talent Innovation, and Equity \("TIE"\) partnership grant](#) from Lumina Foundation to help eliminate disparities in postsecondary success rates between Oregon's overall student population and historically underrepresented students of color.

The grant supports a suite of state leadership activities aimed to improve postsecondary success in Oregon for African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders, with a particular focus on adult learners of color. To drive this work, the HECC will convene a council of statewide equity leaders to help guide Oregon's agenda to increase educational attainment and close equity gaps through an informed, community-driven statewide plan. Oregon will embark on focus group and other research to determine the barriers to completion facing adults from underrepresented populations in Oregon, and develop the strategies and messages needed to support their re-engagement in education and training. [See our press release here for more information.](#)

#### **Recent Reports to the Legislature:**

Oregon Promise in its Third Year: The HECC is pleased to release a new detailed analysis of the first two and a half years of the Oregon Promise program, focusing on impacts on students and the state of this recently launched financial aid grant. Read a 2-page research brief: [Summary, Oregon Promise in its 3<sup>rd</sup> Year](#). Read the full report: [Report to the Legislature \(SB 81, 2015\), Oregon Promise in its 3<sup>rd</sup> Year](#).

Mental Health Task Force: The HECC recently submitted to the Oregon Legislature the [Mental Health Task Force Report](#) developed by the Oregon Task Force on Student Mental Health, pursuant to Senate Bill 231 (2017).

Public University Evaluations: The HECC recently submitted to the Oregon Legislature its evaluation of public universities, required by ORS 352.061, as well as a cover letter from HECC Executive Director Ben Cannon and HECC Commission Chair Neil Bryant. This year's evaluations are of University of Oregon, Portland State University and Oregon State University. [The evaluations and letter can be found on our website here.](#)

STEM Investment Council Annual Report: The HECC also recently submitted the [STEM Investment Council's 2019 report](#), required by ORS 326.500, summarizing the progress made toward increasing STEM education throughout the state.

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

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) continues to receive and to process applications for grants and scholarships.

New Money for College promotional outreach materials: The Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) has new promotional materials to support students and families accessing Oregon financial aid and college and career resources. **Please update communication materials aimed at learners and families with this new logo (also attached) and language:**

[OregonStudentAid.gov](#) is the place to find money for college, **awarding students more than \$102 million in grants and scholarships each year.** Funding includes, *but is not limited to*, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, the Oregon Promise Grant, Scholarships, and specific grants for foster care youth, students caring for dependents, Oregon National Guard members, and resources available to Oregon residents who are undocumented or have Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status.

If you would like OSAC staff to participate or present in an upcoming team meeting, please let us know. For any questions or material requests, please contact [OSAC.outreach@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:OSAC.outreach@hecc.oregon.gov) or by phone at 541-687-7400 x77455.

1<sup>st</sup> Step for State and Federal Aid is FAFSA or ORSAA: If students have not already done so, they should complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA) or the [Oregon Student Aid Application](#) (ORSAA) as soon as possible to be considered for federal and/or state financial aid, including grants and loans. The FAFSA is the primary application for federal and state financial aid, and the ORSAA is Oregon's alternative to the FAFSA for undocumented



students. Information from the FAFSA or the ORSAA are used to determine students' eligibility for the Oregon Promise, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, and numerous scholarships. The FAFSA is also used to determine eligibility for federal aid, including the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loans, and Federal Work-Study.

OSAC Scholarships: OSAC is now processing the applications received for the over 600 privately-funded scholarships the agency administers. This year, OSAC extended the final March 1 deadline by two days because of the challenges students were facing statewide with inclement weather, closures, and power outages.

Oregon Opportunity Grant: The [Oregon Opportunity Grant](#) is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program that helps students pay for college at public community colleges, public universities, and participating private institutions statewide. These grants are awarded until funds are exhausted, so students should file their FAFSA (or ORSAA, if applicable) as soon as possible. Students who were first-time Opportunity Grant recipients in 2018-19 will be considered for a guaranteed second year award, providing they meet [certain additional criteria detailed here](#) and submit a 2019-20 FAFSA or ORSAA by May 1, 2019 for the upcoming school year

Oregon Promise: Current high school seniors and GED® test graduates may apply for the [Oregon Promise Grant](#), which helps to cover tuition at Oregon community colleges. Students must enroll in a community college within six months of graduation and in accordance with Oregon Promise deadlines. Minimum GPA requirements apply. Visit [OregonStudentAid.gov](#) for eligibility details. The program has rolling deadlines depending upon graduation date; [use the "Find Your Deadline" tool](#). Students are also required to complete either the FAFSA or the ORSAA by the deadline.

Oregon National Guard Tuition Assistance: This new program is established to provide funding for tuition at Oregon community colleges (up to 90 credits) and Oregon public universities (up to 180 credits) for current Oregon National Guard members. For additional information on deadlines, eligibility requirements, and how to apply, [visit our website here](#).

Oregon Chafee Education and Training Grant: The Chafee grant, a federal program administered in partnership with the Oregon Department of Human Services, helps current and former child welfare foster youth pay for postsecondary education and training. For information on the grant, visit the [Chafee section of our website OregonStudentAid.gov](#). As with the scholarship program, OSAC extended the final March 1 deadline by two days this year.

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**

New "Core Transfer Maps" Will Guide Community College Transfer Students in 2019: HECC, in partnership with the state's public postsecondary institutions, announced in January, 2019 that students at all 17 Oregon community colleges can now benefit from a new set of transfer tools called the "Core Transfer Maps" (CTMs). The Core Transfer Maps guide Oregon community college students to groups of eight classes they can choose to take if they are thinking about transferring to a university in the future. When the full set of eight courses are successfully completed at an Oregon community college, they are guaranteed to transfer to any Oregon public university, and they will count toward that university's core bachelor's degree requirements. [See our press release here](#).

Academic Program Approvals: At its February 2019 meeting, the Commission approved six new academic programs at Oregon's public community colleges. Mt. Hood Community College, [Certificate of Completion in Business Cybersecurity Practical Implementation](#), [Certificate of Completion in Business Cybersecurity Fundamentals](#), and [Certificate of Completion in Business Computer Fundamentals](#); Rogue Community College, [Certificate of Completion in Medical Assistant](#); Umpqua Community College, [Certificate of Completion in Umpqua Healthcare Career Certificate](#); Lane Community College, [A.A.S in Cybersecurity](#).

Two Partner Reports Focus on Accelerated Learning: Two new reports look at outcomes of students who participate in accelerated learning as well as the number of credits that were presented and accepted at Oregon community colleges and public universities. In November 2018, the Chief Education Office released the first annual report on accelerated learning credit transferability, which is required by House Bill 4053, working with the data collected by the HECC on accelerated learning credits from the state's 17 community colleges and seven public universities. [View the full report here](#). In December 2018, Education Northwest unveiled a new study by Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest, which examines whether Oregon's investment in accelerated learning is paying off. See their [press release here](#) and the [full study here](#).

### **Economic and Community Impact**

HECC Commissioners Approve Changes to Cosmetology Curricular Standards: At their December 2018 meeting, HECC Commissioners discussed and approved changes to Oregon cosmetology standards for private career cosmetology schools, which were proposed by the Private Career Schools (PCS) unit of the HECC. The changes are the culmination of an extensive stakeholder process led by the PCS unit. Last revised in 2007, the now-approved curricular updates provide a curriculum that more accurately reflects the knowledge and skills that are required today to be successful in the industry.

### **Other Updates**

Jim Pinkard Selected as HECC as Director of Postsecondary Finance and Capital: After a national search, HECC is pleased to announce that Jim Pinkard has joined the agency as director of postsecondary finance and capital, leading an office which now includes university and community college funding administration along with capital financing for both sectors. Mr. Pinkard joins us from the Teacher Retirement System of Texas, where he managed the state's more than \$2.5 billion annual funding contribution.

Julia Steinberger Selected as STEM Investment Council Director: Julia Steinberger has been selected as the STEM Council Director in the HECC Office of Workforce Investments (OWI). Ms. Steinberger previously served as Workforce and Community College Policy Analyst for the HECC Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD).

For more on current work of the HECC, please see recent meeting materials, or go to [oregon.gov/HigherEd](http://oregon.gov/HigherEd).