



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

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December Agency Update:

December, 2016 | The HECC launched a new expanded website in November at www.oregon.gov/highered, and among the new resources, partners can now find this and former quarterly Government to Government updates as well as other information on work and initiatives in [Coordination with Oregon Tribes](#) located in the [Equity and Student Success](#) section.

Commission plan and recent actions: Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)'s [2016-20 Strategic Plan](#) provides a foundation and scaffolding for preparing more Oregonians with the degrees, certificates, and training they need to succeed in their goals and careers. The plan defines six key priorities that guides higher education funding and policy decisions within the HECC authority, including: **goal setting, public college and university funding, pathways, student support, college affordability, and economic and community impact.**

On September 1, the HECC submitted the agency's budget request for higher education, detailed in [September's agency update](#), and the next step in the budgeting process will be the release of the Governor's Recommended Budget on December 1. The HECC is gearing up to work with our institutions and partners during the 2017 Legislative Session. During September's Legislative Days, HECC agency leaders provided [updates to legislative committees](#) on: Open Educational Resources, implementation of the Oregon Promise, support to former ITT Technical Institute students, and the capital construction budget development. The HECC met in Salem in October, the Commission continued to focus on need for clear metrics to measure and guide progress toward its strategic goals. Commissioners discussed preliminary recommendations on state

Our Commission

The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is dedicated to fostering and sustaining the best, most rewarding pathways to opportunity and success for all Oregonians through an accessible, affordable and coordinated network for educational achievement beyond a high school diploma. Oregon's higher education and workforce system serves hundreds of thousands of learners through seven public universities, 17 public community colleges, private and independent colleges and universities, workforce programs, and private career and trade schools., who oversees the work of the HECC agency.

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 the HECC agency. For more information, see About Us on the HECC website.

Events

December 7, 2016: Funding and Achievement Subcommittee

December 7, 2016: Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee

December 8, 2015: Full Commission Meeting
For email notices of upcoming public HECC meetings, or sign up for our newsletter, go to www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

metrics with Amy Cox, HECC Director of Research and Data. Dr. Cox [presented leading metrics related to educational attainment, equity, and affordability](#), key priorities in the HECC's strategic plan. The Commission also [took action to foster opportunities for former nursing students of Oregon ITT Technical Institute \(ITT\)](#). In November, the Commission held a short meeting telephonically where they took action on reprioritizing the university capital proposals, and approved proceeding with an emergency funding request to the Oregon Legislature to support PCC's efforts to support former ITT students.

HECC Launches New Website at www.Oregon.gov/HigherEd: We announced in November an expanded HECC website that showcases the breadth of the HECC's work as the single state entity responsible for ensuring pathways to postsecondary success for Oregonians statewide. The new site is organized in eight featured sections, including: [Planning and Paying for College, Institutions and Programs](#) (including [Community Colleges and Workforce Development](#), [Public University Coordination](#), [Private Postsecondary Education, Workforce Investments](#)), [Research and Data](#), including Reports and Legislative Resources, [Policy and Collaboration](#), and [About the Higher Education Coordinating Commission](#). The website was developed using the State of Oregon's new customer-focused, mobile-friendly platform. The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion site is also featured on the new HECC site, and will continue to be maintained at OregonStudentAid.gov.

Affordability and Financial Aid

It is college and financial aid application season, and our major financial aid programs and scholarships are now open for applicants. We hope all our partners will help us get out the word that Oregon students can now apply for over 500 private scholarships, as well as the Oregon Promise and the Oregon Opportunity Grant (see our [press release here](#)). With an early start to the federal financial aid application this year, our Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) staff have been busy working with partners statewide to prepare students and families to apply for financial aid. We invite more high schools and partners statewide to join our outreach efforts through College Goal Oregon and FAFSA Plus+.

- OSAC Scholarships: Students must apply online at OregonStudentAid.gov and submit a completed [OSAC scholarship application](#) and all other required materials by March 1 at 5:00 p.m. Students may explore over 500 scholarships and apply for up to 40 with one application, and there is no cost to apply. Scholarship funds are available for graduating high school seniors, college undergraduate and graduate students, GED and homeschooled students, community college and vocational school students, single parents returning to school, and more. Students who submit their applications by February 15 at 5:00 pm may be entered in a drawing to win a \$1,000 OSAC Early Bird scholarship.
- Oregon Promise: Current high school seniors and GED recipients can now apply for the Oregon Promise grant, which covers some or all tuition at Oregon community colleges. Students must enroll in a community college within 6 months of graduating from an Oregon high school or receiving a GED. Minimum GPA and GED requirements apply. Visit OregonStudentAid.gov for eligibility details and rolling application deadlines or see the [Oregon Promise fact sheet here](#). Students who graduate from high school early in Fall 2016 (between July 1 and December 1, 2016) who plan to attend community college in Winter 2017 must apply for the Oregon Promise by December 1. Students in the high school class of 2017 who plan to attend community college in Fall 2017 must apply by July 1; those who apply by April 1 will receive early notifications. See the fact sheet above for additional details on applications and eligibility. This funding opportunity is subject to legislative approval in 2017
- Oregon Opportunity Grant and other State and Federal Aid: [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. Students should complete either the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) or the [Oregon Student Aid Application \(ORSAA\)](#) for the upcoming school year. The ORSAA is Oregon's alternative to the FAFSA for students who are not U.S. citizens nor eligible non-citizens, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students. OSAC uses data from the FAFSA or the ORSAA to determine students' eligibility for the Oregon Promise, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, and numerous scholarships. Information from the FAFSA is also used to determine eligibility for federal aid, including the Federal Pell Grant, Federal Direct Loans, and Federal Work-Study.

FAFSA opened early this year: The 2017-18 FAFSA season began earlier than previous FAFSA application cycles. On October 1, 2016 students were able to start submitting the FAFSA for the 2017-18 school year, while in the past they had to wait until January 1. Federal Student Aid's [Financial Aid Toolkit](#) explains more about the why and the how. With this change, students will begin reporting income and tax information from an earlier tax year. For example, on the 2017-18 FAFSA, students will report their 2015 income and tax information rather than their 2016 income and tax information. And, with this change, HECC-OSAC has started early with our financial aid outreach this year.

Oregon Promise Student Supports Program: The Oregon Promise eMentoring and Student Support Program is intended to help Oregon Promise recipients stay on track and be successful throughout their community college journey. Oregon Promise students will receive emails and texts throughout the collegiate academic year with friendly reminders, tips, and college-specific articles that will aid in their success. Students also have the opportunity to receive eMentoring via an Oregon Promise eMentor. Topics can include financial aid, scholarships, academic interests, graduation requirements, navigating campus, and more. For more information about this program, contact the Oregon

Promise eMentoring Coordinator, Collin Ellis, at OPSupport@osac.state.or.us.

Expanded Gender Choices on OSAC Financial Aid Forms: HECC-OSAC has expanded the options for demographic-gender information on its (agency-produced) financial aid forms. Prior to this year, applications for financial aid limited gender options to "Male," "Female," or "Choose Not to Say." OSAC heard from students, funding partners and staff that these limited options forced applicants either to avoid the question or to put themselves into a box that wasn't comfortable for them. OSAC has made the decision to expand the list of options under Demographics- Gender to: Female, Male, Trans Female/Trans Woman, Trans Male/Trans Man, Non-binary/Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming, Different Identity, and Choose Not to Say. The expanded list was developed with the support of research and recommendations from Basic Rights Oregon.

More OSAC Scholarships Accepting Alternative to FAFSA: With recent changes approved by two of OSAC's largest funding partners, many students who have had limited financial aid opportunities because of their citizenship status are now able to apply for more private scholarships in Oregon. Students who are not U.S. citizens nor eligible non-citizens are not eligible for federal aid. In Oregon, these students may be considered for some state financial aid programs by submitting the [Oregon Student Aid Application \(ORSAA\)](#), the State of Oregon's alternative to the FAFSA. With the help of our two largest funding partners for private scholarships, ORSAA is now an option for many of the over 500 private scholarships administered by OSAC. The Oregon Community Foundation has determined that all applicants for their need-based awards administered through the OSAC Scholarship Application can use the ORSAA instead of the FAFSA, unless specified. The Ford Family Foundation recently approved using the ORSAA as an alternative to the FAFSA for tuition equity applicants for their scholarships, as well. If students have questions, they may contact ORSAAHelp@hecc.oregon.gov or 800-452-8807.

Tribal Organizations invited to join FAFSA Plus+ Program: HECC-OSAC is still expanding the FAFSA Plus+ program. We invite school districts, high schools, TRIO programs, Tribal Education Agencies, Indian Organizations, or community-based organizations to complete our non-competitive [FAFSA Plus+ Application](#).

FAFSA Plus+ is a year-round program that includes FAFSA completion activities and support, College Goal Oregon (CGO) events, financial literacy information, scholarship resources, award letter help, and other college access information. OSAC shares student-level FAFSA data and best practices with sites, allowing site staff to provide targeted assistance to their students who need to complete and submit a FAFSA, make corrections, and notify students who have been selected for verification. Please direct any questions to FAFSAplus@osac.state.or.us.

Open educational resource (OER) grants in action, focused on tuition affordability for high-enrollment courses: With recent grants, 9 campuses across the state are working to expand the availability of open educational resources (OERS) to reduce textbook cost for Oregon students. Through the Open Education Resources (OER) grant program, funded as a result of HB2871 (2015), the HECC awarded grants to 5 community colleges and 4 universities to adopt and implement OER into 15 courses that were identified as high enrollment and having high cost textbooks. A list of the grant awardees can be found on the [HECC OER webpage](#) here.

Supporting Pathways and Student Success

New Programs Approved: In October, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approved the following academic programs at Oregon community colleges and public universities. University programs: [Oregon State University, B.S. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology](#), [Western Oregon University, B.A./B.S. in Education Studies](#)
Community College Programs: [Linn-Benton Community College, A.A.S. in Visual Communications](#), [Portland Community College: A.A.S. in Nursing - Breckinridge](#)

STEM Grant Implementation: Last spring we distributed nearly \$2 million to 9 higher education institutions as part of HB3072 STEM support funding. These competitive, innovative grants are in full implementation and being used to recruit, retain and graduate underrepresented students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

Economic and Community Impact

HECC Awarded \$1.5M Federal Grant to Advance Apprenticeships: The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) was awarded \$1.5 million from the U.S. Department of Labor ([see press release here](#)) to fund the Advancing Oregon Apprenticeship (AOA) project, which will focus on a wide range of industries. Through AOA, Oregon will make Registered Apprenticeship Oregon's preferred training model; fully integrate Registered Apprenticeship with Oregon's workforce system; and increase apprenticeship opportunities and support for income individuals and underrepresented populations. Key partners include the Bureau of Labor and Industries, Oregon Tradeswomen Inc., and the Technology Association of Oregon, among other state partners. The project will serve 396 apprentices with a focus on low-income individuals, women, individuals from communities of color, other underrepresented populations, and job seekers interested in Registered Apprenticeship. The Office of Workforce Investments (OWI) is responsible for convening partnerships in the workforce system on this grant and other efforts, in collaboration with the Oregon Employment Department. For more information on the grant, contact Shalee.HODGSON@oregon.gov or Shaun.C.ENGSTROM@oregon.gov, or see [Apprenticeship USA State Expansion Grants](#).

Implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) continues with its emphasis on business led strategies that serve a breadth of individuals including traditionally underserved populations- rural, communities of color, second/multiple generation impoverished and special populations such as the disability community.

Other Updates

Fall 4th Week Enrollment Data Released: The HECC has a new expanded Research and Data section of our website, including student data from Oregon public community colleges and universities. Last week, HECC posted updated Fall 2016 4th week [student enrollment data for both the public institutions, available here](#). Overall, the public university resident headcount has dropped slightly from 67,558 to 66,075, and the Full Time Equivalent resident enrollment has also decreased. The total community college headcount enrollment has also dropped from 126,787 to 124,795, and the FTE resident enrollment has also decreased. The percentage of enrolled [students by ethnicity over time is available here](#).

Mahalia Newmark, Hatfield Fellow: We are pleased many Tribal Education leaders have had a chance to meet our Hatfield Fellow in the HECC Office of University Coordination, Mahalia Newmark, whose fellowship is focused on researching strategies in which the agency can support the updated American Indian/Alaskan Native Education State Plan, along with other new and proposed state plans that impact student success initiatives. Mahalia Newmark is an enrolled member of the Tulita Dene First Nations in Canada and we're delighted to have secured her involvement at the HECC.

Kyle Thomas hired as HECC Director for Legislative and Policy Affairs: As the HECC's Director for Legislative and Policy Affairs, Mr. Kyle Thomas will work closely with the Commission and Executive Director to advance the HECC's strategic plan by overseeing development and implementation of the HECC's legislative agenda, serving as a central point of contact for all legislative affairs, and facilitating agency-wide work in response to legislative requests and directives. Prior to joining the HECC, from 2013 to 2015, Thomas was Legislative Program Manager for the Connecticut Board of Regents for Higher Education, and from 2009 to 2013, served as legislative aide to Connecticut State Senator Beth Bye, who served as chair of the Senate Higher Education committee. Mr. Thomas earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of Connecticut.

Juan Báez-Arévalo was hired as Interim Director of the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC), serving in the position previously held by Bob Brew who is now serving as Deputy Executive Director of the HECC. Báez-Arévalo has served as Director of the HECC Office of Private Postsecondary Education since 2014, and will continue to serve in that leadership position as well. Prior to joining the HECC, Juan Báez-Arévalo was a served in diverse educational leadership roles in the K-12 system, worked at a Community College and as a policy advisor in the workforce development system, and has experience in leading change, systematic improvements, public policy and management. As a former Principal of a high poverty, high ELL school he transformed a dual immersion program into a state and national model for simultaneous bi-literacy. Mr. Báez-Arévalo is a native of Mexico, and received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Oregon State University, his Master of Science Degree in Public Management and Policy from Carnegie Mellon University, and additional graduate and professional education at Lewis & Clark College and Portland State University.

Successful 16th Annual ASPIRE Fall Conference: Thanks to all who joined the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion for its 16th annual ASPIRE Fall Conference on October 14th at Lane Community College in Eugene. The conference brought together roughly 220 individuals – ASPIRE coordinators, volunteers, school counselors, college access professionals, and others – to work together on mentoring Oregon students on their path to education and training beyond high school.

Successful 3rd Annual GED Summit: Thanks to all who joined the HECC Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development for its 3rd annual GED Summit on October 27-28 in Tigard, Oregon. Hundreds of GED educators, students, local and national vendors, and partners from every corner of the state joined us for this enriching educational event.

HECC News Clips service: The HECC provides a regular email service including a selection of news clips primarily related to Oregon postsecondary education. If you wish to sign up for this email, please [subscribe to news clips here](#).

For more on current work of the HECC, please see recent meeting materials, or go to oregon.gov/HigherEd.