

2024 UNIVERSITY EVALUATION: Oregon State University (ORS 352.061)



Source: Oregon State University

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INTRODUCTION

This evaluation is guided by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 352.061, which mandates that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) submit a biennial evaluation of public universities listed in ORS 352.002 to the Oregon Legislative Assembly. The purpose of this report is to assess each university's contributions to the state's higher education goals as outlined in state statutes, as well as in the HECC's Strategic Plan and the Roadmap for Oregon Postsecondary Education and Training.

These evaluation focuses on key areas of student success, access and affordability, academic quality, and financial sustainability, while also addressing the universities' roles in regional development and community engagement. This report builds on previous evaluations and provides an updated analysis of the universities' progress in meeting the objectives of Oregon's higher education system.

Each university's evaluation is based on a combination of accreditation reports, self-assessments, and both state and federal data. As part of this evaluation, the report highlights the individual strengths, challenges, and initiatives of the universities in fulfilling their missions and meeting state objectives, including efforts to increase degree completion rates, expand access for underrepresented students, and foster academic excellence.

Additionally, each report includes an assessment of the university's Board of Trustees and their role in ensuring transparency, public accountability, and alignment with the State's higher education mission. The findings presented here will help guide ongoing efforts to improve Oregon's higher education system, with an emphasis on supporting institutions as they work to enhance student outcomes and contribute to the economic vitality and cultural enrichment of the state.

Passed by the Oregon Legislature in 2013, Senate Bill 270 established individual governing boards at the University of Oregon (UO) and Portland State University (PSU). The bill also set a timeline for Oregon State University (OSU) to establish its own governing board, which was subsequently implemented.

House Bill 4018 (2014) and Senate Bill 80 (2015) authorized the creation of independent governing boards at:

- Western Oregon University (WOU)
- Southern Oregon University (SOU)
- Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT)
- Eastern Oregon University (EOU)

These actions led to the dissolution of the Oregon University System. SB 270 and subsequent legislation required the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to conduct regular evaluations of the public universities. In 2017, the legislature amended ORS 352.061, mandating HECC to evaluate each public university once every two years. The evaluation criteria are codified in ORS 352.061.

ORS 352.061(2) outlines the specific components to be included in each evaluation:

- a) A report on the university's achievement of outcomes, measures of progress, goals, and targets.
- b) An assessment of the university's progress toward achieving the mission of all education beyond high school, as described in ORS 350.014 (the "40-40-20" goal).

Additionally, ORS 352.061(2)(c) mandates the HECC to assess university governing boards against the standards set forth in ORS 352.025, which includes the following provisions:

- a) Provide transparency, public accountability, and support for the university.
- b) Are focused closely on the individual university.

- c) Do not negatively impact public universities that do not have governing boards.
- d) Lead to greater access and affordability for Oregon residents without disadvantaging Oregon students compared to out-of-state students.
- e) Act in the best interests of both the university and the State of Oregon.
- f) Promote the academic success of students in alignment with the mission of all education beyond high school, as outlined in ORS 350.014 (the “40-40-20” goal).

For context, ORS 352.025 includes additional legislative findings:

- a) Even with universities having governing boards, there are benefits to a coordinated university system through economies of scale.
- b) Services may continue to be shared among universities, even with individual governing boards.
- c) Legal title to all real property, whether acquired before or after the creation of a governing board, through state funding, revenue bonds, or philanthropy, is held in the name of the State of Oregon, through the governing board.
- d) The Legislative Assembly has a responsibility to monitor the success of governing boards in fulfilling their missions, compacts, and the principles outlined in this section.

This year, the HECC evaluated:

University of Oregon (UO)
 Portland State University (PSU)
 Oregon State University (OSU)

EVALUATION PROCESS

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) initiated a collaborative workgroup including university provosts, the Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate, staff from the Oregon Education Investment Board, HECC staff, and faculty from across Oregon’s public universities. The workgroup began its efforts in February 2015 to establish a clear understanding of the purpose, scope, and structure of the evaluation process. This led to the development of an evaluation framework that could evolve to meet the needs of both the universities and the state. After incorporating feedback from stakeholders, the HECC formally adopted the framework on September 10, 2015.

The HECC’s approach to evaluating Oregon’s public universities is designed to be responsive and adaptable to the unique circumstances of each institution. Rather than adhering to a rigid or formulaic process, the evaluation considers factors such as changes in state funding, student demographics, and the universities’ strategic goals. By integrating a variety of data sources—including self-studies, accreditation reports, and input from university boards of trustees—the HECC aims to provide a nuanced, holistic perspective on each university’s contributions to the state’s higher education objectives.

This evaluation is not a comprehensive review of all aspects of each university but focuses on key legislative priorities, including student success, access and affordability, and financial sustainability. The findings from this evaluation provide insights that support policy development and ensure that Oregon’s higher education institutions remain responsive to both state needs and student outcomes.

STATEWIDE CONTEXT

Funding History

In the wake of the Great Recession (2008-2012), state funding for public universities in Oregon experienced a significant decline, the effects of which are still felt today. Although recent state investments in higher education have returned to pre-recession levels, they are tempered by growing debt obligations tied to state-funded capital projects. As a result, these funding levels have not kept pace with the increasing demands placed on public universities. With an increasingly diverse student body and a focus on raising

graduation and completion rates, additional funding is essential to ensure that institutions have the resources they need to support student success and meet the evolving educational needs of the state.

Governance Changes

Senate Bill 270 (2013) established the benefits of having independent governing boards for public universities, emphasizing that these boards should be transparent, closely aligned with the university's mission, and "act in the best interest of both the university and the State of Oregon as a whole." The Legislature also recognized the value of economies of scale, allowing universities to continue participating in shared service models, which promote efficiency and reduce costs.

It is important to note that under ORS 352.129, public universities were initially required to participate in group health insurance, a select set of retirement plans, and collective bargaining through July 1, 2019. Following this date, universities were no longer mandated to offer the same scope or value for these employee benefits. However, they are still required to maintain participation in shared administrative services for the provision of benefits, as further detailed in the "Shared Administrative Services" section of this report.

Local Conditions and Mission

Oregon State University (OSU) is one of the three largest public universities in the State with a long history of excellence in preparing students in a comprehensive array of academic and professional fields. ORS 350.075 and 350.085 require the HECC to review and approve public university mission statements. At its June 11, 2015, meeting the HECC reviewed and approved the University's mission statement. The mission, vision, goals, and core themes of OSU are reproduced here:

MISSION:

As a land grant institution committed to teaching, research and outreach and engagement, Oregon State University promotes economic, social, cultural and environmental progress for the people of Oregon, the nation and the world. This mission is achieved by producing graduates competitive in the global economy, supporting a continuous search for new knowledge and solutions and maintaining a rigorous focus on academic excellence, particularly in the three Signature Areas: Advancing the Science of Sustainable Earth Ecosystems, Improving Human Health and Wellness, and Promoting Economic Growth and Social Progress.

VISION:

That humankind can equitably and sustainably prosper, and that Oregon State will be a catalyst for that prosperity.

Oregon State University's recently adopted strategic plan, Prosperity Widely Shared (Jan. 2024 – Dec. 2030), continues with the same Mission, and includes updated Vision, Foundational Values, Goals, Actions, and Targets.

OSU's strategic plan is aligned with its accreditation-based core themes (articulated in the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accreditation standards):

CORE THEMES:

1. Undergraduate Education
 - a. Provide broad and continuing access to undergraduate university degrees for the

people of Oregon and beyond.

- b. Provide rigorous and effective undergraduate degree programs.
- c. Provide a supportive and healthy learning environment beyond the classroom for student success and leadership development at all levels.
- d. Use faculty research and scholarship to enrich the undergraduate curriculum.

2. Research and Graduate Education

- a. Create and maintain a diverse research and scholarship environment that consistently achieves high impacts.
- b. Attract, retain and support high quality and diverse students for graduate programs.
- c. Provide high quality training to support graduate students' degree completion and prepare them for post-graduation opportunities.

3. Outreach and Engagement

- a. Extend transformative educational experiences to learners, communities and organizations using means beyond traditional classroom-based instruction.
- b. Increase collaboration with communities and stakeholders to build and sustain mutually beneficial and reciprocal relationships to advance learning, research and engagement opportunities.
- c. Increase the impact of OSU's outreach and engagement activities on economic development, student achievements and success, and quality of life throughout Oregon and beyond.

GOALS:

- 1. A university focused on big discoveries that drive big solutions.
- 2. A university where every student graduates.
- 3. A university that fuels a thriving world.

ACCREDITATION

A comprehensive assessment and review of academic and institutional quality is available from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) that accredits OSU and other universities in Oregon. Accreditation of an institution of higher education by the NWCCU indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality evaluated through a peer review process. An accredited college or university is one that has the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation. Reviews are structured as a cyclical process of continuous improvement. NWCCU accreditation occurs on a seven-year cycle that consists of four parts: Annual Reports each year; Mid-Cycle self-review and peer review in the third year; Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review in sixth year; and Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness self-review and peer review in the seventh year. This section draws on relevant parts of NWCCU reports that are identified as of interest to the Legislature and in alignment with the HECC Strategic Plan.

Oregon State University was last re-affirmed for accreditation in 2019.

OSU completed its Mid-Cycle Review in 2022, and the following two recommendations substantially in compliance but in need of improvement:

- Recommendation 1: Spring 2022 Mid-Cycle Review - Use the results of student learning outcomes assessment more consistently for improvement by informing planning, decision-making, and allocation of resources and capacity. (2020 Standards 1.D.3;1.D.4)
- Recommendation 2: Spring 2019 Mission Fulfillment and Sustainability - Continue to exercise great care that credit and degrees, wherever offered and however delivered, are based on documented student achievement of the established Oregon State University learning outcomes. (2020 Standard 1.C.2)

OSU submitted its Ad Hoc Report with peer review visit in Spring 2023, and NWCCU noted in its response that both recommendations issued in the 2022 Mid-Cycle Review are now fulfilled. That letter can be found here:

https://accreditation.oregonstate.edu/sites/accreditation.oregonstate.edu/files/2024-04/commission_letter-oregon_state_university-6_23_2023.pdf

Next steps in the accreditation cycle follow with a spring 2025 Policies, Regulations, and Financial Review (Year 6).

Specialized Professional Accreditations Academic Year 2024-2025.

College of Agricultural Sciences

Program	Degree	Accrediting or Reviewing Agency	Last Review	Next Review
Agricultural Education	MS	Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP)	2023	2029
Agricultural Education	MS	Oregon Teacher Standards & Practices Commission (TSPC)	2020	2027

Program	Degree	Accrediting or Reviewing Agency	Last Review	Next Review
Food Science and Sustainable Technology	BS	Higher Education Review Board of the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT)	2019	2025
Rangeland Sciences	BS	Society for Rangeland Management (SRM)	2023	2034

College of Business

Program	Degree	Accrediting or Reviewing Agency	Last Review	Next Review
Accountancy	BS, MAC	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Business	MSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Business Administration	BA, BS, MBA, PhD	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Business Analytics	BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Business Information Systems	BA, BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Finance	BA, BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Innovation Management	BA, BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Marketing	BA, BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Organizational Leadership	BA, BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025
Supply Chain & Logistics Management	BS	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB)	2020	2025

STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

Nationally, undergraduate enrollment increased by 4.7 percent in fall 2024, marking a rebound above pre-pandemic levels, as reported by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. In Oregon, public universities continued their positive trajectory, with overall enrollment rising by 1.7 percent from fall 2023 to fall 2024, reflecting growth across the state.

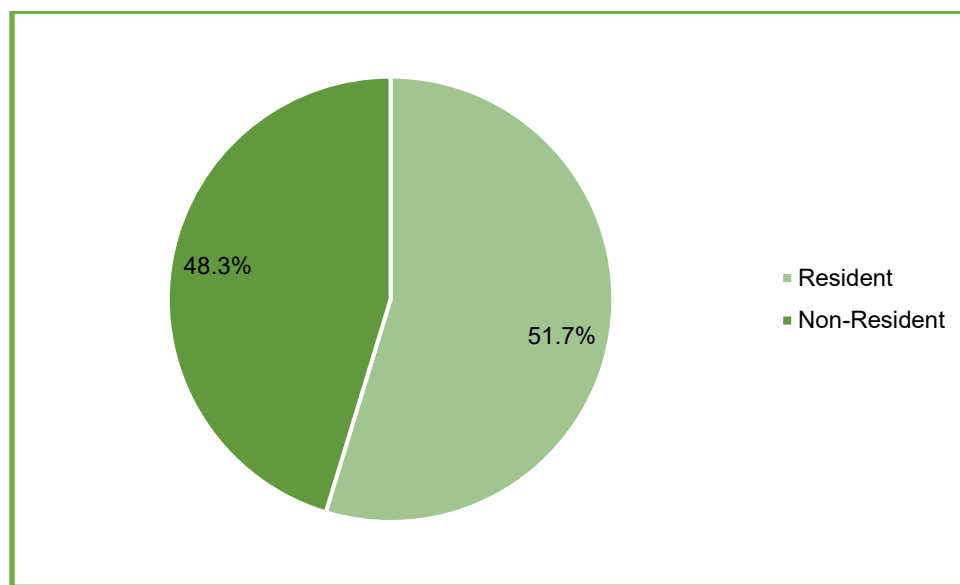
This section of the report is focused on tracking trends in enrollment, completion outcomes, and demographic changes.

Generally, this section describes overall enrollment figures and trends for Oregon State University as a whole. In some places, it distinguishes between Oregon State University (main campus) and Oregon State University-Cascades. The large majority of OSU “main campus” enrollment represents students attending the Corvallis campus, but it also includes on-line (or Ecampus), OSU programs at Eastern Oregon University, and other state, national and world-wide sites. Only OSU-Cascades enrollment is excluded.

As detailed by Figures 3 and 4, during the 2023-24 academic year the majority of OSU students (51.7 percent) were Oregon residents. The majority of OSU’s students (67.9 percent) also attended full-time.

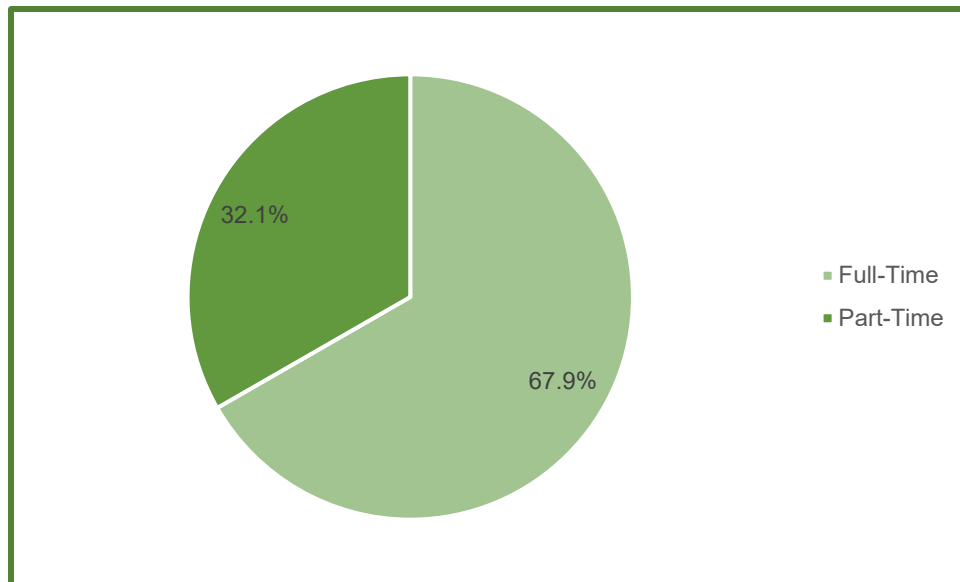
Oregon State University (OSU) has maintained steady enrollment growth since its last evaluation, with total enrollment rising by 4.1 percent from fall 2023 to fall 2024, increasing from 36,935 to 38,459 students. Non-resident enrollment grew by 13.1 percent, while resident enrollment increased by 3.7 percent over the same two-year period. OSU continues to expand access for historically underserved students, with 18.8 percent of the student body identifying as underrepresented minorities and 26.8 percent receiving Pell Grants in fall 2024. Graduate and professional students now comprise 16.3 percent of total enrollment. The first-year retention rate for the fall 2023 cohort was 87.2 percent, underscoring OSU’s continued focus on supporting student persistence and success.

Figure 1: OSU Student Enrollment by Residency, 2023-24



Source: HECC (2025)

Figure 2: OSU Student Enrollment by Full-Time/Part-Time Status, fall 2023-24



Source: HECC (2025)

In fall 2024, OSU enrolled 38,459 students, an increase of 4.1 percent from the previous fall (2023), continuing a multi-year trend of enrollment growth. This stands in contrast to statewide public university enrollment, which has generally experienced further declines over the same period. Between fall 2022 and fall 2024, non-resident enrollment at OSU increased by 13.1 percent, while resident enrollment grew by 3.7 percent. The number of newly admitted, degree-seeking undergraduates for fall 2024 reached 7,956, a 5.5 percent increase over the 7,544 new undergraduates in fall 2022.

While single-year changes may not define a long-term pattern, these enrollment figures reinforce OSU's position as Oregon's largest university and reflect an ongoing shift in the balance between resident and non-resident students. Over the past decade, OSU's non-resident student population has grown by 67.8 percent since 2014 (from 11,333 to 18,934), while the resident population increased by 17.2 percent (from 18,533 to 21,273), and overall enrollment rose by 28.8 percent (from 29,866 to 38,459). Much of OSU's growth is attributable to robust expansion in online degree offerings and increased international student enrollment prior to 2020. As a result, OSU remains the state's most populous and fastest-growing public university.

Table 1: OSU 4th Week Headcount Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity

Race/ Ethnicity	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Change Fall 2023 to Fall 2024
Non-Resident Alien	2,723	2,584	2,543	2,596	53
American Indian/ Alaska Native	185	201	217	250	33
Asian	2,602	2,845	2,872	2,912	40
Black Non-Hispanic	598	629	773	830	57
Hispanic	3,908	4,174	4,430	4,815	385
Pacific Islander	97	100	113	120	7
Two or more races, Underrepresented Minorities	1,146	1,173	1,163	1,233	70
Two or more races, not Underrepresented Minorities	1,093	1,172	1,267	1,326	59
White Non-Hispanic	21,298	22,020	22,938	23,779	841
Unknown	790	665	618	598	-20

Source: HECC (2025)

The number of underrepresented minority (URM) students enrolled at OSU continues to rise, more than doubling since 2012 with an increase of 101.1 percent. In fall 2024, OSU enrolled 7,248 URM students,

representing 18.8 percent of the total student population—the highest proportion in the university’s history. From fall 2021 to fall 2024, growth was observed in nearly every major race/ethnicity category, with notable gains among Hispanic, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, White, and multi-racial students. These trends underscore OSU’s sustained progress in building a more diverse campus community and improving access for historically underserved populations.

Graduation rates at Oregon State University continue to demonstrate steady progress, though gaps remain for certain student groups. For first-time, full-time freshmen entering in fall 2017, the six-year graduation rate for all students reached 72.5 percent. Underrepresented minority students graduated at a six-year rate of 64.3 percent, while Pell Grant recipients achieved a rate of 68.0 percent. Four-year graduation rates were 48.2 percent for all students, 39.1 percent for underrepresented minorities, and 40.1 percent for Pell recipients. While graduation rates for underrepresented and low-income students remain below the institutional average, the narrowing gaps reflect OSU’s ongoing efforts to improve student success and support equitable outcomes across its diverse student population. The four and six-year graduation rates for OSU’s First Time Full-Time Freshmen who entered in fall 2017 are as follows:

Table 2: Four-Year and Six-Year Graduation Rate, First Time, Full-Time Freshmen Entering Fall 2017

	Four- Year Graduation Rate	Six-Year Graduation Rate
All Students	48.2%	72.5%
Underrepresented Minorities	39.1%	64.3%
Pell Grant Recipients	40.1%	68.0%

Source: HECC (2025)

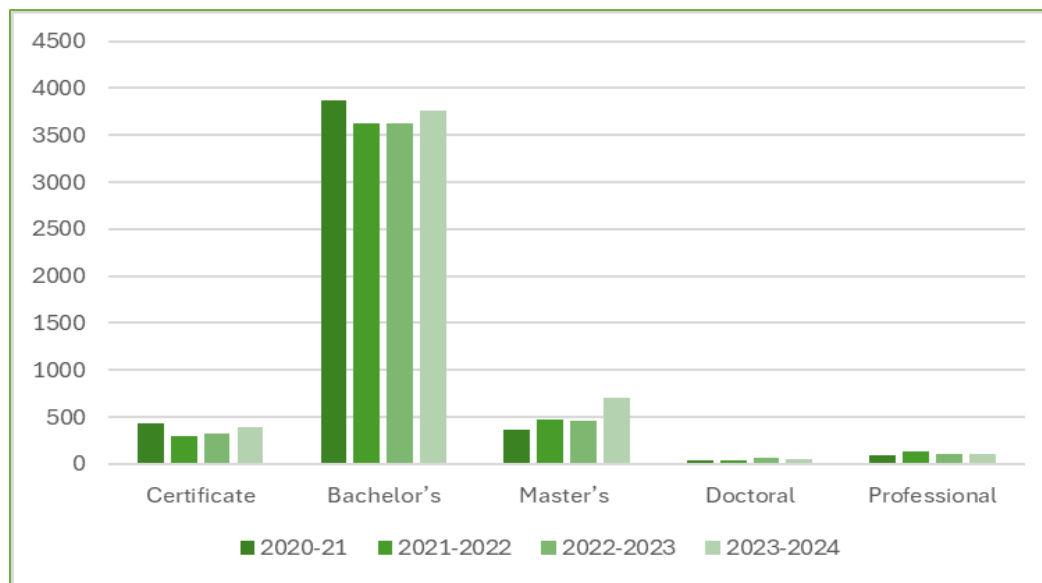
OSU’s total number of resident degree completions has rebounded in recent years, with notable growth since 2021-22. Bachelor’s degrees awarded to resident students increased from 3,628 in 2022-23 to 3,766 in 2023-24, reflecting renewed momentum in undergraduate completion. Master’s degrees saw a significant rise as well, climbing from 466 to 704 over the same period. The number of certificates awarded also increased to 396 in 2023-24. Completions at the doctoral and professional levels remained stable, with 55 and 107 degrees awarded, respectively, in 2023-24. OSU does not offer associate’s degrees. These trends indicate that, while bachelor’s degree completions remain the largest share of OSU’s credentials, the university is also seeing increasing output at the graduate and certificate levels.

Table 3: OSU Resident Student Completions by Award Type

	2020-21	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Certificate	435	290	327	396
Associates	0	0	0	0
Bachelor's	3,865	3,621	3,628	3,766
Master's	366	477	466	450
Doctoral	41	45	61	55
Professional	95	130	102	107

Source: HECC (2025)

Figure 2: OSU Resident Student Completions by Award Type



Source: HECC (2025)

OSU continues to achieve year-over-year increases in the number of underrepresented minority students earning degrees, even as overall university completions fluctuate. From 2020-21 to 2023-24, the number of undergraduate degrees awarded to underrepresented minority students rose from 1,165 to 1,416—a 21.5 percent increase. This growth is particularly notable among Hispanic, Black, Asian, Pacific Islander, and students identifying as two or more underrepresented races. These trends highlight OSU’s ongoing progress in promoting equity in degree attainment and its sustained commitment to supporting the success of historically underserved student groups.

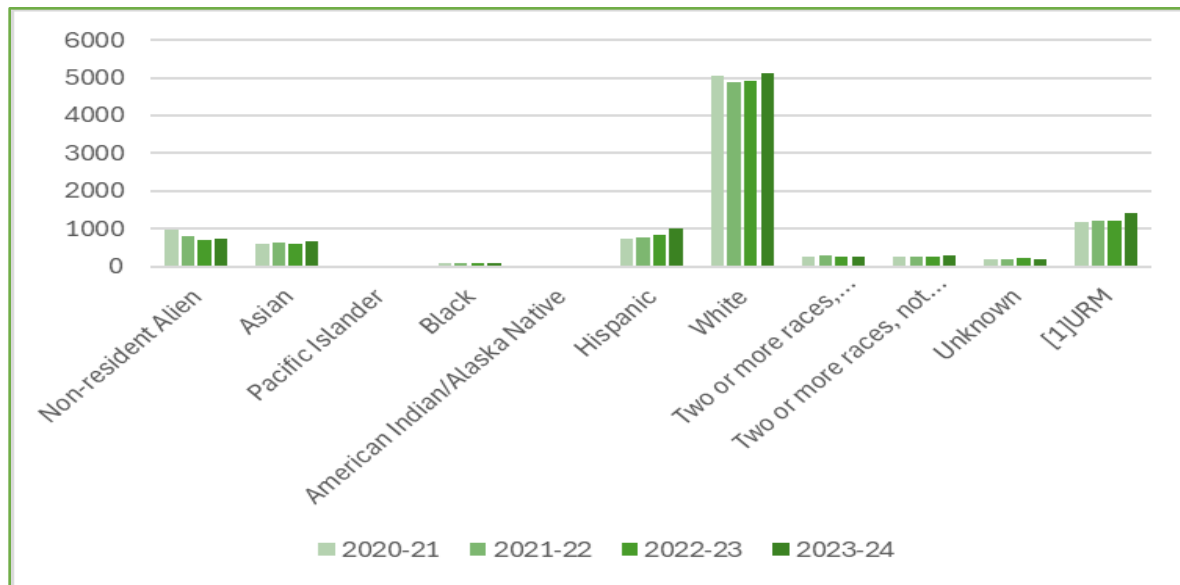
Table 4: OSU Completions by Race/Ethnicity

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Non-resident Alien	985	794	715	726
Asian	615	629	597	655
Pacific Islander	19	23	12	20
Black	99	101	93	107
American Indian/Alaska Native	37	31	35	34
Hispanic	744	779	822	1,002
White	5,038	4,881	4,915	5135
Two or more races, Underrepresented Minorities	266	286	254	253
Two or more races, not Underrepresented Minorities	262	243	254	307
Unknown	196	194	218	176

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
¹ URM	1,165	1,220	1,216	1,416

Source: HECC (2025)

Figure 3: OSU Completions by Race/Ethnicity



Source: HECC (2025)

¹ URM (Under-represented Minority Students: including Pacific Islander, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, and students who identify as two or more under-represented minorities).

AFFORDABILITY

Affordability, more specifically the affordability rate, is a key performance measure used in tracking the factors that contribute to student attainment and equity in alignment with Oregon's higher education goals. As a result, it is a consideration in the university evaluation process. This section includes a discussion of student costs and provides information on the affordability rate over time.

Tuition and fee rates can vary based on several factors including a student's academic year (or cohort), declared major, and residency. The governing boards have authority to set tuition and fee rates; however, they must seek HECC approval for any annual increase of greater than five percent for undergraduate, resident tuition and mandatory fees. Tuition and fee setting is complex with ORS 352.103 laying out requirements for an annual process at each university which requires staff and student participation.

Table A shows the trend in undergraduate, resident tuition and mandatory fees for the past decade unadjusted for inflation. This is for full-time, entering students taking 45 credits over three terms in a given academic year. All incidental fees are included. The information is for the main campus only and for the entering (or freshman) cohort as applicable. Differential tuition and course fees are not included. The average annual increase across all Oregon public universities over this period is 4.5 percent, with an average annual increase of 4.7 percent for OSU, compared to inflation of 3.1 percent.

**Table A: Undergraduate, Resident Tuition and Mandatory Fees
(First-time, full-time enrollment, unadjusted for inflation)**

	Academic Year 2014-15	Academic Year 2023-24	Variance		Annual Growth Rate
OSU	\$9,122	\$13,806	\$4,684	51%	4.7%
Statewide	\$8,391	\$12,433	\$4,041	48%	4.5%

Source: Data is collected from the universities and calculated by HECC staff. Main campus only. Entering cohort only. Incidental mandatory fees are included.

Universities establish a total cost of attendance, or sticker price, which includes tuition and fees, books and supplies, room and board, and personal expenses. During 2022-23, tuition and related fees made up 42 percent of the total cost of attendance on average. Table B shows the change in the total cost of attendance for full-time students over the past decade unadjusted for inflation. The average, annual increase across all Oregon public universities including OSU over this period was 3.0 percent, which is similar to the rate of inflation.

**Table B: Total Cost of Attendance
(Full-time, unadjusted for inflation)**

	Academic Year 2013-14	Academic Year 2022-23	Variance		Annual Growth Rate
OSU	\$23,658	\$30,870	\$7,212	30%	3.0%
Statewide	\$23,481	\$30,630	\$7,149	30%	3.0%

Source: Public University Data Dashboard as published by the HECC Office of Research and Data. Noted as estimated cost of attendance for full-time.

For most students, the total cost of attendance may be partially offset by financial aid including institution remissions and waivers. As a result, most students pay less than the sticker price. Table C shows the change in the average net price for full-time students after accounting for public financial aid and institutional aid. The average annual increase across all Oregon public universities over this period was 2.9 percent, with a rate of 2.8 percent for OSU, or a little less than the rate of inflation.

**Table C: Average Net Price
(Full-time, unadjusted for inflation)**

	Academic Year 2013-14	Academic Year 2022-23	Variance		Annual Growth Rate
OSU	\$15,491	\$19,785	\$4,294	28%	2.8%
Statewide	\$14,360	\$18,565	\$4,205	29%	2.9%

Source: Public University Data Dashboard as published by the HECC Office of Research and Data. Noted as estimated cost of attendance after institutional aid.

This data also suggests the average discount to the total cost of attendance has grown slightly over time for all public universities from 38.8 percent to 39.4 percent during 2022-23. The average discount rate for OSU grew from 34.5 percent in 2013-24 to 36.0 percent during 2022-23. This is likely due to growth in both public and institutional financial aid.

The affordability rate is defined as the percentage of students, overall and by race/ethnicity, whose expected costs are greater than their expected resources. A higher number, therefore, indicates *lesser* affordability. It is measured by comparing the cost of attendance at a college or university with the expected financial resources available for each student including financial aid, the family's contribution, and an estimate of the student's earnings while enrolled. The cost of attendance data comes from the universities and includes estimates for the average, full-time student for tuition and fees, housing, books, supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. The cost of attendance does not include expenses that some students will face such as the cost of caring for children or other family members, health issues, and unexpected events.

Table D: Trend in Affordability Rate

	Statewide	OSU
2013-14	64%	63%
2014-15	63%	63%
2015-16	62%	62%
2016-17	61%	60%
2017-18	61%	60%
2018-19	60%	59%
2019-20	57%	55%
2020-21	54%	52%
2021-22	47%	47%
2022-23	50%	48%

Source: Public University Data Dashboard as published by the HECC Office of Research and Data.

Table D includes the trend in the overall affordability rate for all seven public universities and OSU specifically. This data comes from the Public University Data Dashboard available on the HECC's website. Within the dashboard, the affordability rate can be further explored by race/ethnicity, Pell recipient status, geographic origin (urban, rural, mixed), and gender. Over time, the affordability rate has improved in part due to increased public financial aid and increased institutional aid. However, slightly more students faced unaffordable costs in 2022-23 compared to the prior year likely due to the ending of some expanded federal supports during the pandemic.

ACADEMIC QUALITY AND RESEARCH

The HECC relies on four key areas to track academic quality and research at each institution: regular external accreditation reviews to assess each institution's progress in meeting its stated mission, vision and goals; evidence of regular academic program review to improve quality; regular faculty evaluation and opportunities for professional development; and institutional reports of research activity evidenced by research expenditures. Research contributions are also reflected in economic impact and collaborations both discussed elsewhere in this report.

Oregon State University uses several rigorous and transparent processes to review existing undergraduate and graduate programs and to approve new programs. OSU's program development is guided by the Policy and Guidelines for New Program Proposals by Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission. This policy is consistent with the philosophy and focus of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) and supported by OSU policies and practices. Academic Program approvals move through the Curriculum Inventory Management (CIM) system, following a process with a number of checks, liaison reviews and committee review.

Every undergraduate and graduate academic program has clearly stated learning outcomes, benchmarks for evaluating attainment of those outcomes and participates in annual assessment reviews and reporting. Annual program assessment reports include data and analysis of student learning outcomes and are intended to help guide program improvements. Further, OSU incorporates program learning assessment information into their Academic Unit Assessment process, whereby academic college leadership groups are informed of academic programs' compliance with assessment reporting and their use of assessment feedback for making program improvements.

Periodic Review of Faculty: All faculty with an FTE of 0.5 or more shall be reviewed annually if on an annual tenure appointment. Once tenured, faculty will be reviewed at least once every 3 years.
<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/faculty-handbook/guidelines-periodic-review-faculty>

Promotion and Tenure Process: Candidates for promotion and tenure will be evaluated objectively for evidence of excellence in their performance of assigned duties and in their scholarship or creative activity. Review for tenure occurs during the 6th year of employment; Promotions are review as appropriate:
<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/faculty-handbook/promotion-and-tenure-guidelines>

Mid-Term Reviews: In addition to the annual Periodic Review of Faculty (PROF), all academic units will conduct mid-term intensive reviews for faculty on annual tenure-track appointments. The primary intent is to review progress toward indefinite tenure so that timely guidance can be extended to the faculty member.
<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/policy-mid-term-reviews-tenure-track-faculty>

Post Tenure Review Process: A post-tenure review (PTR) is to be performed if (i) requested by a faculty member (ii) requested by the unit head or supervisor after one negative review or (iii) a faculty member receives two consecutive negative periodic reviews of faculty (PROF).
<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/faculty-handbook/post%E2%80%93tenure-review>

Leadership Academy:

The Leadership Academy is an internal program that has been designed to foster the development of leaders at every level of the university, from department chairs, school heads, and associate deans, to

deans, vice provosts and vice presidents. Examples of topics have included Title IX and sexual misconduct, mentoring, shared governance, navigating employee and labor relations, and budgeting.

<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/academic-leadership-academy>

The new Managerial Competencies Framework is also being implemented to elevate the practice of management and supervision across the university and foster the satisfaction and success of faculty.

<https://hr.oregonstate.edu/training/managerial-competencies-framework>

The ALA includes the annual half- or full-day Academic Leadership Summit each fall. Although the topics change each year, the Summit is a means for welcoming and introducing new academic leaders, building community and supportive relationships among university leaders, and sharing and discussing resources for success in leadership.

<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/academic-leadership-summit>

The Center for Teaching and Learning:

The Center for Teaching and Learning supports excellence in teaching and learning in the academic curriculum and learning in co-curricular settings. The Center has particular expertise in pedagogy and course design; general education; writing in the disciplines; teaching and learning technologies and instructional methods; GTA training and development; inclusive teaching and classroom assessment techniques. Their services include individual consultation, faculty workshops and seminars, faculty learning communities, and orientations.

<https://ctl.oregonstate.edu/core-areas>

National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity (NCFDD) Membership:

Through Oregon State University's institutional membership, all graduate students, postdoctoral scholars, and faculty have access to the National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD), which provides professional development, training, and mentoring. NCFDD resources are broadly applicable across academic disciplines and include a range of topics such as time management, overcoming academic perfectionism, how to develop a daily writing plan, how to write grant proposals, and more.

<https://facultyaffairs.oregonstate.edu/national-center-faculty-development-and-diversity-membership>

The Office of Faculty Affairs provides matching funds for faculty to participate in the NCFDD Faculty Success Program each term. The 12-week online program is their most popular program. It helps non-tenure track, tenure-track, and tenured faculty with the skills necessary to increase research and writing productivity while maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Included in the program are individual coaching sessions, weekly trainings, small group accountability meetings, a community of support, and a time tracker for writing and research productivity.

<https://www.facultydiversity.org/fsp-bootcamp>

Research Advancement Academy

The Research Advancement Academy is a professional development program for faculty from across OSU to develop research leadership skills. The goal of the Academy is to support faculty fellows successfully lead large transdisciplinary proposals & funded research programs. The Academy embodies themes of solutions enterprise leadership, intellectual humility, exposing implicit truths and barriers to success, and

reciprocal team and partnership practices. The program consists of a series of nine workshops in fall and Winter terms through which 20 faculty fellows will explore evidence, mindsets, tools and practices.

The workshops are followed by an opportunity for fellows to apply for seed funds to pursue their solutions research and ongoing coaching and support from the Office for Research Advancement.

<https://research.oregonstate.edu/ora/about/researchadvancement-academy-o>

RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Oregon State University (OSU) is Oregon's land grant institution and is one of only two universities nationally to hold Land, Sea, Space, and Sun Grant designations. OSU also holds the Carnegie Foundation's highest research classification (R1) and its Community Engagement designation, indicating both a broad research mission and significant statewide outreach. The university's research infrastructure includes 11 colleges, 13 Agricultural Experiment Stations, the Forest Research Laboratory, 35 county Extension offices, the Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport, OSU-Cascades in Bend, and the Portland Center, facilitating research across diverse academic and geographic domains.

In FY 2023, OSU reported total research expenditures of \$337.9 million, making it the largest public research university in Oregon by expenditure. The university's research portfolio is funded by a mix of federal agencies, state appropriations, industry partnerships, and philanthropic sources. Federal funding accounts for a significant portion of OSU's external grants and contracts, while engagement with business and industry continues to support applied research and technology transfer. Research activity at OSU spans agriculture and forestry, marine science, engineering, public health, climate science, and other disciplines, with an emphasis on issues relevant to Oregon's economy and communities.

OSU's research outputs have direct implications for economic development, public policy, and innovation statewide. Research activities include collaborative initiatives such as the TRACE-COVID project, which combined expertise from multiple OSU colleges and state partners to assess COVID-19 prevalence and inform public health measures in Oregon communities. Other recent efforts have addressed wildfire resilience, sustainable energy, water resources, food systems, and disaster mitigation planning. Many OSU research projects are interdisciplinary and involve partnerships with other Oregon universities, government agencies, and industry.

Overall, OSU's research activities are intended to address state and regional needs, advance knowledge in priority sectors, and contribute to the public good. Research expenditures and output indicators are reviewed annually by the university and the HECC as part of broader assessments of institutional effectiveness and alignment with statewide higher education goals.

COLLABORATION

There are several joint administrative, academic and governance efforts to maintain collaboration across institutions. Faculty at all public universities are represented at the Inter-Institutional Faculty Senate (IFS), which is made up of elected senate representatives from each institution. The IFS serves as a voice for all faculties of these institutions in matters of system wide university concern. In addition, OSU engages in a number of collaborative initiatives with other universities and partners, as indicated below (P indicates Participation, N/P indicates Non-Participation):

Table 7: Oregon State University Collaborative Initiatives Participation

Other University Collaborations	University Response (Participant/Non-participant)
Public University Councils:	P
Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP)	P
Provosts Council	P
Vice Presidents for Finance and Administration (VPFAs)	P
General Counsels (GCs)	P
Public Information Officers (PIOs)	P
Legislative Advisory Council (LAC)	P
Cooperative Contracting	No formal structure, but include cooperative language in master contracts that would allow other public universities to participate.
Capital Construction Services	N/P – Performed in-house by OSU staff (even while under OUS)
OWAN	P
NERO – the Network for Education and Research in Oregon – is now part of Link Oregon	P
RAIN – Regional Accelerator & Innovation Network	P
Orbis Cascade Alliance – academic library consortium	P
ONAMI – Oregon Nanoscience and Microtechnologies Institute	P
Other (Senior Research Officers Council (SROC) and Oregon Innovation Council (Oregon INC))	P

PATHWAYS

Transfer student success is a key area of focus both in Oregon and nationally. The statutes outlining goals for transfer student success and cooperation between Oregon's higher education sectors (ORS 350.395, 350.400, 350.404, 350.412, and 348.470) are the framework for HECC's continued partnership with the seven public universities and seventeen community colleges. Recent policy discussions between institutions and HECC give this sustained work a renewed focus: more and better statewide data on transfer student outcomes and potential statewide solutions where persistent barriers exist.

Although Oregon has state-level policies and processes to ensure that students may apply credits earned upon transfer from community college to university (e.g., the Associate of Science Oregon Transfer–Business, or ASOT Business) research that resulted from House Bill 2525 (2015) and the subsequent HB 2998 (2017) report revealed that community college transfer students on the whole often face challenges in completing an intended major, which result in excess accumulated credits, increased tuition costs, and debt. Statewide, community college transfer students graduate with more “excess” credits than their direct entry counterparts (aka “native students”). Public universities are working with community colleges to improve advising and information on career pathways to reduce the excess number of community college credits taken. Moreover, despite the best efforts of advisors, faculty, and administrators, some students who complete statewide degrees, such as the ASOT–Business, are ill-served if they transfer into certain majors. Excess credits may transfer as electives, but they sometimes fail to apply to a student's major. Because major requirements at the university level can change, community college students' and advisors' efforts at effective degree planning are negated by these excess credits.

The passage of HB 2998 in 2017 required the HECC to work closely with both public universities and community colleges to create a new framework for statewide transfer, a Core Transfer Map (CTM) of at least 30 credit hours of general education, and a process for the creation of Major Transfer Maps (MTMs) in major fields of study to aid transfer students in moving smoothly into university study, with fewer lost or excess credits. Public university and community college faculty, registrars, institutional researchers, and administrators have been advisors and participants to the HB 2998 implementation process, adding insight and value to the Major Transfer Maps. These partners continue to work closely with HECC staff and the institutions to move this work forward. One area that OSU, PSU, and the UO have participated in has been by nominating faculty to serve on MTM subcommittees (e.g., in Computer Science, Business, English Literature, Biology, and Elementary Education).

Related to transfer student success, programming to provide college credit in high school, or accelerated learning, has also benefited from enhanced statewide collaboration amongst Oregon's public universities and 17 community colleges in 2020-21 and 2021-22. The HECC convened an Oversight Committee for High School Based College Credit Partnerships and the Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Policy Workgroup both have support and representation from all seven public universities. Implementing 340.310, 350.075, and OAR 715-017-0005, the groups ensure that college credit earned in high school is transferrable and supports student pathways to postsecondary degrees and certificates.

State approval of high school-based college credit partnership programs promotes transparency, educational equity, and comprehensive advising so that students may access, earn, and transfer these credits smoothly. State approval of programs, through peer review, confirms that a college course taught on campus and the college course taught in a high school are essentially the same, and treated the same when transferred. HECC staff continues to work with all institutions whenever concerns

about high school-based college credit transfer come to light.

College credit articulations at Oregon's public universities are also on record for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) exams. Articulation tables are published by HECC with advice from the AP/IB Policy Workgroup. This process has led to more transparent and better aligned articulations list, with the expectation that over time articulations will become increasingly similar among community colleges, comprehensive regional universities, and larger research universities. In the online table, a student can find out how a particular AP exam subject and score articulates to all 24 public postsecondary institutions in Oregon as well as to which core transfer map content area that articulation applies.

In the 2021 legislative session, Oregon passed Senate Bill 233 that further supports the work of statewide transfer through the establishment of a Transfer Council to implement Common Course Numbering (CCN). The Commission submitted its first progress report to the legislature on SB 233 in March 2022. One notable change to the legislative requirements was a decrease in the number of MTMs to be approved from three per calendar year to one until calendar year 2026. The intent behind this temporary change is to allow faculty to spend time aligning learning outcomes, credits, and course numbers at the course level.

Starting in spring 2022, four faculty subcommittees (Communication, Math, Statistics, and Writing) and one systems and operations subcommittee began meeting regularly to work on aligning 10 of the most transferred courses between public colleges and universities in Oregon. For seven months, these subcommittees—composed of 96 faculty and staff—logged over 100 hours in meetings to discuss, collaborate, and vote on aligning these courses. The result of these meetings is a guiding framework for common course numbering and the first round of statewide aligned courses in the history of higher education in Oregon. This framework will also be useful for programs that offer college credit in the high school.

All seven public universities and 17 community colleges are in the process of adopting these courses for the 2023-24 catalog, as per the requirements of SB 233. Once again, OSU, PSU, and the UO have played an integral part in this process by nominating faculty and staff to serve on subcommittees.

OSU is an active partner in the following collaborations:

- [Degree Partnership Programs](#) allows dual enrollment at OSU and partner community colleges.
- [Horizon Initiative](#) – an academic/research collaboration of OSU and OHSU Knight Cancer Institute
- [TallWood Design Institute](#) – collaboration with the University of Oregon joining the disciplines of architecture, structural engineering and wood science
- [OSU's Agriculture and Natural Resource program at Eastern Oregon University](#) – cooperative educational partnership to serve the needs of eastern Oregon and the Intermountain West
- [Doctor of Pharmacy program in collaboration with OHSU](#)

OSU's signature pathway program is its Degree Partnership Program (DPP) – a dual enrollment initiative for area community college students to transfer efficiently to Oregon State. OSU's Academic Success Center

(ASC) within the Office of Academic Achievement, has engaged in several new initiatives aimed at supporting transfer students. ASC collaborates with Enrollment Management's transfer and Degree Partnership Program student services staff as well as others (i.e. Veteran's Services, New Student Programs) to identify and address transfer student needs. Two new initiatives are the Welcome Week Transfer Center and development of a new Transfer Transition and Success course. OSU maintains a transparent transfer online application process that includes both official and unofficial evaluations of student credits for admission and application toward a degree.

OSU continues to look for innovative transfer solutions that will be a fit in Oregon and implemented in partnership with community colleges. One pilot program, "OSU Gateway Transfer" is looking at options for student success and support. The pilot places a success coach from OSU on the community college campus, to work directly with students interested in transferring. This coach is able to help ensure students are completing their associate's degree and not taking unnecessary additional credits before transferring to OSU.

OSU has been implementing the Juntos program in rural communities for the past 10 years. With over 4,800 Latinx students and family members completing the curriculum, the Juntos program has a nearly 100 percent high school graduation rate and 92 percent of participants pursue post-secondary education. The program includes culturally responsive curricula for first-generation Latinx students and families, and a robust evaluation plan to ensure continued success.

SHARED ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Pursuant to ORS 352.129 and following the convening of the Workgroup on University Shared Services established by the 2013 Legislature, the seven public universities created the University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE), a service center hosted by Oregon State University. USSE offers a fee for service model for many back-office functions previously offered by the Oregon University System Chancellor's Office. ORS 352.129 mandate participation by the independent universities in certain services offered by USSE until July 1, 2019. These mandated services include group health insurance, group retirement plans, and collective bargaining. The UO serves as fiduciary for all the former Oregon University System retirement plans, and hosts the Oregon Public Universities Retirement Plans ("OPURP") shared-services organization. All seven public universities participate in OPURP via shared-services agreement. This section reflects a statewide assessment of shared services.

This section reflects a statewide assessment of shared services.

Public University Shared Administrative Services

This document provides an evaluation of shared administrative services at the public universities. It does not include information on existing shared academic programs such as transfer agreements, joint degree programs, or other services. Contextual information is provided along with information on work the universities are doing to impact the cost of administrative services in the future.

Key Takeaways

- The universities are moving away from using USSE for finance and administrative services.
- Spending on institution support has increased at a rate more than double that of total spending.
- As part of the TRU + PSU financial sustainability investment, an assessment of current opportunities will occur, focusing on actionable steps to achieve savings and improve service.
- There is ongoing activity at the campus level to address the cost of administrative services.

History of Shared Services

The University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE) was established during the dissolution of OUS to manage shared finance and administrative services that had been performed through the Chancellor's Office. USSE is not a separate legal entity. Rather it is established through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) executed by all seven public universities. For all services except SEIU collective bargaining and legacy debt post-issuance compliance, the universities participate voluntarily and are allowed to select services as needed.

During the past decade, USSE has been shrinking and offering fewer services as the universities elect to perform more administrative functions inhouse. During FY2015, USSE had 32 staff and an operating budget of \$4.8 million with the universities using an average of eleven services each. Table A includes a client service matrix that outlines which services were used by which university during FY2015. SEIU collective bargaining is required in statute. The services USSE provided a decade ago include financial

reporting, IT hosting and maintenance, collective bargaining, benefits/payroll support, risk management, and treasury management.

Table A: USSE Client Service Matrix, FY2015							
	EOU	OIT	OSU	PSU	SOU	UO	WOU
Financial Reporting Services	X	X	X		X		X
IT Hosting and Maintenance	X	X			X		X
SEIU Collective Bargaining	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Benefits payments, tax payments, and reporting	X	X	X	X	X		X
Payroll System Support	X	X	X	X	X		X
PERS Verification	X	X	X	X	X		X
Administration of retirement plan contributions (ORP and 403b)						X	
Risk Management (PURMIT)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Treasury Management Services:</i>							
Legacy debt – post issuance tax compliance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Legacy Debt – accounting	X	X	X	X	X		X
Non-legacy debt – post issuance tax compliance	X	X	X	X	X		X
Non-legacy debt – accounting	X	X	X	X	X		X
Banking & Investment	X	X	X		X		
Endowment Administration	X	X			X		
Public University Fund (PUF)			X				
Number of Services Used	13	13	12	10	13	4	11
Source: USSE staff, February 2025.							

For FY2025, USSE is budgeting for a staff of 5.2 FTE and around \$1.3 million with the universities using an average of six services each. Table B includes a client service matrix that outlines which services are

being used by which university during FY2025. USSE will offer labor relations and treasury management services. A few notes by type of service are included below to help explain some of the changes that have occurred in the services offered.

- **Risk Management** – These services were outsourced to a third-party provider during FY2016. Six of the seven universities participate in the Public University Risk Management Insurance Trust and negotiate for their own insurance needs.
- **IT services** – During FY2019, the TRUs outsourced IT hosting to AWS Cloud. USSE services were terminated as a result. This included almost half of the USSE staff at the time. Those positions were transitioned back to the universities or eliminated through natural attrition.
- **Financial reporting** – Four of the five universities are choosing to perform all financial reporting inhouse. This relates to the production and auditing of annual financial statements. Since external auditing is required, each university will interact separately with their chosen external auditor. USSE stopped offering those services as of June 30, 2024.
- **Payroll and benefits reporting** – Four of the six universities are choosing to perform this function inhouse requiring USSE to terminate service as of June 30, 2024. EOU has chosen to outsource this function to ADP.
- **Retirement plan contributions** – UO now manages the administration of retirement plan contributions (i.e., ORP and 403b plans) for all seven universities.
- **Public University Fund (PUF)** – Investment pool administered by OSU on behalf of all Oregon Public Universities pursuant to legislation adopted in 2014. Five of the seven universities participate in the PUF. OSU outsources most of the administrator duties to USSE.

Table B: USSE Client Service Matrix, FY2025							
	EOU	OIT	OSU	PSU	SOU	UO	WOU
SEIU Collective Bargaining	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Faculty Collective Bargaining	X	X			X		
<i>Treasury Management Services:</i>							
Legacy debt – post issuance tax compliance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Legacy Debt – accounting	X	X	X	X	X		X
Non-legacy debt – post issuance tax compliance	X	X	X	X	X		X
Non-legacy debt – accounting	X	X	X	X	X		X
Banking & Investment	X	X	X		X		
Endowment Administration		X	X		X		X

Public University Fund (PUF)			X				
Number of Services Used	7	8	8	5	8	2	6
Source: USSE staff, February 2025.							

Cost of Institution Support

Table C details the growth in spending for institution support and total operating costs. Institution support includes general operations like executive, legal, financial, accounting, space management, procurement, IT, and other general support functions. During the period noted, the annual growth rate in spending for institution support is twice that of the growth rate for total operating expenses and is the reverse of the national experience. Additionally, the relative proportion of spending for institution support increased from 7.1 percent to 9.5 percent of total spending which is also the reverse of the national experience.

For context, using headcount enrollment, this represents a doubling in spending per student on institution support from roughly \$1,300 to \$2,600 during the period noted. Had spending for institution support during FY2022 been consistent with the national average, Oregon's public universities would have collectively spent \$45 million less on institution support.

Table C: Growth in Institution Support Spending
(Amounts in \$ thousands, unadjusted for inflation)

	Institution Support	Total Operating	Proportion	National Comparison
2014	174,782	2,458,599	7.1%	8.7%
2015	191,523	2,437,159	7.9%	8.6%
2016	234,322	2,865,868	8.2%	8.5%
2017	238,543	2,858,161	8.3%	8.4%
2018	251,708	2,988,700	8.4%	8.1%
2019	262,542	3,064,521	8.6%	7.9%
2020	287,959	3,196,110	9.0%	8.0%
2021	310,597	3,133,949	9.9%	8.3%
2022	308,757	3,234,820	9.5%	8.1%
Annual Growth Rate	7.4%	3.5%		

National Comparison	4.1%	5.0%
Source: Universities audited annual financial reports. Data for national comparison is from U.S. Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics, Table 334.10, 4-year.		

Campus Level Activity

There is ongoing work at OSU to affect the cost of administrative services.

OSU, to address costs and improve service, is executing the Administrative Modernization Program (AMP). Intended to replace the university's 34-year-old core systems for HR, finance, budget, and grant management, the program is comprised of multiple projects staged over a three-year period. Currently budgeted at \$81.3 million (including a \$9.2 million contingency), the new systems will improve the student experience and reduce costs by an estimated \$10 million per year beginning in FY2028.

FINANCIAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT

This section provides an assessment of the university’s current financial position, assesses cost efficiency, and summarizes recent forecasting related to financial sustainability. Financial monitoring is conducted annually by HECC staff. The most recent report from which this data and analysis is drawn was published in April 2024.

The financial position of each university is assessed using currently available data. The analysis within the financial conditions report includes both quantitative and qualitative factors to provide appropriate context. The metrics are measured over time to understand emerging trends. Further, the analysis uses a dual perspective approach providing information across the whole enterprise including the foundation and then considers only the education and general (E&G) fund(s).

The most important predictor of financial instability is enrollment. Specifically, sharp declines in enrollment over a short period of time. OSU’s enrollment over the past decade has been stable relative to other Oregon public universities with fall term FTE increasing annually on average by 2.2 percent. Additionally, by evaluating the composite financial index (CFI), OSU’s finances have been stable over the recent past when considering the whole enterprise (E&G funds, restricted funds, auxiliary funds, etc.) including the expendable portion of the foundation’s net assets.

Table A provides a summary of the five-year trend in the E&G funds. For two of the past five years, OSU has generated a negative operating margin meaning they have not collected enough revenue to cover expenses. This erodes the fund balance over time. OSU was able to build the fund balance during the pandemic but has experienced a structural gap between revenues and expenses in the past couple years. During the period noted, expenses have grown an average of 5.8 percent annually while revenues have grown an average of 5.4 percent annually. Expenses grew slightly higher than the average, annual inflation in the same timeframe, which was 5.3 percent using the CPI-U for the western region.

Table A: Trend in E&G Funds

	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
Total Revenue	619,517,919	624,155,447	639,421,766	694,800,083	765,314,584
Total Expenses	613,897,553	576,190,922	636,314,849	700,309,035	767,859,871
Operating Margin	5,620,366	47,964,525	3,106,918	(5,508,953)	(2,545,287)
	0.9%	7.7%	0.5%	(0.8%)	(0.3%)
% State Revenue	24%	25%	25%	24%	24%
Months Operating Balance	1.5	2.4	2.4	2.2	1.9

Source: Survey data submitted to the HECC annually by the university.

Cost Efficiency

The changing higher education landscape will require efforts by the universities to maximize efficiency, manage spending, and improve student affordability. To assess cost efficiency, several factors are considered including the alignment of staffing levels with enrollment, the use of shared administrative services, and ongoing efforts to control costs.

Table B provides a summary of staffing and the student to faculty ratio. As shown for OSU, the total number of employees has declined, even while enrollment has increased, leading to a slightly higher student to faculty ratio relative to other Oregon public universities. There is no accepted standard or best practice measure of the student to faculty ratio; however, when enrollment declines, and the number of employees does not to the same extent, this can create structural budget gaps. Granted, the level of staffing changed significantly during the pandemic with universities continuing to adjust as appropriate.

Table B: Trend in Staffing							
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Variance	Annual Growth Rate
Student FTE	26,779	27,120	27,006	27,575	28,586	6.7%	1.6%
Admin, Management	249	277	266	221	268	8.1%	2.0%
Classified, Professional	4,013	3,956	3,828	3,757	3,911	(2.5%)	(0.6%)
Faculty	2,356	2,335	2,247	2,265	2,259	(4.1%)	(1.0%)
Total Employee FTE	6,618	6,568	6,341	6,243	6,438	(2.7%)	(1.7%)
Student to Faculty Ratio (OSU)	11.4	11.6	12.0	12.2	12.7	11.3%	2.7%
Student to Faculty Ratio (All OPUs)	13.1	12.9	12.2	11.8	12.0	(8.4%)	(2.2%)
Source: ORS 350.360 Higher Education Employees Annual Report, November 2024. The years noted are the data years as used in the report. The variance noted is from 2018 to 2022.							

Another way for the universities to improve cost efficiency would be to manage spending for institution support. This includes administrative functions like communications, legal, financial, accounting, space management, procurement, IT, and similar business services. Over time, OSU has relied less on the

University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE) for support. Compared to the twelve USSE services OSU consumed during FY2015, during FY2025, they will use eight including statutorily required SEIU collective bargaining, accounting and tax compliance for debt, and endowment administration. It should be noted that OSU administers the Public University Fund (PUF) investment pool on behalf of all the public universities pursuant to legislation adopted in 2014. Five universities participate in the PUF with OSU outsourcing the administrator duties to USSE.

To address costs and improve service, OSU is executing the Administrative Modernization Program (AMP). Intended to replace the university's 34-year-old core systems for HR, finance, budget, and grant management, the program is comprised of multiple projects staged over a three-year period. Currently budgeted at \$81.3 million (including a \$9.2 million contingency), the new systems will improve the student experience and reduce costs by an estimated \$10 million per year beginning in FY2028.

Financial Forecast

In May 2024, OSU staff presented a 10-year business forecast, through FY2033, to the OSU board. The forecast is intended to identify long-term trends, areas of concern, and potential opportunities to support the board's decision making to maintain and improve the university's financial strength. The five actions contained in the university's recently adopted 2024-2030 strategic plan, Prosperity Widely Shared, are included to consider the long-term impacts of current programmatic decisions. The forecast includes several assumptions related to enrollment, tuition, staffing, state funding, and other factors. Many of the assumptions were subsequently assessed by Huron Consulting and adjusted appropriately.

The E&G forecast is impacted significantly by enrollment expectations, specifically continued growth in online enrollment with consistent enrollment growth expected at OSU-Cascades. A combination of enrollment growth and tuition increases are projected to provide the revenue needed for the investments related to the strategic plan. However, the forecast projects falling fund balances and resulting downward pressure on related financial metrics. The October 2024 update to the Board notes that next steps include the "need to pace new spending in light of budget circumstances and the need to evaluate costs, operations, and efficiencies as the university grows."

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Boards of Trustees at each public university and their respective university constituents are continuing the process of developing effective working relationships. The Commission continues to recommend that the areas that all Boards should be attentive to include timing and access (for example, not scheduling meetings during exams, or when classes are not in session); and encouraging feedback by allowing non-board members to weigh in early on in the meetings rather than having to sit through the whole meeting.

Governing Board Focus Area	Evaluation Question	Supporting Narrative (documentation may include links to materials on board website)	Data Source
Transparency (ORS 352.025(1)(a))	Board meets at least quarterly. ORS 352.076(6).	The Board of Trustees holds meetings at least quarterly. Meeting dates of the full board can be accessed here: https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/meetings	Board of Trustees
	Board provides public notice of agenda and meetings. ORS 352.025(1)(a) .	<p>Agendas, meeting materials and meeting locations are available in advance of each meeting on the Board's website. See: http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/meetings</p> <p>Public meeting notices are sent to members of the media and any members of the public who request receiving notices by email. Notices are also included in the university's newsfeed, in the student newspaper and are publicly posted in high traffic areas in the Memorial Union.</p> <p>In addition to the in-person option to view the meeting, there is an online webinar option for members of the public to view and participate in the meeting (by providing public testimony) in addition to an option to listen to the meeting by calling a toll-free phone number.</p>	Board Secretary

	<p>The Board operates in a transparent manner and in compliance with Public Meetings and Public Records laws. ORS 352.025(1)(a).</p>	<p>In compliance with public meetings and public records laws:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board meetings are duly noticed, publicized and open to the public. Meeting agendas, minutes and supporting documents are posted online. See: https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/meetings <p>Public records requests are coordinated and responded to in a timely manner through the Office of Public Records with consultation, as needed, with the Office of General Counsel.</p>	<p>Board Secretary</p> <p>Office of Public Records</p> <p>Office of General Counsel</p>
	<p>The Board has adopted bylaws. ORS 352.076(5).</p>	<p>The Board originally adopted bylaws on January 9, 2014 with subsequent amendments adopted in April 2023, in accordance with SB 273, https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/sites/leadership.oregonstate.edu/files/2024-04/eagc-3c-sb273-implementation-and-next-steps-updated_04-04.pdf</p> <p>Bylaws are published on the Board's website: https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/governance</p>	<p>Board Secretary</p>
<p>Accountability (ORS 352.025(1)(a))</p>	<p>The Board demonstrates its accountability on behalf of the university and awareness of its mission and fiduciary duties.</p>	<p>Since the board's inception, it has established foundational governance documents to ensure fiscal responsibility and stability, to safeguard institutional resources, to assess its own operations and effectiveness, and to operate in a manner that is consistent with governance best practices. This includes adoption of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bylaws Oregon State University Mission Statement Trustee Code of Ethics Trustee Conflict of Interest and Recusal 	<p>Board of Trustees</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities of Individual Trustees • Delegating Authority to the University • Board Recruitment and Appointments • Statement of Mission, Principles & Core Values • Shared Governance Philosophy • Tuition and Fee Process • Policies on Standing Committees, Conduct of Meetings, Board Officers, Board Calendar • Charters for each of the three standing committees of the Board • University Code of Ethics • University Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Reporting • Presidential Assessment Policy • Presidential Compensation Philosophy • Presidential Search and Selection Guidelines • Ten-Year Business Forecast for Oregon State University • Ten-Year Capital Forecast for Oregon State University • Approval of Capital Projects • Debt Policy • Framework to Guide Evaluation of Investment Policy Change Requests • Internal Bank • Investment Policy • Liquidity Management Policy 	
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political Activities • President Emeritus Policy • President's Residence Policy • Public University Fund Investment • Reimbursement of Trustee Expenses and Attendance at University Events • Standards for Recognition of a Foundation <p>The Board or its designated committee also received annual internal and external auditor reports and quarterly operating management, investment, endowment investment, and internal audit reports.</p> <p>The Board conducts an annual board self-assessment and adopts annual work plans for the Board and its committee linked to the Board's responsibilities in its bylaws and to committee charters. New trustees participate in an orientation and onboarding program that covers all aspects of the fiduciary responsibilities of the Board. All members participate in an annual governance "refresher" covering Board and trustee responsibilities, ethics, and other topics.</p> <p>The Board through its Academic Strategies Committee reviews and approves major changes to academic programs including creation, merger, and closure of degree programs. Major new academic programs are forwarded to HECC for approval.</p> <p>Annually, the Board approves the university's operating budget, tuition rates and fees, issuance of general revenue bonds if needed, and presidential compensation.</p>	
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	<p>The Board has established a process for determining tuition and mandatory enrollment fees that provides for participation of enrolled students and the recognized student government of the university. ORS 352.102(2)</p>	<p>On Jun 1, 2018, the Board reviewed and approved amendments to the university's process for determining tuition and fees. Amendments to the process were intended to provide more certainty for students and families in planning for tuition costs over multiple years of attendance at the university. Amendments to the process also incorporated changes necessary to implement House Bill 4141, adopted by the 2018 legislature. The new law required public universities to establish an advisory body to advise the president of the university on recommendations to the governing board regarding resident tuition and mandatory enrollment fees. Oregon State has an extensive process for developing its tuition and fees, which includes a University Budget Committee (UBC), composed of faculty, staff and students, and a Student Budget Advisory Council (SBAC). Given these existing advisory committees, there were minimal changes needed to ensure alignment with the new statutory requirements.</p> <p>The amended process is available at https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/governance</p> <p>Tuition rates, mandatory fees and student incidental fees are discussed at the Board's winter meeting and considered and voted on at the subsequent Board meeting in spring.</p>	Board Secretary
	Board selects and regularly assess the university	<p>On May 29, 2015 the Board adopted a Presidential Assessment Policy that established the process for conducting annual and periodic comprehensive assessments of the president. On October 21, 2016, the Board adopted Presidential Search and Selection Guidelines.</p>	Board of Trustees

	<p>president. ORS 352.096.</p>	<p>The Board completed the president’s most recent assessment in October 2024. A comprehensive assessment of the president is required at least once every five years of the president’s tenure or more often, at the discretion of the board officers. In the year a comprehensive assessment is conducted.</p> <p>https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/sites/leadership.oregonstate.edu/files/2024-10/eagc-3a-board-chairs-report-pres-assessment-fy2025-goals-comp-adjustment.pdf</p>	
<p>Engagement in the University’s Mission (ORS 352.025(1)(b))</p>	<p>The Board adopts the mission statement. ORS 352.089(2).</p>	<p>The Board adopted the university’s mission statement on March 13, 2014.</p> <p>Approved mission statement available at: http://leadership.oregonstate.edu/sites/leadership.oregonstate.edu/files/trustees/agendas-minutes/140313_adopted_osu_mission_statement.pdf</p>	<p>Board Secretary</p>
<p>Coordination across the State of Oregon (ORS 352.025(1)(e))</p>	<p>The Board forwards the university’s mission statement to the HECC. ORS 352.089(1).</p>	<p>Following adoption on March 13, 2014, the Board forwarded the mission statement to HECC. HECC approved the mission statement on June 11, 2015.</p>	<p>Board Secretary</p>
	<p>The Board forwards any significant change in the university’s academic programs to HECC. ORS 352.089(1).</p>	<p>(List all programs approved in 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024.)</p> <p>The Board forwarded significant changes in the university’s academic programs to HECC following Board approval. The Provost’s Office ensures that Board decisions are transmitted to the HECC and handles all follow-up questions and procedures during HECC approval process.</p>	<p>Board of Trustees</p>

		<p>Programs forwarded to HECC since the 2018 report can be found here: https://leadership.oregonstate.edu/trustees/board-actions-and-resolutions</p>	
Real Property Holdings (ORS 352.025 (2)(c))	<p>Legal title to all real property, whether acquired before or after the creation of a governing board, through state funding, revenue bonds or philanthropy, shall be taken and held in the name of the State of Oregon, acting by and through the governing board.</p>	<p>OSU complies with ORS 352.025(2)(c). The Real Property Management department facilitates the sale, acquisition, and lease of University property and manages the drafting and legal processing of real property related documents. Individual items are not listed here given the volume of property associated with the university.</p>	<p>VP for Finance & Administration</p> <p>Leasing and Strategic Real Property Management, Capital Planning and Development</p> <p>Office of General Counsel</p>

CONCLUSION

This evaluation of Oregon State University (OSU) was conducted pursuant to Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 352.061, which requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to assess the university's progress on outcomes, goals, and targets; its advancement toward statewide postsecondary education missions as defined in ORS 350.014; and how the governing board structure aligns with statutory expectations.

OSU remains Oregon's largest public university. In fall 2024, OSU reported a headcount enrollment of 38,459, an increase of 4.1 percent from fall 2023 and marking the institution's 27th consecutive year of enrollment growth. Non-resident enrollment increased by 13.1 percent, while resident enrollment rose by 3.7 percent since fall 2022. The number of newly admitted, degree-seeking undergraduates in fall 2024 reached 7,956—a 5.5 percent increase compared to two years prior. OSU continues to expand access for underrepresented minority (URM) students, with URM enrollment increasing by more than 88 percent since 2014 and accounting for 18.8 percent of the student body in fall 2024.

Student success metrics remain positive. The first-year retention rate for the fall 2022 cohort was 87.1 percent, while the six-year graduation rate for the cohort entering in fall 2017 reached 72.5 percent for all students, 64.3 percent for underrepresented minorities, and 68.0 percent for Pell Grant recipients. In 2023-24, OSU awarded 6,215 undergraduate degrees, including 1,416 to underrepresented minority students. Master's and doctoral degree completions also increased during this period, consistent with growth in graduate enrollment and program offerings.

Affordability continues to pose challenges for students. Undergraduate resident tuition and fees have risen by 51 percent over the last decade, reaching \$13,806 in 2023-24, outpacing statewide trends. The average total cost of attendance has risen to \$30,870, and the net price for students has also increased, though the university has expanded institutional aid and remissions to mitigate some of these costs. OSU's affordability rate—the percentage of students whose costs exceed available resources—has improved over the last decade but has shown some volatility following the expiration of pandemic-related federal supports. HECC will continue to monitor trends in affordability, student aid, and net price in future evaluation cycles.

Academic quality and research remain among OSU's strongest institutional features. The university retains the Carnegie Foundation's highest research classification and Community Engagement designation, and reported \$337.9 million in research expenditures in FY 2023, the highest in Oregon among public universities. OSU's research portfolio is broad, interdisciplinary, and includes significant activity in fields relevant to Oregon's economy, communities, and environment. OSU maintains statewide research infrastructure, including extension services and specialized research centers, and reports high levels of external funding and partnership activity.

OSU's governance and administrative structure remains compliant with state law. The university continues to participate in shared administrative services where efficient, and manages core operations internally to meet institutional needs. The Board of Trustees maintains oversight consistent with statutory requirements regarding transparency, accountability, real property, and fiduciary responsibilities.

In summary, OSU continues to demonstrate alignment with HECC's strategic priorities and statutory requirements, maintaining strengths in enrollment growth, student outcomes, research activity, and statewide engagement. Ongoing attention to affordability and access is warranted, and HECC will continue to monitor data quality, reporting practices, and institutional progress in these areas. This report is provided for the Commission, Legislature, and stakeholders as part of HECC's ongoing oversight and accountability responsibilities.

