

ANNUAL EVALUATION OF THE
OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT,
ORS 348.205



This report was prepared in February 2024 by Amy G. Cox, Shanda Haluapo, Olga Levadnaya, Vern Mayfield, and Shiyao Tao of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission Office of Research and Data.

PREFACE

The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program for students to pursue college and university. Since the program began in 1971, it has helped hundreds of thousands of students continue their education. The program has also changed over the years, in eligibility criteria, funding amounts, and funding processes. In 2015, House Bill 2407 clarified how the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), which currently administers the program, should prioritize grant awards for qualified students with the greatest financial need if funds are not sufficient to serve all qualified students. The 2015 statute also requires the HECC to produce an evaluative report of the program and to submit it to the Legislature in February 2020 and every year thereafter. This fourth annual report presents findings from the HECC's analysis of student academic success and performance among recipients of the OOG.

This report was undertaken by HECC's Office of Research and Data in coordination with HECC's Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC), which administers the program. As the single state entity responsible for ensuring pathways to postsecondary success for Oregonians statewide, the HECC sets state policy and funding strategies, administers numerous programs and over \$2 billion annually of state funding, and convenes partners working across the public and private postsecondary arena to achieve state goals. More information about HECC can be found at www.oregon.gov/highered and about the student financial support programs it administers at www.oregonstudentaid.gov. Questions about the HECC should be directed to info.HECC@state.or.us, and questions about this report should be directed to the Director of the Office of Research and Data, Amy Cox, at amy.cox@state.or.us.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based financial aid program for students to pursue college and university. Since it began in 1971, the program has provided essential financial support to hundreds of thousands of Oregon students pursuing higher education. The program has undergone various changes since that time, including adjustments in fund allocation, award amounts, and the criteria for student eligibility. A significant change occurred with the passage of House Bill (HB) 2407 in 2015, which clarified how the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) should prioritize grant awards in situations where funds fall short of meeting the needs of all eligible students. Moreover, the statute requires the HECC to produce an annual evaluative report addressing the impact of the OOG on the academic success and performance of grant recipients. This document is the fourth annual report, presenting findings on the influence of the OOG program during the 2021-22 academic year.

To apply for this grant, Oregon students need only complete either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA). Annually, the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) processes FAFSA/ORSAA forms for approximately 200,000 undergraduate students who may be eligible for the OOG. Out of this pool, it typically awards grants to 30,000 to 40,000 students each academic year. Currently, eligible students can receive grants for up to four academic years of full-time enrollment. Grants are prorated for partial-year or half-time enrollment. To be eligible for the OOG, students must: be an undergraduate student (with no prior bachelor's degree), a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen, an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to the period of enrollment (with some exceptions), be enrolled at last half time (6 credit-hours/term or more), attend a participating Oregon postsecondary institution, have financial need, and be enrolled in a course of study other than theology, divinity, or religious education.

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion administers the program. It uses the federally calculated expected family contribution (EFC) to determine financial need and awards grants based on students' EFCs. The EFC limit for the 2021-22 academic year was \$6,000, meaning that eligible students with an EFC of \$6,000 or less were awarded a grant. This EFC limit was substantially higher than in previous years because of expanded program funds and lower enrollment. For the previous five years, the EFC limit for the OOG was \$3,500. For the first time in program history, the 2021-22 EFC limit for the OOG was higher than the limit for the federal Pell grant that year, \$5,846.

Because of expanded funding, the EFC limit for the OOG rose again for the 2022-23 academic year, to \$8,000. This was again higher than the EFC limit for the Pell Grant, which was \$6,206 that year. Because most of the data available for this report extend through 2021-22 and because the \$6,000 EFC limit lasted only one year, this report focuses on the 2021-22 academic year.

In 2021-22, annual maximum amounts were \$2,778 for students attending a community college and \$3,612 for students attending a public university or Oregon-based independent private non-profit institution. To receive the maximum award amount, students had to be enrolled full-time for the full year at an eligible Oregon-based postsecondary institution. The grant size rose in the 2022-23 academic year, to \$3,600 for students attending a community college and to \$4,692, for students attending a public university or Oregon-based independent private non-profit institution.

REPORT

This fourth annual report answers the following questions:

1. Who are the students awarded an OOG?
2. What is the financial impact of the OOG on postsecondary affordability?
3. What is the academic success and performance of students who received an OOG?

The report draws on two sources of data to answer these questions: student records submitted to the HECC by colleges and universities and FAFSA/ORSAA records completed by students seeking aid. Student record data include administrative information about student characteristics, enrollment, and completion.

FAFSA/ORSAA data include grant disbursements, student characteristics, EFCs, and other data related to financial aid. We compare students who received the OOG in 2021-22 with other students enrolled in 2021-22 (those from higher income backgrounds and students overall, whether or not they applied for aid) and with students who received aid in earlier years (those with lower EFCs and those with similar EFCs). This allows us to assess the impact of the OOG on college and university students in 2021-22 as well as examining the impact of the program's expanded eligibility.

We examine the financial impact of the program using an index of student affordability, comparing the program's effect on the estimated number of students facing unaffordable costs and how this effect changed with the higher EFC eligibility. We define student success and performance with retention and number of credits earned. Term retention includes two measures: the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continue their enrollment into winter term and the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continue their enrollment into spring term. Annual retention is the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who are enrolled the following fall term one year later. Because OOG eligibility had just expanded in 2021-22 and this was the first year when the OOG had a higher EFC limit than the Pell eligibility limit, there are not enough years to assess the impact of this change on graduation rates, which require four to six years of data.

FINDINGS

Each year, tens of thousands of Oregon students receive an Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) to help pay for college or university. In 2021-22, the focus of this year's report, the OOG served nearly 36,000 Oregon students attending community colleges, public universities, and private, non-profit bachelor's degree-granting institutions. As in earlier years, these students are more likely to come from communities that are marginalized in postsecondary education and training, including students of color, women, older and from rural counties, compared to students from higher income backgrounds.

Regarding postsecondary affordability, we found that students with the OOG are much more likely to be unable to cover the expected costs of college/university than higher-income students, even after taking into account federal and state grant aid, institutional aid, their EFC, and an estimate of their earnings. The OOG did improve affordability for these students, moving an estimated 12.5 percent into the group whose expected resources could cover the cost of attendance at their institution. This impact was greater and affordability was better in 2021-22 than at any point in the previous decade. The expansion of the OOG, combined with fewer students applying for aid and other pandemic-related factors, underlie the improvement in affordability and greater impact of the OOG on affordability.

Regarding academic success and performance, we found that students with the OOG in 2021-22 succeeded at the same or higher levels as other students, across multiple measures of academic progress. Students with the OOG at the community colleges had higher rates and those at the public universities and private institutions had nearly identical rates of fall-to-winter retention, fall-to-spring retention, and fall-to-fall retention as students in 2021-22 who came from higher income backgrounds and as students overall (including those who did not apply for financial aid). Students with the OOG also earned more credits (among community college students) and nearly identical numbers of credits (among public university and private institution students) in 2021-22 as these two other groups of students. Similarly, OOG recipients in 2021-22 had nearly identical rates of term retention and year retention and earned nearly the same numbers of credits as OOG recipients from earlier years who had lower EFCs, and as Pell Grant recipients from earlier years who had similar EFCs. Academic success and performance do not appear to have changed with the expanded eligibility threshold in place for 2021-22. All of these results held for both new and returning students.

IMPLICATIONS

Taken together, this assessment of the OOG reveals a program that serves students from marginalized communities, improves their affordability, and supports their academic progress. The consistency of these results across measures and comparison groups is striking. The results also indicate that the expansion of the program in 2021-22 maintained the support of students served and their academic success while increasing the impact on affordability.

The results shown here occurred while many environments and plans in the lives of students were still unstable because of the COVID-19 pandemic. That students from low-income backgrounds demonstrated academic performance that was virtually identical to—and in some cases stronger than—that of higher-income students during this time is notable and is undoubtedly partly the result of the financial support provided by the OOG.

The expanded eligibility for the OOG reduced the number of students facing unaffordable college/university costs in 2021-22. Nonetheless, we estimate that half of students who received the OOG in 2021-22 were still not able to cover the cost of attending their college or university with the resources available to them. This high number indicates that not only is the expanded eligibility needed to improve affordability, but a larger grant size is needed as well. In the following year (2022-23), the size of the OOG grant did expand, and we will examine the impacts of that policy change in an upcoming report.

The strong academic performance of the students receiving the OOG, combined with the program's impact on affordability overall and on affordability in marginalized communities, are consistent with results from prior assessments. The stability of these results over time and with the policy expansion leads us to recommend continued promotion and expansion of the OOG so that all students who need it are able to benefit from it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report would not have been possible without the contributions of many people. In particular, we wish to thank the staff in the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion who work with students and schools to administer the Oregon Opportunity Grant and for their contributions to this report. Similarly, our institutional partners' ongoing work with students who apply for and receive the grant is an essential part of the grant's success. Finally, we want to thank the students who work so hard to complete their education in the face of many challenges.

ABBREVIATIONS

EFC	Expected family contribution
FAFSA	Free Application for Federal Student Aid
HECC	Higher Education Coordinating Commission
HB	House Bill
OOG	Oregon Opportunity Grant
ORSAA	Oregon Student Aid Application
OSAC	Office of Student Access and Completion at the Higher Education Coordinating Commission

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program for students to pursue college and university. Since it began in 1971, the program has provided essential financial support to hundreds of thousands of Oregon students pursuing higher education. Over the years, the program has undergone various changes, including adjustments in fund allocation, award amounts, and the criteria for student eligibility. A significant change occurred with the passage of House Bill (HB) 2407 in 2015. The change clarified how the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) should prioritize grant awards in situations where funds fall short of meeting the needs of all eligible students. Moreover, the statute requires the HECC to produce an annual evaluative report addressing the impact of the OOG on the academic success and performance of grant recipients. This document represents the fourth annual report, presenting findings on the influence of the OOG program and focused on its implementation during the 2021-22 academic year.

The primary objective of the OOG is to enhance the affordability of postsecondary education for Oregon residents. To apply for this grant, Oregon students need only complete either the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or the Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA). Annually, the HECC Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) processes FAFSA/ORSAA forms for approximately 200,000 undergraduate students who may be eligible for the OOG. Out of this pool, it typically awards grants to 30,000 to 40,000 students each academic year. This report describes these students and their academic success.

THE PROGRAM

Eligibility for the Oregon Opportunity Grant

Eligibility for the OOG and the amount of the grant have evolved over time to adapt to changes in funding levels, legislative priorities, and postsecondary education policies. Currently, eligible students can receive grants for up to four years (12 trimesters or eight semesters) of full-time enrollment. Grants are prorated for partial-year or half-time enrollment. To be eligible for the OOG, students must:

- Be an undergraduate student (no prior bachelor's degree).
- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible noncitizen.
- Be an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to the period of enrollment (exceptions made for some dependent students and out-of-state members of Native American tribes with traditional ties to Oregon). Undocumented students, including students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals status, may be eligible if they meet certain additional requirements.
- Be enrolled at last half time (6 credit-hours/term or more).
- Attend a participating Oregon postsecondary institution (i.e., one that participates in federal Title IV programs and is a public or private non-profit institution located and headquartered in Oregon).
- Have financial need, based on the difference between the institution's cost of attendance and the federal aid and financial resources of the student and the student's family, if applicable.

- Be enrolled in a course of study other than theology, divinity, or religious education.

To maintain eligibility, students must maintain satisfactory academic progress (as determined by the student's school), have no defaults on federal student loans nor owe any refunds of federal student grants, and meet all federal Title IV eligibility requirements. To be eligible for a guaranteed second-year award, students must meet all existing requirements, be a first-time recipient, be enrolled at least half time and have submitted a FAFSA/ORSAA for the upcoming academic year by May 1. Students must submit a new FAFSA or ORSAA for each academic year they plan to attend college or university. Prior to 2021-22, students had to be enrolled at least half time during the fall term to be eligible for the grant. Since fall 2021, increased funding has enabled OSAC to waive this fall-term enrollment, and students could be enrolled at least half-time in any single term to maintain eligibility. This waiver is re-evaluated each academic term.

Awarding Procedures and Amounts

OSAC uses the federally calculated expected family contribution (EFC) to determine financial need and awards grants based on students' EFCs, beginning with EFCs of \$0 and including students with increasing levels of EFC until funds are exhausted.¹ The EFC limit for the 2021-22 academic year was \$6,000, meaning that eligible students with an EFC of \$6,000 or less were awarded a grant. This EFC limit was substantially higher than in previous years because of expanded program funds and lower enrollment. For the previous five years, the EFC limit for the OOG was \$3,500. For the first time in program history, the 2021-22 EFC limit for the OOG was higher than the limit for the federal Pell grant that year, \$5,846.

Because of expanded funding, the EFC limit for the OOG rose again for the 2022-23 academic year, to \$8,000. This was again higher than the EFC limit for the Pell Grant, which was \$6,206 that year. Because most of the data available for this report extend through 2021-22 and because the \$6,000 EFC limit lasted only one year, this report focuses on the 2021-22 academic year.

OOG award amounts vary by educational sector. In 2021-22, annual maximum amounts were \$2,778 for students attending a community college and \$3,612 for students attending a public university or Oregon-based independent private non-profit institution. To receive the maximum award amount, students had to be enrolled full-time for the full year at an eligible Oregon-based postsecondary institution. The grant size rose in the 2022-23 academic year, to \$3,600 for students attending a community college and to \$4,692, for students attending a public university or Oregon-based independent private non-profit institution. Appendix A provides awarding criteria and amounts for the past decade.

PRIOR FINDINGS

The most recent evaluation of the OOG examined the impact of the 2015 policy change through the 2020-21 academic year.² The evaluation reported the OOG provided financial assistance to over 30,000 students annually, with approximately half of them enrolled in one of Oregon's 17 community colleges, just under half attending one of the state's seven public universities, and around five percent enrolled in one of the 13 private

¹ Because available funds and the number of students at different EFC levels vary each year, OSAC specifies the OOG EFC limit relatively close to the academic year. Similarly, OSAC is not able to predict the final deadline for submitting a FAFSA/ORSAA to receive a grant before funds are exhausted. Even when students received the OOG in prior years and filed the FAFSA early, they may not receive a grant in the next year, especially if their EFC is above the limit.

² Higher Education Coordinating Commission. (2021). Report to the Oregon Legislature: Oregon Opportunity Grant Annual Evaluation, 2021. <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/research/Documents/Reports/HECC-HB-2407-OOG-2021-Report.pdf>

colleges and universities within Oregon. Notably, recipients of the OOG disproportionately came from underrepresented and underserved groups, including students of color, women, those from rural areas, and especially first-generation college students. A majority of recipients had annual incomes below \$20,000.

Students who received the grant succeeded academically at equal or higher rates than their low-income peers, in terms of second-year retention, degree completion, and time to degree. These findings align with national research indicating the positive impact of public grant aid, particularly at the state level. Nonetheless, a majority of OOG recipients, still could not meet the cost of attendance at their institution, even after including the OOG grant, other state and federal aid, institutional aid, a student's EFC, and student earnings. Nearly three-fourths of OOG recipients at universities and 61 percent at colleges could not cover the expected cost of attendance with their available resources. Both the academic success and the financial challenges persist across student groups, including racial/ethnic background, gender, rural/urban background, and first-generation college student status.

More generally, students from low-income backgrounds face multiple and compounding barriers to college enrollment and completion.³ Even with public grants, finances often remain a barrier for those from low-income families, as grants only pay a portion of the cost of attending college/university and students may need to contribute to their families' finances in addition to their own education. Students from low-income backgrounds are disproportionately the first in their families to go to college/university, which brings an additional set of challenges to postsecondary success, including elementary and secondary preparation, learning and navigating college/university requirements and timelines, cultural barriers (academia carries its own culture), equipment and study needs, and necessary supports (e.g., health insurance, confidence, and role models). For many students with the OOG, additional barriers exist as well, including cultural barriers and prejudice for students of color and rural students.

CONTENT OF REPORT

Main Questions

In addition to prioritizing students from the lowest income backgrounds for awards, HB 2407 (2015) mandates the HECC submit an annual evaluative report of the Oregon Opportunity Grant to the Legislature. This fourth annual report focuses on the OOG's impact on student academic success and performance and on affordability, particularly with regard to the higher EFC limit in 2021-22.

Specifically, the report answers the following questions:

1. Who are the students awarded an OOG?
2. What is the financial impact of the OOG on postsecondary affordability?
3. What is the academic success and performance of students who received an OOG?

³ Balzer Carr, B., & London, R. A. (2020). Healthy, Housed, and Well-Fed: Exploring Basic Needs Support Programming in the Context of University Student Success. American Educational Research Association, 6(4), 233285842097261. Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420972619>.

Broton, K., & Frank, V. (2014, October). Safety, Security, and College Attainment: An Investigation of Undergraduates' Basic Needs and Institutional Response. Association for Public Policy and Management.

Engle, J., & Tinto, V. (2008). Moving Beyond Access: College Success for Low-Income Students. The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504448.pdf>.

Together, the answers to these questions assess the current state of the Oregon Opportunity Grant program. We note, however, that this report is descriptive in nature. Variables examined may be related to one another or affected by external, unrelated forces, and causal relationships among variables have not been explored.

Data and Methods

To answer these questions, we draw on two sources of data: student records submitted to the HECC by colleges and universities and FAFSA/ORSAA records completed by students seeking aid. Student record data include administrative information about student characteristics, enrollment, and completion. FAFSA/ORSAA data include grant disbursements, student characteristics, EFCs, and other data related to financial aid.

Across the data sources, a key element of evaluating the OOG is the comparison groups with whom we contrast OOG recipients' outcomes. Ideally, we would compare students who receive an OOG with students who are exactly like them (e.g., same income level, same academic preparation, and same first-generation status) but who do not receive the OOG. Unfortunately, though such students likely exist, we do not have a way to identify them. In previous reports, we compared students who receive the OOG with another group of students from low-income backgrounds: those whose EFCs were above the limit for the OOG but who were still eligible for the federal Pell grant. Though not identical to students receiving the OOG, students with just slightly higher EFCs likely face many of the same challenges that OOG recipients face, such as disproportionately being the first in their families to go to college, making them a natural comparison group. This was possible because the EFC threshold eligibility for the OOG was much lower than that for the Pell Grant.

In 2021-22, as noted previously, the EFC limit for the OOG rose, and the EFC eligibility for the OOG and for the Pell Grant were nearly the same. Therefore, throughout this report, we compare students who received the OOG in 2021-22 with other students enrolled in 2021-22 and with students who received aid in earlier years. This allows us to assess the impact of the OOG on college and university students in 2021-22 as well as examining the impact of the program's expanded eligibility. For 2021-22 students, we compare students with the OOG to two groups: students from middle- and upper-income backgrounds, i.e., those who filed a FAFSA/ORSAA and had an EFC above the OOG threshold, and all students, whether or not they filed a FAFSA/ORSAA. We note that the latter group includes students from multiple financial backgrounds and credit loads. To understand the impact of 2021-22's higher EFC eligibility, we further compare students from 2021-22 who had an OOG with students from 2016-17 through 2020-21 who had an OOG and with those from the same years who had a federal Pell Grant.

We examine the financial impact of the program using an index of student affordability. For this analysis, we compare the program's effect on the estimated number of students facing unaffordable costs and how this effect changed with the higher EFC eligibility.

We define student success and performance with retention and number of credits earned. Prior reports have already determined that the OOG is associated with higher second-year retention and higher graduation rates for recipients, compared to their peers with only slightly higher incomes. This year's report builds on this knowledge by examining term-to-term retention and average number of credits earned. Because OOG eligibility had just expanded in 2021-22 and this was the first year when the OOG had a higher EFC limit than the Pell eligibility limit, there are not enough years to assess the impact of this change on graduation rates,

which require four to six years of data. Therefore, we define student success and performance with term and annual retention and number of credits earned.

Term retention includes two measures: the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continue their enrollment into winter term and the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continue their enrollment into spring term. Annual retention is the percentage of students enrolled in fall term who are enrolled the following fall term one year later.⁴ We measure retention for both incoming freshmen (the standard measure of retention) and for students in their second or later years of their college/university career (e.g., the percentage of students in their second year who return for a third year).

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. Chapter Two describes the report findings, addressing the students served by the OOG first, the financial impact of the program second, and the student success and performance of students receiving the grant last. Chapter Three presents a summary of findings and their implications.

⁴ For annual retention, students may or may not have been enrolled in the winter and spring terms of the first year to be counted as having retained. If they enrolled in the fall of year one and are enrolled in the fall of year two, they are considered to have retained. Students who earn a credential before the following year are excluded from the rate.

CHAPTER 2. FINDINGS

WHOM DOES THE OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT SERVE?

Each year, tens of thousands of Oregon students receive an Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) to help pay for college or university. Figure 2 below shows the number of students with an OOG in each sector since the statute changes of 2015. In 2021-22, the focus of this year’s report, the OOG served nearly 36,000 Oregon students attending community colleges, public universities, and private, non-profit bachelor’s degree-granting institutions. The higher number of students in 2021-22 compared to the previous three years reflects the expanded eligibility for the program that year.

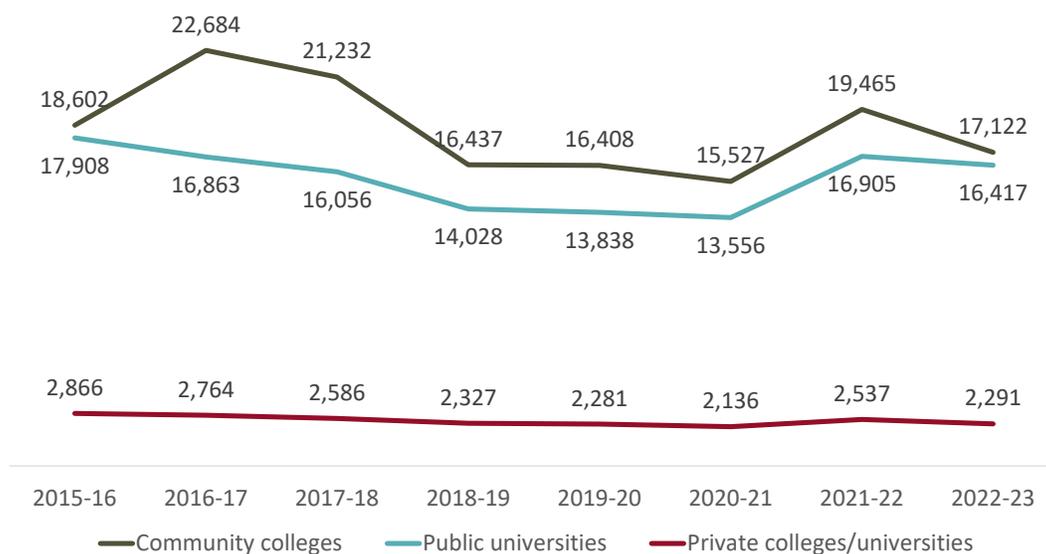


Figure 1. Number of students receiving Oregon Opportunity Grant, by year and educational sector, 2015-16 through 2022-23.

How Do Students with an OOG in 2021-22 Compare to Other Students?

As in earlier years, students who received the OOG in 2021-22 were more likely to be from marginalized backgrounds than other students. Students with the OOG were more likely than students who had an EFC above the OOG eligibility threshold to be students of color (42 percent compared to 32 percent), older (35 percent compared to 24 percent), women (62 percent compared to 57 percent), and from a rural county (14 percent compared to 12 percent). Similarly, students with the OOG were more likely than Oregon students overall (i.e., whether or not they filed a FAFSA/ORSAA) to be students of color, women, older and from rural counties. Table 1 shows the racial/ethnic and gender identities, age groups, and county backgrounds of students by OOG status.

Table 1. Characteristics of students with Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG), students whose EFC was above the OOG threshold, and all credential-seeking students, fall term 2021-22.

	Students with OOG	Students with EFC above OOG threshold	Oregon students in general
Number	35,774	57,240	173,900
Race/ethnicity	100%	100%	100%
Asian American/Asian	6%	6%	6%
Black/African American	4%	2%	3%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	24%	16%	18%
Native American/Alaska Native	1%	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	1%	1%
Two or more races	6%	7%	6%
White	52%	64%	60%
Not reported	5%	3%	6%
Gender	100%	100%	100%
Men	37%	42%	47%
Women	62%	57%	51%
Nonbinary	0%	0%	0%
Not reported	1%	1%	1%
Age	100%	100%	100%
18 to 24	65%	76%	69%
25 and older	35%	24%	31%
Geography	100%	100%	100%
Rural county	14%	12%	12%
Urban or mixed county	79%	80%	81%
Not reported	7%	8%	7%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: “Oregon students in general” includes students at community colleges taking for-credit classes, Oregon admitted undergraduates at public universities, and Oregon admitted undergraduates who filed a FAFSA/ORSA at private bachelor’s degree-granting institutions.

When the EFC eligibility threshold for the OOG rose in 2021-22, the group of students receiving the grant grew larger and much more similar to the group receiving Pell Grants. Table 2 shows how the 2021-22 OOG recipients compare to earlier OOG recipients (who had lower EFCs or were from lower income backgrounds, on average) and to previous Pell grant recipients (who had similar EFCs to the 2021-22 OOG recipients, on average). Compared to both earlier groups, were slightly more likely to be Latino/a/x/Hispanic. On other characteristics, 2021-22 students with the OOG were similar to both former Pell recipients and former OOG recipients. Thus, even with the increase in the OOG eligibility threshold, the program continues to serve students from communities marginalized in higher education.

Table 2. Characteristics of students with Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) and Pell Grant between 2016-17 and 2020-21 and students with OOG in 2021-22.

	Students with Pell Grant, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2021-22
Number			35,774
Race/ethnicity	100%	100%	100%
Asian American/Asian	6%	6%	6%
Black/African American	4%	4%	4%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	20%	20%	24%
Native American/Alaska Native	2%	2%	1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1%	1%	0%
Two or more races	6%	6%	6%
White	57%	57%	52%
Not reported	5%	5%	5%
Gender	100%	100%	100%
Men	40%	40%	37%
Women	59%	59%	62%
Nonbinary	0%	0%	0%
Not reported	1%	1%	1%
Age	100%	100%	100%
18 to 24	63%	63%	65%
25 and older	37%	37%	35%
Geography	100%	100%	100%
Rural county	16%	15%	14%
Urban or mixed county	76%	77%	79%
Not reported	8%	8%	7%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

This section describes the nearly 36,000 Oregon students who received the OOG in 2021-22. As in earlier years, these students are more likely to come from communities that are marginalized in postsecondary education and training than students from higher income backgrounds. We turn next to examining the term-to-term and year-to-year retention of students receiving the OOG.

AFFORDABILITY UNDER THE OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT

Some of the students who received the grant in 2021-22 had higher EFCs than in previous years. Students who in previous years were eligible only for a Pell grant received both an OOG and a Pell grant in 2021-22. How did this affect college affordability for students overall? In this section, we examine the impact of the OOG on affordability by looking at the percentage of students who cannot cover the cost of attendance at their college with their expected resources.

Measuring Affordability

We measure affordability as the percentage of students we estimate face unaffordable costs. We calculate this measure for each individual student at the public universities and community colleges based on the educational costs of attending the institution and the student's educational and financial data and school information. We use institutions' published costs of attendance and what we know or can estimate about students' financial resources to calculate this affordability rate. We define students whose expected costs outweigh their expected resources as facing unaffordable costs.

Educational costs include tuition and fees, room and board, books and supplies, transportation, and personal expenses. Each public university and community college estimates and publishes these costs for students enrolled full-time each academic year. We use the cost of attendance for the institution where a student enrolled for the most credits, and if they enrolled part-time, we pro-rate the cost based on the number of credits in which they enrolled. Many four-year institutions offer financial aid from the institution to cover some or all of these costs, and we take this institutional aid into account as part of students' resources. The other resources we take into account are any federal and state grants each student received, their EFC from their FAFSA/ORSAA, and an estimate of students' own earnings. The estimate of student earnings is 90 percent of minimum wage for 15 hours per week and 48 weeks per year. This affordability rate measure is currently available for students who attended a public university or community college and who filed a complete FAFSA/ORSAA.

The Affordability Challenge and OOG Impact on Affordability

In Oregon, about one-third of students in 2021-22 could not afford the cost of attendance with their expected resources (among those who filed a FAFSA/ORSAA). The rate is higher for students at the public universities (where the cost of attendance is higher) and lower for students at the community colleges, as shown in Table 3 below. Within each sector, the rate is relatively similar across many groups related to educational equity, also shown below.

Table 3. Estimated percentage of students facing unaffordable costs, by sector, 2021-22.

	All public institutions	Community colleges	Public universities
Percent of all students with FAFSA/ORSA	34%	25%	47%
Race/ethnicity			
Asian American/Asian	43%	26%	55%
Black/African American	35%	25%	49%
Latino/a/x/Hispanic	38%	28%	52%
Native American/Alaska Native	31%	25%	40%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	33%	24%	49%
Two or more races	35%	25%	44%
White	33%	23%	45%
Not reported	33%	24%	50%
Gender			
Men	36%	25%	48%
Women	34%	25%	46%
Nonbinary	N/A	N/A	N/A
Not reported	27%	23%	40%
Age			
18 to 24	35%	23%	46%
25 and older	34%	26%	51%
Geography			
Rural county	31%	21%	43%
Urban or mixed county	35%	25%	47%
Not reported	35%	27%	56%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

However, the college affordability challenge is quite different by income group. The lower a student’s family income, the steeper the affordability challenge they tend to face, even after financial aid is awarded.⁵ This is because public financial aid has not kept up with the rising cost of attending college/university.⁶ Among students who receive the OOG, half could not cover the cost of attendance with their expected resources (Table 4). In contrast, 23 percent of students whose EFC was above the OOG eligibility level faced unaffordable costs.

⁵ Karol Dachelet, “Can Students Pay for College?”, Education Commission of the States analysis, December 2018 <https://ednote.ecs.org/can-students-afford-to-pay-for-college>.

⁶ For example, the federal Pell Grant covered about 80 percent of the average cost of attendance in the 1976 but covers only one-third of that cost today, “#DoublePell for College Affordability,” National College Attainment Network, <https://www.ncan.org/page/Pell#:~:text=Unfortunately%2C%20the%20purchasing%20power%20of,a%20four%2Dyear%20public%20university>.

Table 4. Estimated percentage of students facing unaffordable costs, by OOG status and sector, 2021-22.

	All public institutions	Community colleges	Public universities
Percent of all students with FAFSA/ORSA	34%	25%	47%
Students receiving OOG	50%	40%	62%
Students with EFC above OOG limit	23%	13%	36%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Without the OOG program, these rates would be even higher. If there had been no OOG program in 2021-22, the overall affordability rate would have been 5.4 percentage points higher, or 40 percent of students facing unaffordable costs, rather than 34 percent. The impact is even greater for students with EFC levels within the OOG limit: 62.5 percent of these students would have faced unaffordable costs without the program, rather than 50 percent. Put another way, the OOG enabled an estimated 12.5 percent more students to cover the cost of attending their college/university with their expected resources.

The impact of the OOG on affordability was larger in 2021-22 than in recent years. For the previous decade, when the EFC limit for the OOG was much lower, the program lowered the percentage of students facing unaffordable costs by two to three percentage points (see Figure 2). However, in 2021-22, the OOG improved the affordability rate by 5.4 percentage points. Figure 2 also shows the considerable decline in the percentage of OOG recipients and the percentage of students overall who faced unaffordable costs in 2021-22. After remaining nearly the same for a decade, the rates fell considerably in 2021-22.

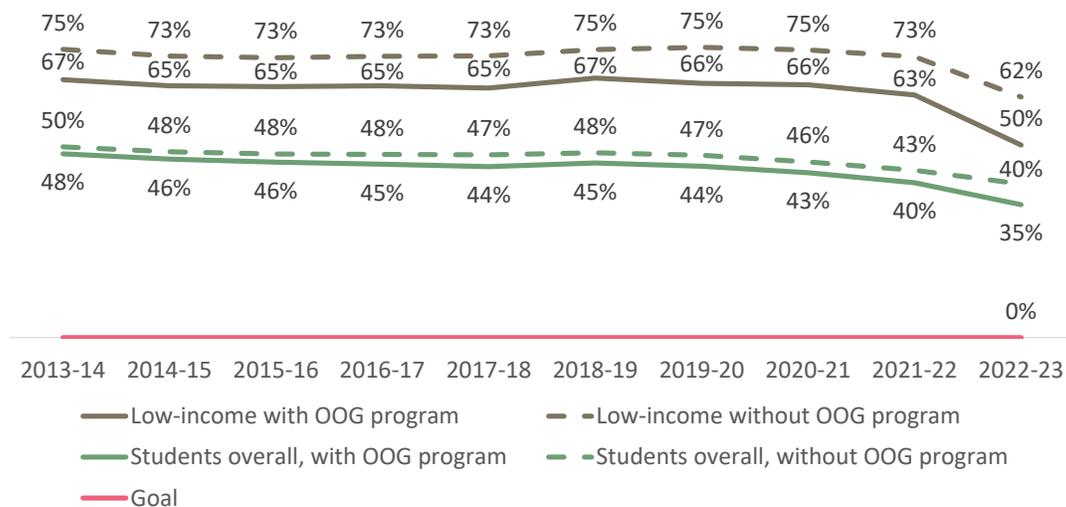


Figure 2. Estimated percentage of students facing unaffordable costs, by OOG status and sector, 2013-14 to 2021-22.

There are several reasons for this improvement in affordability and the OOG’s greater impact in 2021-22 than in previous years. Chief among them is the higher EFC eligibility limit in 2021-22. The ability to offer the program to students from a larger range of financial backgrounds meant that proportionally more students were covered by the grant. As a result, proportionally more could cover the cost of attendance. Relatedly,

declines in enrollment at colleges and universities meant fewer students applied for financial aid in 2021-22 than previously, and the financial aid that was available was able to reach a broader share of the student body. In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic and related economic crisis, the number of students who completed a FAFSA/ORSAA fell 21 percent at the community colleges and seven percent at the universities between 2019-20 and 2021-22. The expanded OOG eligibility, combined with the decline in students, meant that the OOG covered about 20 percent of students in 2021-22, compared to 17 percent in the previous five years.⁷

In addition to the expanded grant and declining enrollment, additional resources became available to students through federal pandemic relief (through the CARES Act). This expanded the financial aid available to students, colleges, and universities during 2020-21 and 2021-22. Institutional aid at the public universities rose 11 percent from before the pandemic (2019-20) to 2021-22 (after adjusting for inflation).

Finally, costs fell slightly during this period, allowing students' resources to stretch further. Most institutions kept tuition flat or near flat in 2020-21 and 2021-22, and this resulted in the overall cost of attendance falling slightly after adjusting for inflation. The average full-time cost of attendance in 2021-22 was almost \$1,000 less per year among FAFSA/ORSAA filers at the public institutions than it was in 2019-20 (\$952 at the community colleges and \$806 less at the public universities).

In this section, we asked how the OOG affected student affordability in 2021-22. We found that while students with the OOG face steep affordability challenges, the program enabled many to cover the cost of attendance at their institution. Affordability improved and the program's influence grew in 2021-22 because of expanded eligibility, combined with declining enrollment and other pandemic-related factors.

STUDENT SUCCESS UNDER THE OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT

Retention and Credits Earned for Students in 2021-22

In this section, we examine how students who received the OOG did academically in college/university. Because of the single 2021-22 year under the higher EFC eligibility threshold, we examine term-to-term retention, year-to-year retention, and number of credits earned for students with the OOG. We define term-to-term retention as the percentage of fall term students who return for winter and/or spring term. Oregon community colleges and public universities have three terms during the academic year, and we measure both the percentage of fall term students at these institutions who return for winter term and the percentage who return for winter and spring terms. Private colleges and universities in Oregon have two terms, and for students at these institutions, we measure the percentage of fall term students who return for spring term. We measure year-to-year retention in the same way for students at all institutions, as the percentage of fall term students who re-enroll the following fall term (whether or not they were enrolled in the intervening winter and/or spring terms).

Students in 2021-22 with the OOG have similar rates of retention as other students in 2021-22. Table 5 shows the rates of retention for OOG recipients, for students who completed a FAFSA/ORSAA but were not eligible for an OOG, and for the broader group of Oregon students. The results show that students with the

⁷These percentages reflect a fall-term student body that includes all Oregon resident admitted undergraduates at the public universities, all for-credit Oregon resident students at the community colleges, and all Oregon resident admitted undergraduates who filed a FAFSA/ORSAA at the private institutions.

OOG have higher rates of retention than other students at the community colleges and very similar rates of retention as other students at the public universities and private non-profit institutions. These results hold for all measures of retention.

Table 5. Percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continued to winter term and to spring term and percentage enrolled in fall 2021 who were also enrolled in fall 2022, by sector and OOG status, 2021-22.

	Students with OOG	Students with EFC above OOG threshold	Oregon students in general
Enrolled fall and winter terms			
Community college	80%	72%	73%
Public university	92%	91%	89%
Private institution	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enrolled fall, winter, and spring terms			
Community college	64%	57%	58%
Public university	83%	83%	81%
Private institution	89%	89%	N/A
Enrolled fall 2021 and fall 2022			
Community college	46%	42%	43%
Public university	64%	65%	62%
Private institution	57%	59%	N/A

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: “Oregon students in general” includes students at community colleges taking for-credit classes, Oregon admitted undergraduates at public universities, and Oregon admitted undergraduates who filed a FAFSA/ORSA at private bachelor’s degree-granting institutions. All columns include new and returning students. Private institutions are on semester schedules, and their fall to spring semester retention is included in the rates for fall winter and spring terms.

Table 6 shows the other indicator of student success that we measure, the number of credits students earned. As with retention, the number of credits earned by students with an OOG in 2021-22 was higher than other students at the community colleges and nearly identical at the public universities and private institutions. This includes the comparison both with students whose EFC was above the OOG threshold and with the broader group of Oregon students, including those who did not apply for financial aid. We note that credits are on average higher among students at public institutions than among those at private institutions because the public institutions use three terms and the private institutions use two terms during the academic year. We also compared the retention and number of credits separately for new students and found similar results to those in Table 6. The results for students in their first year can be found in Appendix B.

Table 6. Average number of credits earned by students in 2021-22, by OOG status and educational sector.

	Students with OOG	Students with EFC above OOG limit	Oregon students in general
Community college	24	21	20
Public university	38	38	37
Private institution	26	27	N/A

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: “Oregon students in general” includes students at community colleges taking for-credit classes, Oregon admitted undergraduates at public universities, and Oregon admitted undergraduates who filed a FAFSA/ORSAAs at private bachelor’s degree-granting institutions. All columns include new and returning students. Public institutions have three terms in the academic year, with 90 credits required for an associate degree and 180 credits required for a bachelor’s degree. The private institutions included in this analysis are on two-term schedules, with 120 credits required for a bachelor’s degree.

Retention and Credits Earned for Students with the OOG in 2021-22 Compared to Earlier Students

We also compared the retention and average number of credits earned by OOG recipients in 2021-22 with those of two earlier groups of students to better understand how raising the OOG EFC threshold may have affected the program’s impact. In general, students with the OOG in 2021-22 had similar rates of retention as the previous five years of OOG recipients and the previous five years of Pell Grant recipients (Table 7). There was greater variation across the comparison groups at community colleges, where earlier groups of Pell Grant recipients had the lowest retention, earlier groups of OOG recipients had the highest retention, and OOG recipients in 2021-22 had retention rates between the two. Looking across the sectors and based on this one year of data, the higher EFC eligibility of the OOG does not appear to have changed retention rates. We also made the same comparisons for first-year students only and found similar results; retention rates were very similar among Pell Grant recipients between 2016-17 and 2020-21, OOG recipients between 2016-17 and 2020-21, and OOG recipients in 2021-22. These results can be found in Appendix B.

Table 7. Percentage of students enrolled in fall term who continued to winter term and to spring term and percentage enrolled in fall 2021 who were also enrolled in fall 2022, among students with Pell Grants and students with OOG between 2016-17 and 2020-21 and students with OOG in 2021-22.

	Students with Pell Grant, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2021-22
Enrolled fall and winter terms			
Community college	77%	83%	80%
Public university	91%	93%	92%
Private institution	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enrolled fall, winter, and spring terms			
Community college	62%	68%	64%
Public university	83%	85%	83%
Private institution	91%	91%	89%
Enrolled fall 2021 and fall 2022			
Community college	45%	48%	46%
Public university	63%	65%	64%
Private institution	61%	62%	57%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Includes new and returning students.

Finally, we compared the number of credits earned by students who received an OOG in 2021-22 with the number of credits earned by earlier groups of students, those who received a Pell Grant and/or an OOG grant between 2016-17 and 2020-21. We found little to no difference in the number of credits earned across these three groups, as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 8. Number of credits earned by students in 2021-22, by OOG status and educational sector.

	Students with Pell Grant, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2016-17 to 2020-21	Students with OOG, 2021-22
Community college	23	26	24
Public university	38	38	38
Private institution	28	28	26

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Includes new and returning students.

In this section, we presented data on four measures of student success and compared students with the OOG in 2021-22 to multiple other student groups. We found that community college students with the OOG had higher rates of retention and more credits earned than higher-income students in 2021-22 and than the broader group of community college students. They had similar levels of student success compared to earlier groups of Pell Grant and OOG recipients. For students with the OOG at public universities and private institutions, we found nearly identical rates of retention and nearly identical numbers of credits earned as all other groups: those with higher EFCs, the broader group of students who may or may not have applied for financial aid, those from earlier years who had lower EFCs, and those from earlier years who had similar EFCs.

CHAPTER 3. CONCLUSION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This report asked three primary questions: (1) Who are the students served by the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG)? (2) How does the program affect affordability? and (3) What is the academic success and performance of students receiving the OOG? We answered these questions with student-level data from academic records and financial aid applications, and we compared students with the OOG in 2021-22 with other students in the same year and with previous groups of financial aid recipients. The first comparison shows how OOG recipients are doing compared to students from higher-income backgrounds and to students overall, while the latter comparison examines effects of the significant policy change that occurred in 2021-22. This change expanded eligibility for the OOG to include a wider group of students, those whose federally defined expected family contribution (EFC) was just above the limit for the federal Pell Grant. Prior to 2021-22, the OOG eligibility threshold was much lower than the federal Pell Grant's threshold.

We found that the OOG served nearly 36,000 Oregon students in 2021-22 who came from communities that are marginalized in postsecondary education and training. Students with the OOG were more likely than other students in 2021-22 to be students of color, women, older, and from rural counties. Compared to OOG and Pell recipients from prior years, students with the OOG in 2021-22 were more likely to be students of color and to be women. The OOG continued to serve students who face headwinds pursuing college and university under the higher eligibility threshold.

Regarding academic success and performance, we found that students with the OOG in 2021-22 succeeded at the same or higher levels as other students, across multiple measures of academic progress. Students with the OOG at the community colleges had higher rates and those at the public universities and private institutions had nearly identical rates of fall-to-winter retention, fall-to-spring retention, and fall-to-fall retention as students in 2021-22 who came from higher income backgrounds and as students overall (including those who did not apply for financial aid). Students with the OOG also earned more credits (among community college students) and nearly identical numbers of credits (among public university and private institution students) in 2021-22 as these two other groups of students. Similarly, OOG recipients in 2021-22 had nearly identical rates of term retention and year retention and earned nearly the same numbers of credits as OOG recipients from earlier years who had lower EFCs, and as Pell Grant recipients from earlier years who had similar EFCs. Academic success and performance do not appear to have changed with the expanded eligibility threshold in place for 2021-22. All of these results held for both new and returning students.

Regarding postsecondary affordability, we found that students with the OOG are much more likely to be unable to cover the expected costs of college/university than higher-income students, even after taking into account federal and state grant aid, institutional aid, their EFC, and an estimate of their earnings. The OOG did improve affordability for these students, moving an estimated 12.5 percent into the group whose expected resources could cover the cost of attendance at their institution. This impact was greater and affordability was better in 2021-22 than at any point in the previous decade. The expansion of the OOG, combined with fewer students applying for aid and other pandemic-related factors, underlie the improvement in affordability and greater impact of the OOG on affordability.

IMPLICATIONS

Taken together, this assessment of the OOG reveals a program that serves students from marginalized communities, improves their affordability, and supports their academic progress. The consistency of these results across measures and comparison groups is striking. The results also indicate that the expansion of the program in 2021-22 maintained the support of students served and their academic success while increasing the impact on affordability.

The results shown here occurred while many environments and plans in the lives of students were still unstable because of the COVID-19 pandemic. That students from low-income backgrounds demonstrated academic performance that was virtually identical to—and in some cases stronger than—that of higher-income students during this time is notable and is undoubtedly partly the result of the financial support provided by the OOG.

The expanded eligibility for the OOG reduced the number of students facing unaffordable college/university costs in 2021-22. Nonetheless, we estimate that half of students who received the OOG in 2021-22 were still not able to cover the cost of attending their college or university with the resources available to them. This high number indicates that not only is the expanded eligibility needed to improve affordability, but a larger grant size is needed as well. In the following year (2022-23), the size of the OOG grant did expand, and we will examine the impacts of that policy change in an upcoming report.

The strong academic performance of the students receiving the OOG, combined with the program's impact on affordability overall and on affordability in marginalized communities, are consistent with results from prior assessments. The stability of these results over time and with the policy expansion leads us to recommend continued promotion and expansion of the OOG so that all students who need it are able to benefit from it.

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APPENDIX A. OREGON OPPORTUNITY GRANT AWARDING CRITERIA AND AMOUNTS

Table A.1: Average annual cost of attendance by sector and thresholds for receiving federal Pell Grants and OOG awards, 2012-13 through 2022-23.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Average yearly cost of attendance, community colleges	\$17,031	\$17,374	\$17,735	\$18,223	\$19,147	\$19,893	\$20,485	\$20,796	\$21,091	\$21,124	\$22,549
Average yearly cost of attendance, public universities	\$20,693	\$21,192	\$21,540	\$22,263	\$23,466	\$24,474	\$25,232	\$25,908	\$27,733	\$28,177	\$29,826
Yearly maximum EFC to receive a Federal Pell Grant	\$4,995	\$5,081	\$5,157	\$5,198	\$5,234	\$5,328	\$5,486	\$5,576	\$5,711	\$5,846	\$6,206
Yearly awarding criteria limits, OOG	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$4,000	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$6,000	\$8,000
Yearly awarding criteria metric	Adjusted Gross Income			Expected Family Contribution							

Table A.2: Average OOG disbursement amounts, by sector, 2012-13 to 2022-23.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Community colleges	\$1,384	\$1,404	\$1,382	\$1,429	\$1,502	\$1,533	\$1,774	\$1,835	\$1,818	\$1,996	\$2,257
Public universities	\$1,766	\$1,796	\$1,762	\$1,819	\$1,909	\$1,910	\$2,766	\$2,901	\$3,083	\$3,196	\$3,678
Private non-profit institutions	\$1,768	\$1,794	\$1,775	\$1,876	\$1,985	\$1,979	\$2,889	\$2,919	\$3,321	\$3,409	\$3,860
Overall	\$1,569	\$1,600	\$1,579	\$1,639	\$1,696	\$1,714	\$2,277	\$2,364	\$2,468	\$2,642	\$3,034

Table A.3: Annual maximum OOG award amounts by sector from 2012-13 to 2022-23.

	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Community college	\$1,950	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,100	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,600	\$2,700	\$2,778	\$2,778	\$3,600
Public university	\$1,950	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,100	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$3,200	\$3,300	\$3,600	\$3,612	\$4,692
Private non-profit institutions	\$1,950	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,100	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$3,200	\$3,300	\$3,600	\$3,612	\$4,692

APPENDIX B. RESULTS FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

RETENTION

Table B.1. Percentage of first-year students enrolled in fall term who continued to winter term and spring term and percentage enrolled in fall 2021 who enrolled in fall 2022, by sector and OOG status, 2021-22.

	First-year students with OOG	First-year students with EFC above OOG threshold	First-year Oregon students in general
Enrolled fall and winter terms			
Community college	81%	75%	78%
Public university	93%	93%	92%
Private institution	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enrolled fall, winter, and spring terms			
Community college	64%	62%	63%
Public university	86%	86%	86%
Private institution	90%	92%	N/A
Enrolled fall 2021 and fall 2022			
Community college	54%	53%	53%
Public university	78%	78%	79%
Private institution	70%	78%	N/A

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Private institutions are on semester schedules, and their fall-to-spring semester retention is included in the rates for fall winter and spring terms.

Table B.2. Percentage of first-year students enrolled in fall term who continued to winter term and spring term and percentage enrolled in fall 2021 who enrolled in fall 2022, among students with Pell Grants and students with OOG between 2016-17 and 2020-21 and students with OOG in 2021-22.

	First-year students with Pell Grant, 2016-17 to 2020-21	First-year students with OOG, 2016-17 to 2020-21	First-year students with OOG, 2021-22
Enrolled fall and winter terms			
Community college	77%	84%	81%
Public university	93%	94%	93%
Private institution	N/A	N/A	N/A
Enrolled fall, winter, and spring terms			
Community college	62%	69%	64%
Public university	87%	88%	86%
Private institution	93%	94%	90%
Enrolled fall 2021 and fall 2022			
Community college	49%	54%	54%
Public university	77%	78%	78%
Private institution	79%	79%	70%

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Private institutions are on semester schedules, and their fall-to-spring semester retention is included in the rates for fall winter and spring terms.

CREDITS EARNED

Table B.3. Average number of credits earned by first-year students in 2021-22, by OOG status and educational sector.

	First-year students with OOG	First-year students with EFC above OOG limit	First-year Oregon students in general
Community college	22	23	22
Public university	37	37	37
Private institution	26	27	N/A

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Public institutions have three terms in the academic year, with 90 credits required for an associate degree and 180 credits required for a bachelor's degree. The private institutions included in this analysis are on two-term schedules, with 120 credits required for a bachelor's degree.

Table B.4. Number of credits earned by first-year students in 2021-22, by OOG status and educational sector.

	First-year students with Pell Grant, 2016-17 to 2020-21	First-year students with OOG, 2016-17 to 2020-21	First-year students with OOG, 2021-22
Community college	22	25	22
Public university	37	37	37
Private institution	27	27	26

Source: HECC analysis of student-level data.

Notes: Public institutions have three terms in the academic year, with 90 credits required for an associate degree and 180 credits required for a bachelor’s degree. The private institutions included in this analysis are on two-term schedules, with 120 credits required for a bachelor’s degree.

