



Photo courtesy of Southern Oregon University

## Vision

*The Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) envisions a future where all people benefit from the economic, civic, and cultural impact of high-quality postsecondary education, training, and workforce development.*

## Mission

*Through strategic coordination, funding, outreach, services, reporting, and leadership for systems change, the HECC:*

- *Drives equitable postsecondary access and success for all Oregonians;*
- *Anticipates and meets workforce and economic needs; and*
- *Strengthens Oregon's collective future by fostering research, innovation, learning, civic engagement, and cultural contributions.*

## Values

### Collaboration

We believe that collaboration is essential for achieving common goals and driving positive change. When we are collaborating, we proactively share information, optimize resources, seek and give feedback, and foster inclusive participation to ensure that diverse perspectives are heard and valued.

### Creativity and Innovation

We believe that creativity and innovation are catalysts for finding unique solutions and pushing boundaries. When we are creative and innovative, we are not constrained by our current ways of working. We strive for excellence to continuously improve and to leverage information to solve problems in unexpected ways.

### Equity

We believe that equity is crucial in ensuring equal opportunities for all individuals. When our work is rooted in equity, we share power and leadership, engage our communities, and analyze data to remove barriers and create access and pathways to growth.

### Empathy

We believe that empathy plays a key role in understanding and valuing others. When we are empathetic, we strive to recognize the real-life results of our work, are attuned to our shared humanity, and integrate the beliefs and experiences of others into our decision-making.

### Integrity

We believe that integrity guides our actions and decision-making. When we are demonstrating integrity, we operate with transparency, accuracy, honesty, and humility. We trust ourselves and others to do the right thing, and to follow through on our commitments to ensure that there is a clear connection between our values, words, and actions.

### Determination

We believe that higher education in Oregon and the U.S. is at an inflection point requiring significant change. A strong future demands our relentless determination to more effectively center the needs of learners and better address employers' needs. The complexity of this work does not excuse inaction. We will utilize our unique role as a statewide body to lean into this work and determine improvements needed in our approach and processes.

## Goals:

## Outcomes:

## Strategies:

### Relevance:

Improve the responsiveness of Oregon's education and training systems to the goals and needs of learners, employers, and communities.

- Increase learners' satisfaction with their educational and training experiences.
- Increase the percentage of residents who move from the lower to higher end of the income distribution due to education and training.
- Increase employers' ability to hire qualified workers.
- Increase graduates' preparation for solving civic, economic, and social challenges.

### Alignment:

Align Oregon's education and training systems to create straightforward pathways for learners.

- Increase the percentage of recent high school students, GED® completers, and other adults entering post-secondary education and training.
- Increase the rate of credit transfer toward completion of degree or certification.
- Increase employment rates for education and training completers.

### Affordable Access:

Make postsecondary education and training affordable for all Oregonians.

- Eliminate the unmet financial need of learners seeking postsecondary education and training.
- Close participation, retention, and completion gaps across income levels.

### Belonging:

Elevate learner voices and support inclusivity and belonging in all postsecondary learning settings.

- Learner satisfaction is high across all demographic groups.
- Completion demographics match the state and/or region's demographics.

### Leadership:

Infuse postsecondary education, workforce development, research, and innovation into Oregon's economic development strategies.

- Make postsecondary education and training a key driver in the State economic development plans and strategies.
- Increase opportunities for diverse partners to share in the co-creation of workforce education and training strategies in response to statewide economic priorities.

- **Foster Equitable Workforce Outcomes:** Prioritize programs and experiences that connect underserved learners with sustainable wages, in-demand careers, and equitable advancement opportunities.
- **Connect Postsecondary Education and Training to Workforce Needs:** Facilitate and streamline partnerships between employers and postsecondary education and training, prioritizing essential employability and in-demand technical skills.
- **Contribute to Solving Community Problems:** Increase the proportion of postsecondary learners who work to solve public problems and can collaborate across different perspectives and experiences.
- **Broaden Learners' Understanding of Their Possibilities, Opportunities, and Responsibilities:** Support postsecondary programming that broadens horizons, including by giving learners the opportunity to benefit from and contribute to the cultural, social, and economic vitality of their communities.

- **Support Transitions for High School Students, GED® Completers, and Adults into Postsecondary Education and Training:** In collaboration with partners, establish a shared goal for postsecondary participation and implement practices, programs, and policies to achieve it.

- **Connect Learning Across the Education Continuum:** Partner with K-12 and postsecondary education and training providers to align standards in support of straightforward transitions, including simplified transfer pathways.

- **Strengthen Postsecondary to Employment Transitions:** Identify, encourage, and incentivize programs that support education to career transitions.

- **Grow State Investment in Learners and Institutions:** By increasing financial aid for students and support for institutions, target state investments to ensure that low- and middle-income Oregon residents can afford postsecondary education and training.

- **Help Learners Meet Their Basic Needs:** Increase public investment and coordination of services such as advising, counseling, housing, dependent care, mental health, and food security.

- **Support Institutional Efficiency:** Provide incentives and support for public education and training institutions to lower costs and increase quality through innovative models such as shared services and collaborative program delivery.

- **Empower Students:** Gather and utilize student feedback at the institutional level and the HECC to understand and shape institutional and state policies and initiatives that support belonging.

- **Invest in Belonging:** Develop, promote, and fund models and programs that support student belonging and wellbeing both in the classroom and throughout learning spaces.

- **Connect Learners to College and Career Pathways:** Build learners' awareness and connection through clearly communicated pathways and career opportunities that are linked to their interests.

- **Support Providers in Connecting Learners to Pathways:** Evaluate and promote best practices for postsecondary education and for training providers to design learner pathways and career opportunities that are culturally responsive.

- **Enhance Partnerships for Economic Development:** Partner with state, local, and private entities to ensure that economic development plans incorporate postsecondary education, research and innovation, and workforce development strategies.

- **Identify and Respond to Partner Needs:** Work with industry, education, labor, and community partners to identify barriers to equitable access and completion of postsecondary education and to inform recruitment, retention, and advancement strategies that are equitable and supportive of a diverse workforce.

- **Support Business Recruitment and Retention:** Collaborate with federal, state, and local economic development agencies to ensure postsecondary education and training are contributing to business recruitment and retention.

- **Quantify and Evaluate Postsecondary Education's Economic Development Impact:** Assess and influence the effectiveness of college/university strategies to advance economic development.