

Overview

The Oregon Transfer Module (OTM) provides for the completion of a subset of general education courses, equivalent to three academic quarters, which all “count” as transferable to satisfy general education requirements. It satisfies the majority of university general education requirements and represents approximately half of an associate degree or the first year of a baccalaureate degree. The OTM’s primary benefits for students include improved efficiency in credit transfer between postsecondary institutions; an organized framework for students who have not determined their academic majors or who change majors early in their college careers; and provision of a reliable early start on a college degree for high school students who take OTM-approved coursework. As it relates to efficient credit completion, however, the benefits of the OTM may be limited; use of the OTM as an organizing principle for general education solely reflects fulfillment of those general requirements without attending to the ways in which credit may/may not also fulfill destination institution, degree type, or major requirements and recommendations. Furthermore, evidence suggests that rather than serving as a stepping-stone to be completed early in a student’s postsecondary education, students completing only the OTM (without also completing an associate degree) do not typically complete the full module until after significant investment in their postsecondary education.

Research conducted by the HECC in 2015 found that the average number of credits for an OTM-only completer was 90.5 credits (in 2014-15). While OTM completions have increased over the past few years as institutions began auto-awarding on completion, the fact that most students do not complete it first on the way to an AAOT, ASOT or other credential suggests that it is not being deliberately used as an academic planning tool or milestone.

HECC Research and Data also found inconsistencies in how the OTM is recorded and reported. This preliminary evidence, in addition to anecdotal discussions with the field, suggest the OTM was underutilized, little regarded, or poorly understood by students, faculty, and even advisors. In conjunction with JTAC (Joint Transfer & Articulation Committee), HECC conducted in September 2017 an unscientific survey of faculty, advisors, and other academic professionals to gauge the level of utility and understanding of the Oregon Transfer Module for the field. The results follow the official OTM guide in these background materials.

OREGON TRANSFER MODULE (OTM; 2016-2017)

The Oregon Transfer Module (OTM) is an approved 45-unit subset of general education courses (foundational skills and introduction to discipline courses) that are common among Oregon's colleges and universities. Courses are selected from an approved list of 100- and 200 level, general education requirements as determined by each Oregon community college, public university, or participating Oregon independent college or university. It is designed to improve student access to a college degree by enhancing opportunities for the transfer of credits earned at one institution to another.

Any student holding an Oregon Transfer Module that conforms to the guidelines below will have met the requirements for the Transfer Module at any Oregon community college or public university. Upon transfer, the receiving institution may specify additional course work that is required for a major or for degree requirements or to make up the difference between the Transfer Module and the institution's total General Education requirements.

Benefits to Students

- Improved efficiency in credit transfer between postsecondary educational institutions.
- Faster completion of degree as all credits "count" and are transferable.
- High school students who take OTM-approved coursework get a reliable early start on their college degree.
- Savings on the cost of tuition by maximizing the number of courses taken and not having to retake courses at multiple postsecondary institutions.
- Advanced advising tool allowing students to effectively select applicable courses.
- An organized framework for student who have not determined their academic majors or who change majors early in their college careers, and provides clear milestones that students can accomplish to serve their future goals.
- Supportive of students who transfer early to a four-year institution by allowing for seamless transfer of student's first year of coursework.

Required Coursework

The Oregon Transfer Module includes the following coursework, which is equivalent to three academic quarters. The coursework must be chosen from the courses approved for the categories below by the institution issuing the credit. In the case of community colleges, these will be courses approved for the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT) degree; in the case of universities and 4-year colleges,

they will be courses approved for the General Education part of a baccalaureate degree. All courses must be passed with a grade of "C-" or better and must be worth at least 3 credits (quarter system). Students must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 at the time the module is posted.

General Education

- **Writing:** Two courses of college-level composition (WR121, WR1 22, WR123 or WR227). *Information Literacy is included in the Writing component.*
- **Oral Communication:** One course of fundamentals of speech or communication.
- **Mathematics:** One course of college-level mathematics.

Introduction to Discipline Studies

Students are encouraged to complete at least one course with the embedded Cultural Literacy component in order to complete AAOT requirements.

- **Arts and Letters:** Three courses.
- **Social Sciences:** Three courses.
- **Science/Math/Computer Science:** Three courses, including at least one biological or physical science with a lab.

Community Colleges: Generally, these will be courses approved for the AAOT degree.

Universities and 4-year Colleges: Generally, they will be courses approved for the general education part of a baccalaureate degree.

As required to bring the total credits to 45. Courses must be from the Introduction to Disciplines areas (Arts & Letters, Social Science, or Science/Math/Computer Science).

Electives

As required to bring the total credits to 45. Courses must be from the Introduction to Disciplines areas (Arts & Letters, Social Science, or Science/Math/Computer Science).

Notes and Clarifications

1. Courses that are designed to prepare students for college-level work are not applicable to the transfer module.
2. When choosing courses in science and mathematics, students and advisors should check the specific requirements at receiving schools. Courses that include a laboratory component, or that deal with specific subjects, may be required for majors or degrees.
3. Computer Science courses used in the Math/Science/Computer Science area must meet Oregon Council of Computer Chairs criteria for a science course. See list of courses at Oregon Council of Computer Chairs.

4. In Arts and Letters, the second year of a foreign language may be included, but not the first year. American Sign Language (ASL) is considered a foreign language. Demonstrated proficiency in an American Indian language can meet all or part of the second language requirement, as certified by the governing body of any federally recognized tribe.
5. All Oregon community colleges and public universities will offer students the opportunity to complete an Oregon Transfer Module and the OTM designation will be posted on the transcript by the issuing institution (either by auto-award process and/or upon request). Regionally accredited private colleges and universities within the state are also welcome to offer and issue Transfer Modules, which will be accepted at any Oregon community college or public university.
6. At least one, minimum 3 credit course needs to be taken at an institution in order to receive the OTM at that campus, since Oregon institutions do not produce a transcript without a course taken.
7. Oregon Transfer Module credits may not match program requirements in the receiving school. The OTM supplements, but does not supplant, existing articulation agreements and does not replace effective advising.