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Background Brief on ...

Postsecondary Education in Oregon

Recent Governance Changes

Dramatic changes in the governance of Oregon's institutions of postsecondary education are currently underway. In 2009, the Oregon State Board of Higher Education (OSBHE) and the Oregon University System (OUS) began a review of funding and governance issues related to higher education. A Legislative Work Group on Higher Education was formed in 2010 to review OSBHE and OUS recommendations and solicit input from national experts on higher education management. The resulting legislation became Senate Bill 242 (2011) which accomplished the following:

- Created a Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to develop state goals and accountability measures for all of postsecondary education in Oregon – community colleges and OUS – and a strategic plan for achieving these;
- Defined OUS as a Public University System, consisting of the Office of the Chancellor, the seven OUS institutions and related offices and activities.
- Provided that the State Board of Higher Education would continue to carry out its duties, and OUS would remain an instrumentality of the state and a governmental body;
- Released OUS from expenditure limitations on available moneys including tuition and fees collected;
- Allowed OUS to maintain all interest earnings in the Oregon University System Fund, including earnings on tuition revenues;

The 2011 Legislature passed Senate Bill 253, which redefined the mission of postsecondary education in Oregon as follows:

1. Ensure that at least 40 percent of adult Oregonians have earned a bachelor's degree or higher;
2. Ensure that at least 40 percent of adult Oregonians have earned an associate's degree or postsecondary credential as their highest level of educational attainment; and
3. Ensure that the remaining 20 percent or less of all adult Oregonians have earned a high school diploma, an extended or modified high school diploma, or the equivalent of a high school diploma as their highest level of educational attainment.

The goal of achieving these outcomes by 2025 became known as 40-40-20.

Left unresolved by these 2011 measures was the authorization of institutional governing boards sought by some representatives of Portland State University and the University of Oregon. House Bill 4061 (2012) established the Special Committee on University Governance to "recommend legislation for the creation of local governing boards at public universities." After hearing testimony from all seven university presidents, OUS, OSBHE, student, faculty and other stakeholders, the Committee submitted its Recommendations Regarding Establishment of Institutional Governing Boards to the Governor and the Legislative Assembly. These recommendations became Senate Bill 270 (2013) which provides for the following:

- Authorizes institutional governing boards at Portland State University and University of Oregon;
- Provides option for Oregon State University to form an institutional governing board;
- Grants institutional governing boards discrete powers including the ability to hire and fire university presidents, to issue revenue bonds in consultation with the State Treasurer and set tuition within limits established by the Legislature.

Additionally, Senate Bill 270 called for the creation of a new Interim Committee on University Governance and Operations to discuss governance of the state's technical and regional universities (Oregon Institute of Technology, Eastern Oregon University, Western Oregon University and Southern Oregon University, or "TRUs"). House Bill 4018 (2014) contained the Committees recommendations that these four institutions also be allowed to form independent governing boards with the approval of the State Board of Higher Education. All seven Oregon universities have chosen to exercise the option to form independent governing boards.

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission created but not funded by Senate Bill 242 was reestablished by House Bill 3120 in 2013 as the single point of statewide authority for higher education in Oregon:

- For degree authorization;
- For licensing private career schools;
- For public universities for development of biennial budget request, allocating legislatively appropriated resources, and approving mission changes and new academic programs;
- For community colleges for development of biennial budget request, allocation of legislatively appropriated resources and approving new programs;
- For student access and financial aid for oversight of the Oregon Opportunity Grant and other financial aid programs.

As of July 1, 2014, both the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development and the Office of Student Access and Completion operate under HECC authority. The Task Force on Integrating the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development into the Higher Education Coordinating Commission was created to recommend legislation necessary to accomplish this transition.

Oregon's Public Universities

Eastern Oregon University (EOU) serves students and communities throughout Oregon with a special focus on rural, regional and distance learning. Programs are delivered on campus, online and onsite in La Grande and at 16 regional centers and include liberal arts, business, education and cooperative programs in agriculture, nursing and dental hygiene.

Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT), the Northwest's only polytechnic institution, serves the state with programs in business, engineering and health technologies, and cooperative programs in dentistry and nursing.

Oregon State University (OSU) is a land, space, sea, and sun grant university with programs in the liberal arts and sciences and professional programs in agricultural sciences, business, education, engineering, forestry, health and human sciences, oceanography, pharmacy, and veterinary medicine. The OSU-Cascades campus in Bend opened in 2001, in partnership with Central Oregon Community College, and offers degree programs in arts and sciences, business, engineering, education, natural resources, and recreation.

Portland State University (PSU) is a diverse urban university offering liberal arts and sciences programs and professional programs in fine and performing arts, liberal arts and sciences, business administration, education, urban and public affairs, social work, engineering and computer science.

Southern Oregon University (SOU) provides liberal arts and sciences programs, professional programs in business, education, and performing arts, and a cooperative program in nursing.

University of Oregon (UO) is an Association of American Universities liberal arts and sciences university with professional programs in architecture and allied arts, business, education, journalism, law, music and performing arts, and planning and public policy.

Western Oregon University (WOU) provides programs in liberal arts and sciences, professional programs in education, business, and public services, and a cooperative program in nursing.

Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), is the only academic medical center in the state and primarily operates on its main campus adjacent to downtown Portland. The Legislative Assembly established OHSU as a public corporation with academic programs and fees overseen by its board. (Not included in chart.)

University	Location	Fall 2013 Enrollment	2013/2014 Tuition/Fees
Eastern Oregon University	La Grande	4,157	\$7,460
Oregon Institute of Technology	Klamath Falls	4,414	\$8,457
Oregon State University	Corvallis	27,925	\$8,258
Oregon State University - Cascades	Bend	936	\$7,007
Portland State University	Portland	28,766	\$7,798
Southern Oregon University	Ashland	6,140	\$7,712
Western Oregon University	Monmouth	6,188	\$8,906
University of Oregon	Eugene	25,548	\$9,682
		Total Enrollment 103,074	Average Tuition/Fees \$8,161

Oregon's Community Colleges

Oregon's community colleges offer a range of academic, workforce, and other programs and services, including professional technical programs, coursework for degree-seeking and upper division college-bound students, workforce training, coursework for general educational development and adult high school diploma completion, English as a Second Language, adult basic education, and non-credit general education courses. Each of Oregon's 17 community colleges is governed by a president and local community college board.

College	Main Campus	Fall 2013 Enrollment	2014/2015 Tuition/Fees
Blue Mountain	Pendleton	3,121	\$4,576
Central Oregon	Bend	9,129	\$4,241
Chemeketa	Salem	16,814	\$4,230
Clackamas	Oregon City	9,870	\$4,132
Clatsop	Astoria	1,892	\$4,995
Columbia Gorge	The Dalles	1,402	\$4,545
Klamath	Klamath Falls	1,891	\$4,605
Lane	Eugene	14,112	\$4,920
Linn-Benton	Albany	9,612	\$4,476
Mt. Hood	Gresham	13,918	\$4,751
Oregon Coast	Newport	907	\$4,770
Portland	Portland	41,572	\$4,476
Rogue	Grants Pass	6,827	\$4,680
Southwestern	Coos Bay	3,891	\$5,337
Tillamook Bay	Tillamook	940	\$4,680
Treasure Valley	Ontario	2,688	\$5,085
Umpqua	Roseburg	4,630	\$4,372
		Total Enrollment 143,216	Average Tuition/Fees \$4,640

Private Nonprofit Institutions

Oregon is also home to a number of highly ranked independent nonprofit colleges and universities. Since it is estimated that as many as 25% of undergraduate degrees granted in Oregon are earned at these institutions, the state recognizes the critical role they play in pursuit of 40-40-20. The Office of Degree Authorization (ODA) is required by statute “to provide for the protection of the citizens of Oregon and their postsecondary schools by ensuring the quality of higher education and preserving the integrity of an academic degree as a public credential.” Under direction of the HECC, ODA administers laws, standards and services enacted to protect students, holders of legitimately earned degrees, institutions, businesses, employers, patients, clients and licensing boards. All degree-granting private postsecondary institutions offering academic programs in Oregon, or to Oregon students from outside the state, must be approved by the ODA.

For-Profit Career Schools

The Private Career School licensing unit (PCS), also operating under the auspices of the HECC, regulates the activities of non-degree granting postsecondary institutions. There are over 200 such entities currently operating in Oregon to prepare students for specific professions such as real estate broker, tax preparer and cosmetologist. In addition to licensing career schools, PCS registers individuals who teach in career schools, approves new instructional programs, responds to student complaints and manages the Tuition Protection Fund. In recognition of contributions to the “middle 40” of 40-40-20 made by career schools, PCS works to: Ensure Oregon’s licensed career schools maintain a high level of quality; help career schools be successful providers of career training and protect students’ investment of time and money.

Paying for College

The Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) provides access to postsecondary education opportunities through information, mentoring and financial support under the HECC. OSAC administers the following programs which deliver over \$118 million annually in financial aid:

- Scholarships
- Oregon Opportunity Grant
- Chaffee Grant
- Childcare Grant
- ASPIRE (Access to Student Assistance Programs in Reach of Everyone)

Additionally, the Legislative Assembly has directed the HECC to study a number of initiatives to address increasing tuition and student loan debt. The HECC has also been tasked with developing a clearinghouse for information to allow students to compare the relative value of similar programs offered by various institutions operating in Oregon.

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