

Government Relations Update for the Campus Community March 2017

Prepared with the assistance of the Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP)

March Madness in Salem

The Oregon Public Universities' government relations team has been tracking 900 bills related to higher education this session. We hope to reduce the size of the list after the posting deadlines occur in April. Bills must be **posted** for work sessions in their committees of origin by **April 7th** and must **receive** work sessions by **April 18th**.

President Naganathan spent three days in Salem in March, at the Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP) conference, where the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC) was showcased, and meeting legislative leaders. He also attended the Oregon Council of Presidents' March meeting in person for the first time. It's great to have him on our team!

Budget

The Oregon Public Universities budget presentations are scheduled for April 12 and 13 in front of the Education Subcommittee of Ways and Means. On April 12, WOU President Rex Fuller will provide a profile of Oregon's university students, retention and graduation rates, funding per student, and cost drivers that necessitate an additional \$100M investment in the Public University Support Fund, above the \$667M that is included in the Governor's Recommended Budget. On April 13, university leaders and students will present the case for Sports Lottery Funding for athletic programs, State Public Service Programs, including the Oregon Renewable Energy Center, and Statewide Programs, such as Oregon State Extension. On April 17, there will be a public hearing on the entire university budget, with students, faculty and industry partners testifying on our behalf. The universities anticipate a need for strong advocacy throughout the session to achieve the +\$100M goal, or most universities will need to increase tuition in the range of 5% - 12% next year.



Trustee Celia Nunez, Bill Gerry from Boeing, Senator Betsy Johnson, and President Naganathan discuss OMIC at the OMEP conference in March.

We are awaiting additional direction from the HECC on the information that will be requested from institutions seeking tuition increases above 5%. The most recent indications are that information that is provided to institutional boards will be submitted along with an executive summary for each institution that the HECC will compose. The Commission will also administer a survey to students involved in the tuition-setting committee seeking feedback on their perception of the process on each campus.

The universities expect to finalize a letter to legislators in support of ongoing revenue discussions between business and labor interests this week, in the hope that additional revenue will result in a larger investment in higher education.

Update on bills of interest...

SB55: Oregon Promise/Free Community College

SB55 was "gutted and stuffed" to remove the cap of \$10M on the program, so that the HECC could fulfill the Oregon Promise this year. Other substantive policy changes to the program were removed from SB55 so that the senate could expedite its passage. [The Oregon Council of Presidents testified](#) in writing on the bill, raising the affordability principles that support serving low-income students first. The bill received a third reading on the House Floor on March 27th, and is anticipated to pass.



Rep. Sherrie Sprenger greets President Naganathan in the State Capitol.

SB207: Credit for Advanced Placement (AP) Scores:

SB 207 was amended in the Senate to require colleges and universities to award credit for AP passing scores at a level of 3 or higher. Universities support the intent of the bill, and universities have been awarding AP credit for successful test scores for over a decade, but do not support including a specific test score for all courses in statute. Our faculty believe that some courses require a test score of 4 or 5 to represent equivalency to college-level work. [The universities submitted written and verbal testimony](#) on the bill in early February, however it passed out of Senate Education Committee and has been referred to House Higher Education and Workforce Development.

SB8: Allows Mergers of Community Colleges and Universities

This bill was introduced by the Senate President to allow a voluntary merger of a community college and university, by presenting a plan to the HECC that proposes how the merged institution would be governed, and the efficiencies that would be achieved. The universities are neutral on this bill, after it was amended, since it is voluntary in nature.

HB 2864: Relating to Cultural Competency

The universities continue to work with Rep. Alonso Leon on amendments that will allow universities more discretion in how to meet the intent of this bill.

SB2540 : Applied Baccalaureates in Nursing at Community Colleges

[The public universities testified](#) to the House Higher Education Committee during its public hearing, and raised concerns about jeopardizing the Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) transfer agreement between community colleges and OHSU, and also changing the degree-granting authority of the community colleges. The nursing programs at EOU, OIT, SOU, and WOU are all part of the OCNE consortium. The Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and OHSU testified in opposition. The Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) submitted a collective letter of support and Chemeketa CC's President testified in support along with several other rural health care providers.

HB 2729 Extension of Textbook Affordability and "Open Education Resources"

A work session on on textbook affordability, has been scheduled this week. The bill has a subsequent referral to Ways and Means. Most universities are reporting a small fiscal on the bill—in aggregate, more than the \$250k the bill appropriates.

[HB 2587](#) Removes 40-40-20 Goal from Statute

The public universities did not testify on this bill during the public hearing in March, however we would have stated support for funding institutions and programs in order to reach that goal, even if the aspirational numerical goals are not in statute. We also would have reiterated testimony from the community colleges indicating willingness to engage in a conversation about Oregon’s educational attainment goals. The Oregonian’s editorial board wrote an editorial in opposition to repealing the numerical goals.

[HB 2972](#): Student Code of Conduct related to Reporting by Victims

This bill on provisions in university student codes of conduct, introduced on behalf of the Attorney General, received a public hearing in House Judiciary and a work session has been scheduled in late March. The universities submitted a letter from the Title XI directors and SOU’s Title IX director testified on the proactive efforts of campuses to provide a safe environment. General Counsel from UO testified to clarify that UO’s student code of conduct has never and would never be used in the way that the bill would prohibit. The AG’s office, the Oregon Law Center, Brenda Tracy, OTLA, OHSU and the sponsors testified in support of the measure.



Rep. Mark Johnson and Legislative Director, Cassie Hayt, work on HB 2998, to improve 2-year to 4-year student transfer.

[HB 2998](#): Transfer Pathways

Reps. Johnson and Alonso Leon have convened a transfer work group to develop consensus amendments for HB2998 that are feasible for universities and community colleges to implement. We anticipate amendment language that will focus on evaluation of the Oregon Transfer Module (OTM) as well as setting a timeline to identify unified transfer pathways from community colleges to universities in the subject areas with highest enrollment within the next two years. We have also advocated for language that encourage students to declare a “guided pathway” or meta-major at the community college so they are more likely to take courses that will transfer into their major at the university.

[HB 3276](#): Health Services

The universities submitted a joint letter in support of [HB 3276](#) that would require coverage of necessary health services in the case of an outbreak or epidemic.

[SB 196](#): Adjunct Faculty Health Care

SB 196 would allow adjunct faculty who work at multiple institutions to aggregate hours for healthcare coverage. The bill is scheduled for a public hearing in Senate Education. We have spoken with Sen. Dembrow to let him know we support the aim of this bill but not without funding to accomplish it. We also have concerns with a portion of the bill that authorizes the HECC to review institutional HR policies.

[SB 253](#): Information for Students about Cumulative Student Debt

The reporting bill sponsored by Sen. Taylor for the Attorney General, [SB 253](#), is scheduled for a work session on April 6th. The universities participated in a work group on amendments but have not yet seen them. The universities supplied information to Sen. Taylor on when and how students receive information on loans and housing. It remains unclear whether sponsors of House measures focusing on similar reporting requirements have been contacted or agreed to use SB 253 as the main vehicle for changes.

[SB 420A](#): Tuition Waiver for Upper-division Math Courses for Math Majors

This bill had a public hearing and work session in Senate Education. The original bill was “gutted and stuffed” with amendment language that would waive tuition for math majors for upper-division math courses, and

establish a task force on math teacher education. It was referred to Ways & Means by prior reference with a hall pass rather than a full fiscal analysis. The universities provided a fiscal impact statement of over \$1M.

HB 2782: Financing of Expansion of OSU-Cascades Campus, was passed out of the House Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee and referred to Ways and Means. The bill has a fiscal impact of \$70M in bond indebtedness.

An informational presentation on **UO's Science Campus** was held in the House Higher Education Committee in March as well.

Policy Bills Initiated by the Oregon Public Universities

- [SB 214](#) Establish Alternative Retirement Plans for Postdoctoral Scholars
 - **Current Committee:** Senate Workforce
 - **Status:** Received a public hearing on 3/6. Amendments have been finalized with AAUP and we have requested a work session to be scheduled.

- [HB 2582](#) Establish a University Research "Fighting Fund"
 - **Current Committee:** House Higher Education and Workforce Development
 - **Status:** Received a public hearing on 3/14.

- [HB 2576](#) Technical Fix to the Wildlife Trafficking Prevention Act
 - **Current Committee:** House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
 - **Status:** Passed out of committee last week with a -1 amendment that is a consensus with the Humane Society.

- [SB 201](#) Retroactive Fix for Out-of-State University Employees
 - **Current Committee:** Senate Workforce
 - **Status:** Public hearing in the Senate Workforce Committee on 3/6. Work session requested.

- [HB 2565](#) Expand Veteran Priority Registration and Services
 - **Current Committee:** Senate Education
 - **Status:** Passed out of the House on a 57-0 vote.



Senator Alan DeBoer, the new senator from Ashland, discusses Oregon Tech's capital projects with Lita. Senator DeBoer's brother is a graduate of Oregon Tech.

Opportunity for Campus Engagement: May 16, 2017: TRU Day in the Capitol

Please join us for this advocacy day for the technical and regional universities. All seven university presidents will be there for the Council of Presidents and to conduct advocacy meetings with legislators. An invitation to TRU day is attached for your information.

For more information, contact Lita Colligan or Brittany Miles, Government Relations: Lita.colligan@oit.edu or Brittany.Miles@oit.edu.



Support Oregon Tech and make your voices heard.

On **May 16th** the Technical and Regional Universities – the “TRUs” which include Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Southern Oregon University, and Western Oregon University – will be holding a day of activities in the State Capitol to inform legislators and their staff about the amazing opportunities these institutions provide to Oregonians.

On May 16th you can show your support by coming to Salem and meeting with legislators.

Wilsonville: students and staff will leave the Wilsonville campus at 7:00 am on May 16th

Klamath Falls: There will be a bus leaving campus after classes and practice on May 15th. The bus will leave Salem to return to Klamath Falls at 4:00 pm May 16th. Lodging will be provided.

If you would like to support Oregon Tech and let your elected representative know you support funding for public universities, please complete the registration.

Register to Attend:: [Take the survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://oit.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/preview/SV_OTUWSLEdJRUR4DX?Q_CHL=preview

Full Schedule and detailed itinerary to follow.

Please email Brittany.miles@oit.edu or call her at (503) 821-1288 with any questions.