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HECC Statement to High School and Prospective Postsecondary Students Impacted by COVID-19

Statement from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC)

For students who are just beginning or planning their postsecondary pathways, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) is committed to supporting their success, and is working closely with state's public and private colleges and universities to minimize disruption to students starting and achieving their college and career goals.

The HECC is working closely with the postsecondary institutions to ensure that the pass/incomplete grading system being employed at Oregon high schools in Spring, 2020 will not disadvantage students in their competitiveness for admission or scholarships at Oregon public colleges and universities.

The HECC supports alignment of postsecondary policies to the greatest extent possible with the [Oregon Department of Education](#)'s recently issued [Graduation Pathways 2020](#) guidance to school districts to help support the timely graduation of high school seniors. Many of these policy decisions are made at the institution level, and we join institutional leaders in a deep commitment to student success during this challenging time. The HECC is working closely with public and private degree-granting institutions in Oregon on identifying common assurances institutions can make to prospective students regarding admissions, transfer, and other key topics to help high school students and learners continue to pursue and succeed their postsecondary goals.

The HECC Office of Student Access and Completion has announced flexibility in the state financial aid programs and scholarships (see [OregonStudentAid.gov](#) for details on specific programs) during this time. We encourage all students and families to apply for financial aid if they have not already done so.

Admissions and Enrollment during COVID-19

If students have been admitted to a college or university this fall, but the COVID-19 pandemic might impact the academic record that qualifies them, will they still be admitted?

Numerous institutions are offering added flexibility regarding admissions during this time, and we encourage prospective and future college students to check directly with their college or university admissions office regarding their admissions process during COVID-19. The admissions criteria of public and private institutions is established by the individual institutions under the authority of their governing boards. Oregon's seven public universities have issued the following joint statement related to their approach to incoming freshmen.



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Statement from Oregon's seven public universities and OHSU:

- The Oregon public universities are committed to ensuring that incoming first year students who intend to enroll at our institutions are considered fairly in light of the educational interruption they have endured in their final year of high school. No student admitted to our institutions for fall 2020 will have their admission rescinded due to changes in grading policy or the inability to complete their coursework, as long as they graduate high school. Students who apply to our institutions are still subject to a review process that focuses on their ability to succeed in college, but the Oregon public universities recognize that some situations are beyond their control. We look forward to supporting students and high schools through this challenging time, both now and with future high school graduating classes impacted by the pandemic." – Joint statement of EOU, OHSU, OIT, OSU, PSU, SOU, UO, WOU

Should current students stay enrolled?

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) strongly encourages students to continue their enrollment at Oregon institutions during spring term and beyond to the greatest extent possible during this challenging time.



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