



NEWS DIGEST - March 7, 2016

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2016 Legislative Session Recap

[To read the OCCA End of Session Report, please click here.](#)

This week, the Oregon Legislature wrapped up a contentious short session passing out major legislation on issues such as the state minimum wage and a phasing out of the use of coal by Oregon power utilities. Higher education issues were less of a focal point for legislators this session, after having dealt with restructuring state-

March 10, 2016

OCCA Board Meeting
Portland Community College - Sylvania Campus, Portland

March 11, 2016

OPC Meeting
Portland Community College - Sylvania Campus, Portland

April 9-12, 2016

AACC Annual Convention
Chicago, IL

level governance for universities and community colleges and enacting a new access program for Oregon students over the last several years.

Raising Oregon's minimum wage proved to be one of the most contentious issues legislators dealt with in the short session with Democratic leadership aiming to head off two ballot measures aimed at raising the state's minimum wage – with one measure intending to raise the wage to \$13.50 statewide and another that would raise it to \$15.00. In the end, legislators approved the first tiered minimum wage in the country, which would increase to \$14.75 inside Portland's urban growth boundary, \$13.50 in midsize counties and \$12.50 in rural areas by 2022. The labor-backed campaign to raise the minimum wage to \$13.50 has since called off their petition drive, though the campaign pushing for a statewide \$15.00 minimum wage has vowed to keep collecting signatures.

Legislators were reluctant to fund new initiatives in the short session in part because of the March 2016 revenue forecast. According to state economists, Oregon is facing a projected structural deficit of between \$1-1.3 billion for the 2017-19 biennium. Though the General Fund is projected to increase 8.2 percent to \$19,490 million, increased cost drivers from PERS, minimum wage, health care, and increased caseloads will leave a gap

April 20, 2016

AOAT Student Scholar
Event
Salem Convention
Center

April 20-21, 2016

OPC Meeting
OCCA Office, Salem

May 3, 2016

AOAT Recognition
Program
Salem Convention
Center

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between projected revenue and the current service level. Further, the 2017-19 forecast is down \$191 million from the December forecast. As a result, a host of spending proposals, such as funding for student support services for universities and funding the statewide ask for community college public safety, were off the table. These proposals will be reconsidered in the 2017 legislative session when the full state budget is crafted.

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[To read about the specific bills affecting community colleges that either passed or failed this legislative session, please click here.](#)

Legislative Funds for Student Success via HB 4076

The passage of [HB 4076](#) makes available an additional \$1.66 million for Oregon community colleges to provide student support services. Below are details for this funding:

- Funds will be dispersed by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) as grants beginning July 1, 2016.
- Funds will be evenly split in to 20 shares of \$82,990 each. Portland CC will receive four

shares and remaining colleges will receive one share each.

- Community colleges are required to submit reports to the HECC regarding the use of these funds by November 30, 2016 and again by April 7, 2017.
- Use of grant funds includes support services that provide the following:
 - First year experience
 - Student success team
 - Professional development for faculty and staff to provide intentional, strategic interventions to students
- Colleges may wish to use funds to contract with AVID for Higher Education.

Elizabeth Cox Brand, Student Success & Assessment Director for OCCA, is available to spend a day with your leadership team to facilitate a discussion regarding data, current student success initiatives in place on your campus, next steps and options that may be most applicable for your college (elizabeth@occa17.com).

Mental Health on Community College Campuses

In an effort to better understand the state of mental health on community college campuses, the Healthy Minds Network, the Wisconsin HOPE Lap, the Association of Community College Trustees, and Single Stop, worked in partnership to conduct a survey of more than 4,000 students at 10 community colleges across the nation. [The survey results](#) reveal that nearly half (49%) of the students surveyed are experiencing a current or recent mental health condition, with depression (36%) and anxiety (29%) the most common issues.

Moreover, when compared to mental health incidence among four-year students, the rates are higher among community college students, with the disparity persisting within age groups. For instance, among students age 25 and younger, 56% of community college students reported a mental health condition, compared to 46% of students at four-year institutions.

The study also found that of the students who reported experience a current or recent mental health condition, less than half (30%) of them are receiving any mental health services.

These finds are significant as mental illness can impair academic success and quality of life. There is a clear need for greater attention to and

resources for mental health services on community college campuses. The report concludes with some things institutions and stakeholders can do to help with the issues, such as communications to provide information and reduce stigma, which does not necessarily require substantial financial resources.

To read the full report, please click [here](#).

Save the Date: All Oregon Academic Team Luncheon

The 2016 All Oregon Academic Team Recognition Program will be held May 3, 2016 at the Salem Convention Center. Please save the date and join us in celebrating the achievements of our 2016 All Oregon Academic Team recipients.

Oregon's 17 community colleges are a vital part of the state's education system and serve roughly 350,000 students a year, or about 1 in 11 Oregonians.

The OCCA Digest updates members and the public about recent news affecting community colleges and efforts by the association to enhance student success and workforce development.

Do you have links to local stories or other items of interest? Please forward them to mjensen@occa17.com.

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