

Enrollment Growth & Oregon's Largest Higher Education Sector

Oregon's 17 community colleges serve more students than any other higher education sector. Enrollment is up statewide, particularly in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs such as healthcare, manufacturing, IT, early childhood education, and skilled trades. Community colleges provide pathways that meet the needs of working adults, parents, rural learners, and first-generation students. They are the backbone of Oregon's workforce system, aligning programs with employer demand and contributing to strong local economies.

Community Colleges Respond When the Economy Shifts

Community colleges function as Oregon's economic stabilizer. When the economy weakens, enrollment grows as workers seek retraining or upskilling. Colleges provide quick, flexible education and training programs essential to helping communities recover. Cuts during economic downturns reduce the ability to scale programs when Oregonians need them most.

Statewide Impact of a 5% Mid-Biennium Cut

A 5% reduction removes more than \$26.5 million statewide in the first year alone, with similar reductions in the second year. Because most college spending supports instruction and student services, reductions directly impact classrooms, staffing, and critical supports. Common systemwide impacts include fewer course sections, decreased CTE capacity, delayed equipment upgrades, hiring freezes, and reduced rural access.

Consequences for Students

Students feel cuts first. With fewer course offerings, it becomes harder to enroll in required classes and stay on track for completion. Reduced advising, tutoring, childcare support, transportation assistance, food pantries, and mental health services create real barriers to success. If colleges must raise tuition or fees to absorb cuts, affordability becomes an even greater challenge for students already struggling to meet basic needs.

Representative College Impacts (Two-Year Totals)

Examples from the statewide analysis illustrate the magnitude of reductions individual colleges would need to absorb:

- Portland Community College — \$15,150,711
- Lane Community College — \$4,911,688
- Linn-Benton Community College — \$3,305,024
- Mt. Hood Community College — \$4,865,374
- Rogue Community College — \$2,496,552

These reductions would require adjustments to instructional capacity, CTE programs, staffing, and services at every campus.

Two-Year Budget Reductions for All 17 Colleges

College	FY25-26 Cut	FY26-27 Cut	Two-Year Total
Blue Mountain	(\$509,764)	(\$423,210)	\$932,974
Central Oregon	(\$1,501,391)	(\$1,528,994)	\$3,030,385
Chemeketa	(\$3,015,330)	(\$3,037,315)	\$6,052,645
Clackamas	(\$2,102,580)	(\$2,117,258)	\$4,219,838
Clatsop	(\$378,407)	(\$287,531)	\$665,938
Columbia Gorge	(\$364,456)	(\$303,502)	\$667,958
Klamath	(\$880,108)	(\$886,252)	\$1,766,360
Lane	(\$2,447,302)	(\$2,464,386)	\$4,911,688
Linn-Benton	(\$1,646,764)	(\$1,658,260)	\$3,305,024
Mt. Hood	(\$2,424,225)	(\$2,441,149)	\$4,865,374
Oregon Coast	(\$215,502)	(\$181,961)	\$397,463
Portland	(\$7,504,719)	(\$7,645,992)	\$15,150,711
Rogue	(\$1,243,934)	(\$1,252,618)	\$2,496,552
Southwestern	(\$688,668)	(\$704,097)	\$1,392,765
Tillamook Bay	(\$232,385)	(\$191,178)	\$423,563
Treasure Valley	(\$545,401)	(\$558,809)	\$1,104,210
Umpqua	(\$834,624)	(\$853,049)	\$1,687,673