

Headcount vs. FTE

Why Headcount Matters for Oregon Community Colleges

Whether a student takes 4 credits or 16 credits, they rely on the college's core systems, staffing, wrap-around supports, and support infrastructure.

Core Services and Supports



Advising and Counseling

Academic advising, degree planning, career guidance, and enrollment support.



Admissions and Registration

Application processing, orientation, placement, and class registration.



Financial Aid and Support

Financial aid processing, scholarships, emergency aid, and payment plans.



Student Services

Tutoring, disability services, libraries, technology, and student success resources.



Wrap-Around Supports

Basic-needs referrals, childcare navigation, transportation support, and other supports that help students stay enrolled.



Operations and Facilities

Classrooms, labs, utilities, safety, maintenance, and administrative support.



Records and Compliance

Transcripts, records management, and compliance with state and federal requirements.

The Real-World Ratio

Approximately 2.8 students are served for every 1 FTE.



This ratio highlights the reach of community colleges: many students depend on the same essential infrastructure and supports.

Key Community College Measures

Headcount	Student FTE (Full Academic Year)	Students Served per FTE	Estimated Public Support per Headcount	Estimated Public Support per FTE
209,605	73,786.7	2.8:1	\$3,223.05	\$9,155.69



Community colleges serve approximately 2.8 students for every 1 FTE.

Headcount helps show the full number of students who rely on core college systems, staffing, and wrap-around supports.



Policy takeaway:

FTE works for measuring instructional load but does not capture the base costs associated with serving each student. Headcount provides an important additional view of the number of students community colleges must support.