

## The Benefits of a Coordinated, Statewide Higher Education Approach in Oregon

The public university system was created by the Oregon legislature in 1929 to make it easier for students to move through universities and graduate with the skills and competencies Oregon employers need. The system is the operations and academic “glue” between the seven universities and its education partners, **ensuring Oregon meets its 40-40-20 education goals**. It creates efficiencies, economies of scale and innovative programs that make college more affordable and more relevant for the realities of today’s world. It saves money for Oregon taxpayers, avoids duplication of costly programs and provides unbiased information to policymakers on the most important higher education issues.

### Benefits of Oregon’s public university system include:

1. **Saves Taxpayer and Students Money and Ensures Accountability.** The system provides efficiencies, eliminates redundancy, and leverages economies of scale to ease the financial strain on students and Oregon taxpayers. Rather than have seven separate administrative functions at each of the campuses, OUS bundles or shares functions for many operational areas that save millions of dollars every biennium.
2. **Helps Achieve the 40-40-20.** OUS’ unified, statewide focus creates efficiencies in the system and more capacity for students, drives new teaching and learning innovations, and provides direction and incentives for universities to collaborate and align programs, necessary to create the scale of change required to increase the degrees we need to meet Oregon’s workforce and economic needs, and reach our 40-40-20 goal.
3. **Accelerates students’ path to college degrees.** The system spearheads partnerships with community colleges and high schools to make getting degrees faster and easier for students. Students’ transfer process from community colleges is simplified with transfer degrees, dual enrollment options, new reverse transfer degrees, Applied Baccalaureate and others. Partnerships with K-12 include dual credit and aligned academic standards between high schools and OUS to lower tuition costs, and ensure more students are ready to succeed in college.
4. **Promotes Collaboration Among Public Universities.** The system builds on the individual strengths of each university and campus and harnesses the benefits of collaboration to increase efficiencies and effectiveness. Examples include Signature Research Centers like ONAMI, ORTRADI, and Oregon BEST, and the Life Sciences Collaborative with OHSU. For students, OUS creates consolidated admissions tours, common Transfer Days with community colleges, collaborative academic programs and coordinated outreach and information about university, program and financial options.
5. **Secures Substantial Federal and Private Funding.** The system brings in millions of federal and private grant funds that are available exclusively to statewide higher education systems. These include GEAR UP, College Access Challenge Grant, Common Core State Standards, Reverse Transfer, and Degree Qualifications Profiles. This biennium, these grants have brought in more than \$11 million in new dollars for Oregon’s student success initiatives.

6. **Provides Centralized Coordination for Vital Policies and Programs.** OUS provides coordination from a single source with other education sectors and state partners such as the Department of Education, Community Colleges and Workforce Development, Veterans Affairs, Government to Government, MWESB, Economic Development, and Public Safety. Initiatives and outcomes include the Oregon Diploma, alignment of graduation requirements and admissions requirements, ease of transfer, provision of veterans' services at campuses, and policy and programs coordinated to increase MWESB contracting.
7. **Offers a Single Unified Voice to Policymakers in Salem.** OUS provides streamlined information and focused advocacy to policymakers regarding an array of higher education issues, including operating and capital construction budget requests. This centralized, unified voice saves valuable time and public resources that the Governor, Legislators, and their staffs would otherwise have to devote to mastering and coordinating the working details of each of the seven campuses.