



House Bill 3335
House Higher Education, Innovation and
Workforce Development Committee

Chair Read, Vice Chairs Whisnant and Gallegos, and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Ben Cannon, Executive Director for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

The HECC is supportive of seeing more degree pathway options that are clearly understood by all students, that meet current and future standards of rigor and quality, and that are useful for Oregon students in making swift and sure transitions from one institution to another, and from college to the workforce.

Currently, universities are able to award intermediate credentials that can be attained before a bachelor's degree and that are transferable among Oregon universities. The **Oregon Transfer Module (or OTM)** is 45 credits of lower division, general education courses.¹ Historically, a few Oregon universities have also awarded Associates degrees, but in limited areas and not in great numbers. It is our understanding that HB 3335 does not reflect an interest in "reverse transfer", rather it would have the HECC work with institutions to award a credential to be earned solely at a four-year institution.

The HECC wishes to work closely with all stakeholders to refine the General Education Credential pathways envisioned by this bill. Several questions would need to be addressed in examining this concept:

- Would these new intermediate credentials be linked to major fields of study?
- Would the new credentials be linked to, or be new versions of the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer, the Associate of General Studies, or Associate of Science Oregon Transfer?
- Would the new credentials be considered terminal certificates or degrees designed for students who plan to exit the university?
- Would these new credentials be considered part of the "middle 40" in 40/40/20?

¹ [http://handbook.ccwwebforms.net/handbook/programs-degrees-and-certificates/definitions/associate-degrees/oregon-transfer-module-\(otm\)](http://handbook.ccwwebforms.net/handbook/programs-degrees-and-certificates/definitions/associate-degrees/oregon-transfer-module-(otm))

Any new General Education Credential offered by the universities would also need to account for the emergence of other curricular innovations, such as major fields of study at community colleges which were recently approved in principle by a joint meeting of university and community college provosts. Moreover, Oregon employers should be consulted so as to make these intermediate credentials useful as a marker of proficiency in a given field or general preparation for the workforce.

Thank you for your attention and I would be happy to answer any questions.