



House Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee Senate Bill 143A | 27 April 2017

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Senate Bill 143, as it was originally introduced, directs the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs (ODVA) to develop an overall campus veteran program for state universities and community colleges that includes a campus veteran resource center and a campus veteran coordinator. The program would distribute grants to establish a campus program or to expand and enhance an existing program. The Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs would administer and award the grants, and provide training and technical assistance.

The Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee amended the bill. The amendments require the ODVA Veterans Affairs Advisory Committee, which is the advisory committee to ODVA, to review and consider Senate Bill 143 as introduced. The advisory committee would evaluate the merits of the bill, address funding priorities for implementation and make recommendations for legislation by February 1, 2018.

This briefing is on the original bill. ODVA encourages this Committee to amend the bill to language in SB 143 as introduced. SB 143 would have a meaningful impact on our student veterans and provide them with critical support at our state community colleges and universities. A strong campus veterans program can help attract and retain veterans and result in increasing and retaining federal financial assistance for veterans.

Background on SB 143 as Introduced

The purposes of campus veterans programs are to help Oregon veterans at three important transition stages.

- First, to successfully transition from military service to college life.
- Second, to successfully complete a certificate or degree program.
- Third, to successfully transition from college to the workforce and community.

Currently, five community colleges and universities both campus resource centers and full-time campus veteran resource coordinators..

- The centers provide a place for veterans get assistance and support from campus resource coordinators, connect the other veterans, study, and network.
- Campus veteran resource coordinators help veterans transition to campus life, support them on completing their education, and assist in the transition from the campus to the workforce.
- Campus veteran resource coordinators provide support and connect veterans with local state county and federal resources.
- One very important benefit for veterans is that resource coordinators serve as a critical link to the county veteran service officers who provide advocacy for veterans obtaining federal benefits.

Return on Investment

A strong campus veterans program can help attract and retain veterans and result in increasing and retaining federal financial assistance for veterans.



In 2015, Oregon veterans received from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs:

- Over \$2.6 billion in total benefits
- Over \$145.9 million in education benefits to attend community colleges, universities or certification and training programs.

Number of Veterans

- 5,876 = veterans receiving federal VA educational benefits at state universities and community colleges as of Fall 2016
- 7,625 = approximate total number of veterans at state universities and community colleges as of Fall 2016

Status of Current Programs

Universities. Six state universities have veteran resource centers: Oregon State University, Portland State University, University of Oregon, Southern Oregon University, Eastern Oregon University, and Western Oregon University. Three universities have a full-time veteran resource coordinator; three have a part-time coordinator. Oregon Institute of Technology is the only university with no veteran center or coordinator.

Community Colleges. Currently, there are 17 Oregon community colleges.

- Two have veteran resource centers and full-time coordinators: Portland C.C and Clackamas C.C. ; PCC has centers on three of its four campuses.
- Three community colleges have a veteran resource center only and no veteran coordinator: Central Oregon C.C., Lane C.C. and Linn-Benton C.C.
- One community college has a full-time veteran coordinator, but no veteran resource center: Chemeketa C.C.,
- Nine community colleges have no centers or coordinators.

Senate Bill 143 Implementation

The program is implemented through a grant program and a grant application process. Grants are awarded to establish a campus veteran program and resource coordinator or to enhance an existing program through grants administered through and supported by the ODVA.

The Legislature would determine the amount of the grants to be distributed to the community colleges and universities. If the Legislature funded grants totaling \$1 million to \$2 million, ODVA anticipates the need for one FTE, a Campus Veteran Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will develop and administer the grant program, award grants and maintain reports, provide training to veteran coordinators and staff, provide technical assistance in establishing programs, provide best practices and networking for coordinators, provide accountability for the outcomes. The fiscal impact, including personal services and services and supplies is \$239,000 for the biennium.

State of Oregon Community Colleges and Universities | Fall 2016
“Certified” Student Veterans, Campus Resource Centers, Campus Coordinators

	Universities	Vets Certified Dec. 2016*	# of . Veterans (total)*	Veteran Center	Veteran Coordinator	Notes
1.	Oregon State University	801	1,041	YES	YES	Enrolls over 1,000 veteran students/family members.. Veterans lounge in the Memorial Union. Veterans resource Center in Snell Hall. Full time coordinator.
2.	Portland State University	782	1,016	YES	YES	Full-time director and office manager and three VA federal work-study students who support the transition from “rucksack to backpack.”
3.	University of Oregon	370	481	YES	YES Part-time	Center: 4 computers, free printing. Coordinator is a graduate employee at .49 FTE fall-spring plus Student workers. Peer Advisors For Veteran Education program pairs new veterans with returning veterans. Half-day New Student Veteran orientation throughout the year.
4.	<i>Oregon Institute of Technology</i>	<i>141</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>Veteran support services embedded into student services programs. Veterans lounge. OIT ranked #2 for Best West Colleges for Veterans by US News & World Report.</i>
5.	Southern Oregon University	133	173	YES	YES Part-time	Center has 5 computers, 1 printer. Part-time coordinator is also certifying official. Employ six student veterans. Regular lunches for new veterans. Peer support and a free tutor. Resources for veterans and dependents.
6.	Western Oregon University	128	166	YES	YES	Veterans Success Center. Free: veterans only parking, MacBook rental, printing, storage lockers, study rooms, lounge area, Internet access. Memorial Day Banquet, new student orientation, monthly newsletter, campus outreach. Onsite county and state resources.
7.	Eastern Oregon University	92	120	YES	YES Part-time	Center is a student lounge; computer access. .5 FTE coordinator assists veterans face academic struggles. Free, intro Humanities class taught by a veteran for veterans: “When Two Worlds Collide.”
8.	<i>OHSU</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	
	TOTALS	2,498	3,246	6	3 FT 3 PT	

State of Oregon Community Colleges and Universities | Fall 2016
“Certified” Student Veterans, Campus Resource Centers, Campus Coordinators

	Community Colleges	Vets Certified Dec 2016*	Approximate # Veterans* (total)	Veteran Center	Veteran Coordinator	Notes
1.	Portland CC (4 campuses)	1,073	1,394			PCC has approximately 1,400 veterans.
	PCC: Sylvania			YES	YES	Center has computer stations, printing, work/study opportunities, meetings, activities, social events and safe space to study/relax. Full-time veteran coordinator.
	PCC: Rock Creek			YES	YES	Center has computer stations, printing, work/study opportunities, meetings, activities, social events and safe space to study/relax. Full-time veteran coordinator.
	PCC: Cascade			YES	YES	Center has computer stations, printing, work/study opportunities, meetings, activities, social events and safe space to study/relax. Part-time veteran coordinator.
	<i>PCC: Southeast</i>			<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	
2.	Central Oregon Community College	494	642	YES	<i>NO</i>	A place for veterans to relax, connect with other vets, discuss resources and to have a dedicated place. No coordinator.
3.	Lane Community College	337	438	YES	<i>NO</i>	Center offers PC and Mac computer stations, Internet access Wi-Fi and printer. Lounge study area, notebook computer loan program, and coffee. No coordinator.
4.	<i>Rogue Community College</i>	<i>236</i>	<i>307</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	
5.	Chemeketa Community College	226	293	<i>NO</i>	YES	Coordinator develops a number of events for veterans and assists with resources.
6.	<i>Mt Hood Community College</i>	<i>209</i>	<i>272</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	
7.	Clackamas Community College	202	262	YES	YES	Veteran’s coordinator also a certifying official, but primary duties are as coordinator. Second person is primarily certifying official.
8.	Linn-Benton Community College	202	262	YES	<i>NO</i>	Veterans Club began 2010, 30-50 members. Offers mentoring/camaraderie. Physical location spring 2016. No coordinator—volunteer veteran/ faculty advisor.
9.	<i>Umpqua Community College</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>126</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>NO</i>	

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10.	Treasure Valley CC	78	102	NO	NO	
11.	Klamath CC	77	100	NO	NO	
12.	Southwestern Oregon CC	57	74	NO	NO	
13.	Clatsop CC	39	51	NO	NO	
14.	Blue Mountain CC	37	48	NO	NO	
15.	Tillamook Bay CC	11	14	NO	NO	
16.	Columbia Gorge CC	3	4	NO	NO	
17.	Oregon Coast CC	0	0	NO	NO	
TOTALS		3,378	4,389	6 CC (8 total)	4 FT 1 PT	Note: Six community colleges have resource centers. PCC has centers on three of its four campuses, for a total of 8 veteran resource centers in Oregon.

GRAND TOTALS ALL UNIVERSITIES AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES	5,876	7,635	12 (14 TOTAL)	7 FT 4 PT	Note: Six community colleges have resource centers. PCC has centers on three of its four campuses, for a total of 8 veteran resource centers on community college campuses.
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*** Notes:**

- **Numbers of certified and approximate # veterans (total).** The number of certified veterans was provided to ODVA by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, and is based on students certified for Federal VA educational benefits as of Fall quarter 2016.
- **“Certified”** means veterans who are drawing a Federal VA Education benefit and does not reflect all veterans (see “approximate total veterans”) and could include a small number of dependents.
- **“Approximate Total # Veterans.”** It is difficult to estimate the number of veterans who are attending community colleges and universities in Oregon who are not receiving Federal VA educational benefits because the students are not “certified” and therefore not tracked. A rough estimate may be based on information from Portland Community College, stating that 1,073 veterans are certified; however, the college states that they serve approximately 1,400 veterans. *Therefore, the “approximate number” of total veterans is an estimation based on the number of certified veterans times a factor of 1.3.*