

SB 143
Oregon Public Universities
Campus Veterans Resources

The seven public universities support SB 143 which would establish a grant program to establish or supplement campus resources available to serve veteran students. We have assembled a brief summary of the resources and services already available across the seven campuses. At a later date we will be able to provide the Committee with more in-depth information for each campus with standardized funding figures.

For the purposes of today's hearing I am here to first, voice our support for this effort, and second, to provide a sense of whether campuses fall into the "a" or "b" category outlined in Section 1(4) of the bill.

"A" campuses: currently have "campus veteran resource centers and campus veteran resource coordinators." Grants for these campuses would provide "training for campus veteran coordinators, computer and other equipment and supplies, additional staff, veteran events, access to workforce and community resources that were not previously available and meeting other identified needs for the successful and continued operation of the existing centers and coordinators."

- Eastern Oregon University (EOU): Veteran students can access EOU's Veterans Resource Center at any time during normal business hours. The Veterans Resource Center provides a student lounge setting with computer access. Veterans services accounts for 50% of the EOU Military/Veterans Coordinator's FTE. The Coordinator, a veteran himself, works out of both EOU's regional center in Umatilla County and the main campus in La Grande. If veteran students are facing academic struggles, the Coordinator provides them with the assistance needed to succeed. In the Registrar's Office, 60% of the FTE for the Veterans Certifying Official is dedicated to veteran's services. A Humanities class entitled "When two worlds collide" is taught by a veteran and offered as an introductory course for student veterans on campus free of charge to assist with transitioning into college.
- Oregon State University (OSU): OSU currently enrolls over 1,300 veteran students and eligible family members using veterans' benefits. OSU funds a full FTE "Military and Veteran Resources Advisor" who is responsible for coordinating and assisting veterans services on campus. OSU serves and supports veteran students through coordination across multiple departments on campus. The university maintains a veterans lounge in the Memorial Union, and a Veterans Resource Center in Snell Hall.
- Portland State University (PSU): PSU currently maintains a Veterans Resource Center (VRC), which includes a director, office manager, and three VA federal work study students. The VRC connects student veterans, service members and their families with a variety of services specific to their individual needs, supports the transition "from rucksack to backpack," and help student veterans to connect with one another. The VRC also provides services to PSU faculty and administrators who seek to better understand the unique cultural differences found in the student veteran community and how we can all work together cohesively and respectfully for the success of the PSU community.
- University of Oregon (UO): UO's Student Veteran Center serves the student veteran community with a variety of resources and programs including a Peer Advisors for Veteran Education program that allows newly matriculating student veterans to be paired with returning student veterans to aid in their transition to the University. UO also coordinates a half-day New Student Veteran

Welcome/Orientation and various workshops throughout the year. UO also offers student veterans the use of four computers and free printing, as well as a common access card reader for students who are currently in the Reserves. Currently, the UO Student Veteran Center is staffed by a Graduate Employee acting as the Veteran Resource Coordinator at .49 FTE during fall, winter, and spring. It relies on student workers to keep the center open the remaining 20 hours a week.

- Southern Oregon University (SOU): SOU has a Veterans Resource Office, which provides resources for our veterans and their dependents. We have five computers, printing capabilities, faxing and scanning. We have a part-time coordinator who is also the certifying official for veteran's benefits. We have regular scheduled lunches for new veterans to connect with other veterans, build community and peer support for all students. In our space, we have a free tutor as well as offering onsite assistance for the VA application when applying for benefits and scholarship assistance. We employ six student veterans who work closely with new and returning students. Veterans resources are provided at a location within the Commuter Resource Center. Our coordinator works as the certifying official as well as the coordinator for the Commuter Resource Center. She/he is on location full-time, but has shared responsibilities.
- Western Oregon University (WOU): WOU has a Veteran's Success Center and a 1.0 FTE staff member who oversees the center and coordinates programming efforts and activities. The Center employs two students through the Veteran's Administration Work-Study program. Services provided include: Admissions application fee waiver, Voyager award extension, newly renovated and dedicated 878 square foot space for a veterans center, veterans only parking spaces located in close proximity to the Veterans Success Center, free MacBook Pro rental to student-veterans (in Veteran Success Center), formal seated and served Memorial Day Banquet, graduating student-veteran social and recognition night, new student-veterans orientation, student-veteran monthly electronic newsletter, student Veterans of America (SVA) student organization, student travel opportunities to SVA Conferences, Resident Adviser training for student-veteran culture competency on campus, campus outreach events for military specific holidays such as: Veterans Day, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Memorial Day, etc., and assistance with priority class registration. The Veterans Center provides free printing, free to use storage lockers, quiet study rooms, lounge area with TV and gaming consoles with internet access, refrigerator, microwave, and coffee station. Representatives from Worksource Oregon, Veterans Employment and Polk County Veteran Service Officer hold weekly office hours in the WOU Veteran's Success Center.

“B” campuses: currently do not have “campus veteran resource centers or campus veteran resource coordinators.” Grants for these campuses would establish new centers and recruit and employ coordinators.

- Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT): Oregon Tech has a VA certifying official in the Registrar's Office and the Student Veterans Program maintains a Veterans Lounge. Our veterans support services are embedded into our student services programs, to ensure that veterans receive comprehensive services. Our Director of Retention started a small bridge loan program to provide students no-interest short term loans in order to complete their term. While Oregon Tech does not have a separate veteran resource center or coordinator, we are ranked #2 for Best West Colleges for Veterans by U.S. News & World Report. Oregon Tech could be classified as an “A” campus to expand veterans' services within the comprehensive student services center, or as a “B” campus to establish a separate center and employ coordinators.