

From the desk of Representative
Teresa Alonso Leon



635 NE Dekum St, Portland, OR, 97211 | (503) 286-0477 | www.orstudents.org | @OregonStudents

Vote YES for Cultural Competency in Higher Education HB 2864

As directed by Oregon House Bill 3308 (2015), the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) convened a workgroup of various stakeholders to analyze and develop recommendations pertaining to addressing disparities in higher education through continuing education. The bill was a direct outcome of students sharing their concerns and describing time where they experienced microaggressions, racial slurs, and inappropriate stereotypes within our higher education public institutions. As a result, HB 3308 (2015) produced recommendations to address these disparities that will ultimately lead to more positive learning environments to foster greater student success.

The legislatively mandated workgroup included students, faculty, staff and administrators from community colleges and public universities, identified several key recommendations that are reflected in HB 2864. Under this concept, each campus will develop it's own process made up of students, faculty, staff and administrators; to craft cultural competency standards that would work best for their campus.



"So, the reason why I support HB 2864 is because I believe it will aid our underrepresented populations, populations that I swore an oath to protect... This bill would give us the opportunity to establish the much needed dialogue surrounding culture in our nation right down to our individual committees. By giving educators to tools to improve cultural competence in higher education, we are laying the foundations for acceptance and creating an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and included." - Brent Finkbeiner, ASPSU student Senate Chair, Student Veteran, Portland.

"I strongly believe that this is the right direction towards addressing quintessential issues on college campuses: safety, a strive for true equity and how that impacts our ability to be successful and in some cases survive. Cultural Competency would give students, faculty, staff and administrators a much needed responsibility to work together and push for addressing the disparities many traditionally marginalized communities face on a daily basis, such as racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, classism and ableism. Many of which I have faced and seen many students and faculty experience as well." – Mariana Paredones, Oregon Students of Color Co-Chair, HECC Student Commissioner, Eugene.