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## **Vote YES for Universal Credit Transfer HB 2998**

Universal credit transfer is an essential part of creating a more efficient and affordable higher education system in Oregon. There is a significant difference in the completion rates of students that begin their experience as a student at a public university, and those who begin their post-secondary career at a community college, prior to transferring accumulated credits to a public university.

Nationally, transfer students are more likely to be first-generation students, members of historically underrepresented groups, and/or financially constrained than direct-entry baccalaureate degree-seeking student populations. In Oregon, 63% of transfer students entered universities with fewer credits than they had earned at Oregon community colleges with 35% of transfer students losing more than one term of work (15 credits). Thirty-five percent of the 2007 cohort who "transferred" into an Oregon public university after starting at a community college completed a bachelor's degree within the six-year timeframe. That's below the national average of 42%, California's rate of 50%, and Washington's rate of 55%

A primary barrier to transfer reported by Oregon transfer students include a lack of coordinated, meaningful, and accurate information about transfer requirements. Gus Smith, a 24-year-old transfer student himself, shares his story below:

"I have been a devoted student and will maintain the whole of my credits upon transfer from my Lane to the U of O. My credits however, are not considered 'upper division' meaning that courses taken at Lane, in terms of their value, are worth less compared to some identical courses offered at a four-year university, which means I will inevitably have to repeat those same courses after my transfer. I attended a community college in order to save money, to take courses I knew would be both useful and economical to my personal goals. Yet, if I knew the extent to which I would be taking identical courses adjusted only to the increased cost of a four-year university, I would have welcomed taking on the increased debt for the sake of my own time as I fear entering the workforce older than other undergraduates. Supporting Universal Credit Transfer in order to create an effective and accessible program for students of all educational levels allows them to pursue their own avenue of education without fear of wasted time and money."

HB 2998 requires community colleges and public universities to develop unified statewide transfer agreement based on foundational curricula for each major course of study and requires community colleges to provide specified information to student when student attending the college informs the school that they intend to transfer to a public university. Vote YES to support transfer students and help in creating a more efficient and affordable pathway through higher education.

Sources: <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/tracking-transfer-institutional-state-effectiveness.pdf>  
<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2017R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/134361>

The Oregon Student Association (OSA) is a statewide, student-led advocacy and organizing non-profit which was established in 1975 to represent, serve, and protect the collective interests of students in postsecondary education in Oregon.