

## Senate Bill 3

*Permits community colleges to offer applied baccalaureate (AB) degree programs under specified conditions and upon receiving approval from Higher Education Coordinating Commission.*

### Current Strategies to Improve Access to Baccalaureate Degrees:

- Alliance institutions are currently investing in programs to work with Oregon community colleges to develop pathways to baccalaureate degree programs – Oregon universities are already serving these community college students, who earn technical degrees at the community college level.
  - Example: Pacific University is working with several Oregon community colleges to develop pathways to baccalaureate degrees, some actually on-site at their institutions. Pacific offers five applied or professional degrees: Bachelor of Dental Hygiene (BSDH); Bachelor of Education (BED); Bachelor of Health Sciences (BHS); Bachelor of Social Work (BSW); and Bachelor of Applied Vision Science (BAVS).
- Regarding rural access, multiple Oregon schools have online programs that are not at capacity.
  - Examples: (1) Linfield College offers an all online RN-to-BSN program and Central Oregon Community College's ADN graduates are guaranteed admission to it. (2) OHSU has in-seat programs in four rural parts of the state. (3) One of Pacific University's degree programs (the BHS) is offered primarily through distance education, allowing students to complete it no matter where they are located. (4) Three of Pacific's applied degrees have direct pathways from Oregon community colleges, including offering programs on or extremely near partner community college campuses.
- The existing higher education institutions in Oregon (both private and public) have the capacity to absorb more students.

### Related to State Funding:

- State funding would be required for Oregon community colleges to build and offer AB degrees.
- A [2010 report](#) included a fiscal analysis for *planning* for community college AB programs of almost \$700,000. Certification of each AB program will cost an additional \$30,000 to \$100,000.
- The introduction of AB degree programs at community colleges could have an unpredictable effect on the distribution of state funding between them. Community colleges with fewer resources could receive a smaller share of available community college funds over time.
- The tuition and financial aid structure at Alliance institutions is such that most community college transfer or articulation students receive significant need-based aid packages.
- In an effort to respond to 40-40-20 and local workforce needs, Alliance institutions have invested in both program offerings and financial aid.

### Specific to SB 3 & ABs in Oregon:

- SB 3 does not require community colleges to research similar program availability in the state and submit this information to the HECC.
- SB 3 does not provide details on needed analysis of the actual student demand for particular degrees and school resources required to implement.
- More sideboards and safeguards are needed to assure there is a balance between statewide needs and current programs. The legislature must have more control.
- A more effective and financially sustainable means to achieve access for students is to increase the amount of money allocated to those pursuing higher education through the Oregon Opportunity Grant.

### Possible Amendments to SB 3:

- Safeguards for current programs
  - Mileage radius from current degrees offered
  - Limiting types of programs – i.e. exempt nursing
- Sideboards for HECC decision making
  - Costs at community colleges, including large costs of accreditation, considered in decision
  - Degree availability nearby
  - Better definition of “unmet need”