



MEMORANDUM

Prepared for: Oregon State Senate
Regarding: Review of Executive Appointments
Date: May 18, 2022

LPRO: LEGISLATIVE POLICY AND RESEARCH OFFICE

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

The Governor has appointed the following individuals to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, subject to Senate confirmation:¹

New Appointees

Emily Simnitt of Eugene
Fernando Rojas-Galván of Portland
Natalie Arnot of Klamath Falls

Term

07-01-2022 – 06-30-2024
07-01-2022 – 06-30-2024
07-01-2022 – 06-30-2024

Statutory Authority

[ORS 350.050 \(2021\)](#).

Statement of Economic Interest²

Required.

Composition³

The commission consists of 15 Oregon residents who are well informed concerning the principles of higher education:

- one each from Oregon's five congressional districts (FAJARDO (CD1), EDWARDS (CD2), CROSS (CD3), DEVLIN (CD4) and HAMANN (CD5));
- four members of the general public (ADAMS, BECKER, LUJAN-VALERIO and ROWE);
- one undergraduate student at a public university (**ARNOT**);
- one graduate student at a public university (SIPELLI);
- one faculty member at a public university (**SIMNITT**);
- one student at a community college (VALDOVINOS TORRES);
- one faculty member at a community college (**ROJAS-GALVÁN**); and,
- one staff person from either a community college or a public university (MATIAS).

¹ [Or. Const. art. III, §4](#); [ORS 171.562 and 171.565 \(2021\)](#).

² [ORS 244.050 \(2021\)](#).

³ [ORS 350.050 to 350.060 \(2021\)](#); and see [ORS 182.100 \(2021\)](#) for affirmative action policy and [ORS 236.115 \(2021\)](#) for diversity criteria.

Appointees representing congressional districts and the public serve four years, and higher education appointees serve two; all are eligible for reappointment. Official organizations at community colleges and public universities may make recommendations for appointees to higher education positions. Appointees may be removed for cause after notice and public hearing, but not more than three within a period of four years unless it is for corrupt conduct in office. The commission selects its chair and vice chair, meets at least once every three months, and a majority constitutes a quorum.

Duties⁴

The commission works to ensure access to post-secondary education and academic success. It also convenes groups, institutions and other stakeholders across the spectrum of public and private higher education. Its duties include:

- establishing educational attainment goals for adults not currently enrolled in a post-secondary training program in coordination with the State Workforce and Talent Development Board;
- appointing an executive director;
- developing goals for the state post-secondary education system and for student access programs;
- determining strategic investments to achieve goals;
- coordinating the post-secondary elements of data collection with the advice and recommendations of others as appropriate to construct a longitudinal data system and administering that system;
- adopting a strategic plan to achieve post-secondary education goals;
- making recommendations to the governor for a consolidated higher education agency request budget aligned with the strategic plan each biennium;
- approving or denying any significant change to the academic program of a community college or public university;
- approving mission statements adopted by public universities, reviewing specified proposed fee increases, advising the governor and the legislature with respect to university governance issues, and authorizing degrees;
- authorizing degrees offered by independent post-secondary institutions;
- overseeing the regulation of career schools;
- conducting statewide longitudinal studies and reporting on early learning, kindergarten through grade 12 education, higher education, and workforce programs in coordination with the Department of Education, the Employment Department, and others;
- implementing a review process to take appropriate action on student complaints;
- ensuring implementation of diverse educator recruitment plans;
- working with institutions of higher education to carry out specified goals and appoint an advisory committee to coordinate implementation;
- administering specified funds and grant programs;

⁴ [ORS 350.018 to 350.640 \(2021\)](https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/commission.aspx): Higher Education Coordinating Commission, *Commission*, <https://www.oregon.gov/highered/about/Pages/commission.aspx> (last visited May 15, 2022).

- monitoring and reporting on participation of specified groups in higher education, including veterans and current and former foster children;
- conducting annual reviews of each public institution of higher education with respect to the employment of all employee groups at the institution; and
- developing standards related to the transfer and award of education credits in consultation with community colleges and public universities.

The commission may also:

- establish advisory and technical committees;
- enter into contracts and agreements;
- refer the investigation and resolution of a student complaint as appropriate to the nature and content of any allegations made;
- accept donated money or property;
- apply for funds from any source and arrange for receipt as appropriate; and
- prescribe tests and other measures or procedures to evaluate high school equivalency tests.

Executive Appointments Board Roster

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Agency: Oregon Department of Education
Authorization: ORS 350.050 & ORS 351.715
Members: Min: 14 Max: 15
Term Length: 4 years Limit: 2
Senate confirmation required? Yes

Policy Area: Education

Board Contact:

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Current Appointments:

Member Name and Address (Alphabetical)

Rukaiyah N Adams At-Large (voting) Term(s): 11-19-2021 - 06-30-2025	Position Number: 4
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Natalie Arnot University Student Term(s): 07-01-2022 - 06-30-2024	Position Number: 13
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Vanessa A Becker At Large (Voting) Term(s): 07-01-2019 - 06-30-2023 01-01-2018 - 06-30-2019	Position Number: 5
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Terry L Cross, Chair CD3 (voting) Term(s): 07-01-2019 - 06-30-2023 11-20-2015 - 06-30-2019	Position Number: 1
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Richard Devlin Term(s): 03-01-2022 - 02-28-2026	Position Number: 6
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Helen L Edwards CD2 (Voting) Term(s): 10-02-2020 - 06-30-2023	Position Number: 7
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Arnel M Fajardo, PhD CD 1 (Voting) Term(s): 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2025	Position Number: 3
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Gregory J Hamann CD 5; (voting) Term(s): 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2025	Position Number: 8
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Executive Appointments Board Roster

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Member Name and Address (Alphabetical)

Policy Area: Education

Rico Lujan-Valerio At Large (Voting) Term(s): 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2025 12-01-2020 - 06-30-2021	Position Number: 2
Aislyn Matias Faculty Term(s): 03-01-2022 - 02-29-2024	Position Number: 14
Fernando Rojas-Galván Community College Faculty Term(s): 07-01-2022 - 06-30-2024	Position Number: 11
Sandy Rowe, Vice-Chair At Large (voting) Term(s): 07-01-2021 - 06-30-2025 09-25-2017 - 06-30-2021	Position Number: 9
Emily Simnitt Faculty Term(s): 07-01-2022 - 06-30-2024	Position Number: 10
Motutama Sipelli Graduate Student Term(s): 03-01-2022 - 02-29-2024	Position Number: 12