

Memorandum

PREPARED FOR: Senate Committee on Rules
DATE: February 2, 2026
BY: Leslie Porter, Legislative Analyst
RE: Legislative Review of Executive Appointments



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

Reappointments

Richard Devlin of Tualatin
Jennifer Smith of Eugene

Terms

Devlin: March 1, 2026 – June 30, 2030
Smith: July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028

Appointment/Confirmation Authority

[ORS 350.050 \(2025\)](#)

Statement of Economic Interest²

Required.

Composition³

The commission consists of 15 Oregon residents serving as voting members who are well informed concerning the principles of higher education. Membership includes

- one public university undergraduate student (DAVIS-BOUCHER);
- one public university graduate student (NJUE);
- one public university faculty member (SIMNITT);
- one community college student (LAWSON);
- one community college faculty member (MIDDLETON);
- one public university or community college nonfaculty staff member (**SMITH**);
- one member from each of the six congressional districts (FAJARDO (CD1), YAMASAKI (CD2), KOCHER (CD3), HAMANN (CD4), PROCTER ANDREWS (CD5), **DEVLIN** (CD6)); and
- three members of the general public (DEMBROW, EDWARDS, MARTINEZ).

¹ [Or. Const. art. III sect. 4](#), [ORS 171.562](#) and [171.565 \(2025\)](#).

² [ORS 244.050 \(2025\)](#).

³ [ORS 350.050 and 350.060 \(2025\)](#); [ORS 182.100 \(2025\)](#) for affirmative action policy; [ORS 236.115 \(2025\)](#) for diversity criteria.

Appointees from the congressional districts and from the general public serve four-year terms and the remainder serve two-year terms. The Governor may, for cause, remove any member after notice and a public hearing, but not more than three members shall be removed within a period of four years, unless it is for corrupt conduct in office. The commission selects its chair and vice chair. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum. The commission must meet at least once every three months.

Duties⁴

The commission works to ensure access to post-secondary education and academic success. The commission must:

- establish educational attainment goals for certain adults, and develop goals for post-secondary education;
- appoint an executive director;
- determine strategic investments, and adopt a strategic plan;
- coordinate post-secondary data collection and administer a longitudinal data system;
- recommend a consolidated higher education agency request;
- adopt rules governing the distribution of appropriations;
- approve or deny any significant change to academic programs;
- approve public university mission statements; review fee increases; advise the Governor and Legislative Assembly about university governance issues; and authorize degrees offered by independent post-secondary institutions;
- oversee the licensing of career schools;
- implement a review process for, and appropriately act on, student complaints;
- advise on specified policies, and administer specified funds and grant programs;
- ensure the implementation of diverse educator recruitment plans;
- make specified reports to the Legislative Assembly;
- monitor and report on participation of specified groups in higher education;
- conduct annual reviews of each public institution of higher education; and
- develop standards for transferring and awarding education credits.

⁴ [ORS 350.018 to 350.640 \(2025\)](#).



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Agency: **Higher Education Coordinating Commission**

Policy Area: **Education**

Authorization: **ORS 350.050**

Board Admin: **Ben Cannon**

Min Members: **14** Max Members: **15**

Address:

Term Length: **4** Term Limit: **2**

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Senate Confirmation Required?: **Yes**

255 Capitol Street NE

Salem, OR 97310

(503) 947-2379

Ben.CANNON@hecc.oregon.gov

Current Appointments

Davis-Boucher, Demetrius

Term(s): **7/1/2026 - 6/30/2028**

Undergraduate Student

11/20/2025 - 6/30/2026

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **1**

Njue, Erick

Term(s): **10/1/2025 - 6/30/2027**

Graduate Student (CD 4)

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **2**

Simnitt, Emily

Term(s): **7/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

Public University Faculty Member

7/1/2022 - 6/30/2024

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **3**

Lawson, Devon

Term(s): **10/1/2025 - 6/30/2027**

Community College Student (CD4)

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **4**

Middleton, Mary

Term(s): **10/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

Faculty - Community College

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **5**

Smith, Jennifer

Term(s): **7/1/2026 - 6/30/2028**

Nonfaculty Staff (Public University or Community College)

7/1/2024 - 6/30/2026

Appointed By: Governor

Position Number: **6**

Mrs Edwards, Helen L Term(s): **7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**
Public Member **3/1/2025 - 6/30/2025**
Appointed By: Governor **10/2/2020 - 6/30/2023**
Position Number: **14**

Mr Fajardo, Arnel M PhD Term(s): **7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**
CD 1 **7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025**
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **7**

Ms Yamasaki, Gayle S Term(s): **10/5/2023 - 6/30/2027**
CD 2
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **8**

Kocher, Evelyn Term(s): **10/5/2023 - 6/30/2027**
CD 3
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **9**

Dr Hamann, Gregory J Term(s): **7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**
CD 4 **7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025**
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **10**

Procter Andrews, Jennifer Term(s): **2/16/2024 - 6/30/2027**
CD 5
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **11**

Devlin, Richard Term(s): **3/1/2026 - 6/30/2030**
CD 6 **3/1/2022 - 2/28/2026**
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **12**

Martinez, Theresa Term(s): **2/16/2024 - 6/30/2027**
Public Member
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **13**

Dembrow, Michael Term(s): **10/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**
CD 3
Appointed By: Governor
Position Number: **15**

Vacant Positions