

Affordability

The Legislature added \$43 million additional dollars to the Oregon Student Assistance Commission (OSAC) budget, adopted and funded a new financial aid model known as the Shared Responsibility Model (SRM), and made strides to deal with the price of textbooks.

This session, legislators passed an innovative new model for need-based aid. The Shared Responsibility Model uses the existing state grant program, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, to maximize dollars at the family, local, institutional, state, and federal levels.

The model is based on a methodology that considers the amount a student can earn based on a reasonable number of work hours, the resources of the family and qualified federal grants before determining the state's share of meeting that student's financial needs. More community college students will qualify for financial aid under this new plan and community college students can expect to receive higher award amounts. Community college students who attend school half-time or more are eligible for funding.

Senate Bill 365 was passed late in session after numerous discussions with publishers. The bill gives faculty members more information when ordering textbooks and other materials for classes. The bill requires "unbundling" textbook products from available ancillary materials and requires publishers to offer individual pieces as instructors designate their need. The bill also requires publishers to inform faculty members about updates for the materials being purchased, when those updates would be effective, and how long the specific material will be available.

One bill of note that did not pass was House Bill 3424, which would have prohibited community colleges from increasing tuition, fees, and other charges. This bill never received a hearing.

Financial Aid

SB 334 – Relating to student assistance

Effective Date: July 17, 2007

Chapter: 802 (2007 Laws)

Directs Oregon Student Assistance Commission to base method of determining state share of education costs on student share, family share and amount expected from federal government.

Status: Governor signed

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0300.dir/sb0334.en.pdf>

HB 2208 – Relating to benefits for performing military service

Effective Date: July 31, 2007

Chapter: 857 (2007 Laws)

Makes veterans enrolled part-time in course of study or professional training eligible for state financial aid.

Status: Governor signed

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2200.dir/hb2208.en.pdf>

Textbooks

SB 365 – Relating to textbooks

Effective Date: January 1, 2008

Chapter: 582 (2007 Laws)

Requires college textbook publishers to provide prospective adopters of particular textbook or set of textbooks with specified information regarding products.

Status: Governor signed

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0300.dir/sb0365.en.pdf>

NOT PASSED

HB 2586 – Relating to education

Creates Task Force on Textbook Costs.

Status: In committee upon adjournment

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2500.dir/hb2586.intro.pdf>

HB 3424 – Relating to higher education

Prohibits State Board of Higher Education, board of education of community college and Oregon Health and Science University Board of Directors from increasing tuition, fees and other charges imposed on residents of Oregon.

Status: In committee upon adjournment

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb3400.dir/hb3424.intro.pdf>

Local Boards

Ethical issues raised at the state and national levels regarding relationships between lobbyists, organizations, and policymakers greatly influenced the 2007 legislative session. The passage of Senate Bill 10 and HB 2595 marked a critical change in the interactions between lobbyists and policymakers in Oregon. Senate Bill 10 changes regulations governing public officials, lobbyists and lobbying interests, specifically with regard to funding of the Government Standards and Practices Commission, regulating gift, meals and travel expenditures for public officials, and the expenditures that may be made on behalf of public officials, including legislators and community college board members. The bill will go into effect on January 1, 2008. A lawsuit was recently filed challenging the gift limitations as an unconstitutional limit on free speech. Many unanswered questions remain as to how this legislation will be implemented.

In a moment of honor this session, House Concurrent Resolution 7 was passed, highlighting the lifetime accomplishments of long-time Portland Community College board member Doreen Margolin. Both the House and the Senate took time to reflect and applaud Doreen's many life accomplishments and her influential role on Oregon's community colleges. Doreen was a prior president of OCCA and was a major leader in elevating OCCA's profile amongst the legislature. Doreen's family members were present during the floor discussions in each chamber.

Ethics

HB 2595 – Relating to government ethics

Effective Date: July 31, 2007

Chapter: 865 (2007 Laws)

Changes name of Oregon Government Standards and Practices Commission to Oregon Government Ethics Commission.

Status: Governor signed

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hb2500.dir/hb2595.en.pdf>

SB 10 – Relating to government ethics

Effective Date: July 31, 2007

Chapter: 877 (2007 Laws)

Directs Oregon Government Standards and Practices Commission (GSPC) to charge public bodies, special government bodies, local governments and local service districts proportionate amounts for purposes of funding activities of commission. Requires quarterly filing of expenditure statements by lobbyists and directs the commission to make the statements available on the internet. Increases penalties from \$1000 to \$5000 for violations of lobbying or government ethics law. Prohibits former legislators from lobbying during the first regular session out of the Legislative Assembly. Sets monetary limit on gifts received by public officials from people with legislative or administrative interests of \$50. Exempts certain food, beverage, travel, lodging, and receptions from the definition of gift. Modifies requirements for contents of statement of economic interest. Requires public officials and candidates to report specified information quarterly.

Modifies reporting requirements for honoraria. Authorizes public official to establish legal expense trust fund to defray certain legal expenses upon approval of the GSPC.

Status: Governor signed. Most changes to the law go into effect January 1, 2008.

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/sb0001.dir/sb0010.en.pdf>

Board Members

HCR 7 – In memoriam: Doreen Margolin, 1947-2007.

Recognizes Portland Community College Board Member, Doreen Margolin, for her outstanding service to community colleges, students, the community, and the State of Oregon.

Status: Filed with the Secretary of State

For the full text of the measure:

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/07reg/measpdf/hcr1.dir/hcr0007.en.pdf>