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University System Enrollment Higher than '04, but Growth Remains Slow

Ten year growth of 31% and record increases in degrees reflect state demand for college grads

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PORTLAND, November 16 – Oregon University System's fall 2005 enrollment reached a record 80,888 students, although growth continued to be slow compared with earlier years in the decade, showing a 1% increase over fall 2004. This is higher than last year's growth of 0.6% for the System's seven public universities, but lower than the growth of 1.9% and 5.7% experienced in 2003 and 2002, respectively.

Over the last ten years, OUS has experienced significant growth, adding almost 19,300 students into the System, roughly the equivalent of a campus the size of Oregon State University. "Demand for college graduates will continue to strengthen as Oregon's economy rebounds," said George Pernsteiner, chancellor of the Oregon University System. "It is critical that Oregon focus on growing-our-own highly qualified, job-ready graduates. Supporting our established and new industries with local talent keeps our communities strong, balanced and stable. Reducing the need to import employees from out-of-state and international markets reduces industry costs, and enables Oregonians to compete for top positions," added Pernsteiner.

System-wide enrollment at fourth-week fall 2005 showed an increase of 822 students over 2004 for all seven campuses and one branch campus. This includes 65,810 undergraduates, an increase of 0.9% or 576 students over last year at this time, but slightly lower growth than the 1.1% seen in 2004. Graduate students increased 1.7% over last year to 15,078, a rebound from the 1.4% decrease seen in 2004, and an all time high. Across the System, the number of newly admitted freshmen was up only marginally, to 9,825 this year from 9,730 in fall 2004, and down slightly in those from Oregon. Newly admitted undergraduates overall total 16,902 this year, up from 16,890 in fall 2004.

"Participation rates from Oregon high schools declined slightly, in spite of the increasing evidence of the need for a college education in the global economy," said Bob Kieran, director of Institutional Research for the OUS. "While the Governor, Legislature and the Board of Higher Education worked diligently to nearly double the Oregon Opportunity Grant, the session ended too late in the year to help enrollments this fall. With state need-based aid being extended to part-time students in fall 2006, and an increase in the number of full-time grant recipients, we hope to see improvement in access for low- and moderate-income high school students beginning next year," Kieran said.

Eastern Oregon University saw the largest percentage increase of the seven OUS institutions at 5.8% (195 student increase) over last year to 3,533 students. Portland State University experienced the largest increase in student numbers with 529 more than 2004 (a 2.3% increase). Western Oregon University rebounded from the 5.2% decline in enrollment seen in 2004 to an increase of 2.2% in 2005. Oregon State University and University of Oregon enrollments remained relatively flat, with both increasing less than 1%; while OSU-Cascades campus in Bend increased enrollment by 53 students to 491. Oregon Institute of Technology saw a slight decrease of 22 students from last year, and Southern Oregon University saw a 3.3% decrease in enrollment, half the rate as was seen in 2004.

Student diversity showed some positive trends, with Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native students showing the highest enrollment growth of 6.9% and 6.7%, respectively, from fall 2004 to 2005. African American student enrollment increased at a rate of 1.6% over the prior year. Asian/Pacific American student enrollment decreased by 2.6% in 2005. International students increased by 1.2% in 2005, rebounding from last year's decrease of 4.1%. Caucasian student enrollment increased by 0.2% from 2004 to 2005.

"Although this year's growth was moderate, the steady, cumulative enrollment growth over the past several years has produced a robust pipeline of students," Kieran said. "This has continued the strong growth in the last few years in graduating classes, the largest in OUS history." The 2005 graduating class included 18,769 degrees and certificates, 2.5% more than the prior year, and a three-year increase of almost 24%.

Fall 2005 Headcount Enrollment 4th Week Totals				
Oregon University System				
Institution	Fall 2005	Fall 2004	# Change Fall '04 to Fall '05	% Change Fall '04 to Fall '05
Eastern Oregon University	3,533	3,338	195	5.8%
Oregon Institute of Technology	3,351	3,373	-22	-0.7%
Oregon State University - Corvallis	19,236	19,159	77	0.4%
Oregon State University - Cascades	491	438	53	12.1%
Portland State University	24,015	23,486	529	2.3%
Southern Oregon University	4,989	5,161	-172	-3.3%
University of Oregon	20,394	20,339	55	0.3%
Western Oregon University	4,879	4,772	107	2.2%
OUS System Total	80,888	80,066	822	1.0%
Undergraduates	65,810	65,234	576	0.9%
Graduates (includes Professional*)	15,078	14,832	246	1.7%
* Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy and Law Source: OUS Institutional Research Services				

Oregon University System (OUS) comprises seven distinguished public universities, reaching more than one million people each year through on-campus classes, statewide public services and lifelong learning. The Oregon State Board of Higher Education, the statutory governing board of OUS, is composed of eleven members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Oregon State Senate. For additional information, go to www.ous.edu.

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Eastern Oregon University | Oregon Institute of Technology | Oregon State University | Portland State University | Southern Oregon University | University of Oregon | Western Oregon University | Oregon Health & Science University - Affiliated

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