Q&A on Oregon University System Transition,
November 1, 2013

Q1: Will the State Board of Higher Education continue as a Board after July 1, 2014?
A1: Yes. The Board will govern the four Technical/Regional (TRU) universities in the Oregon University System: Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Southern Oregon University, and Western Oregon University, pending any legislative changes.

Q2: Will the name Oregon University System go away after June 30, 2014?
A2: The name “Oregon University System” currently remains in Oregon Revised Statutes and pending any legislative change in February 2014, will consist of Eastern Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University and the Office of the Chancellor as of July 1, 2014.

Q3: Will the Chancellor’s Office exist in name or function after June 30, 2014?
A3: The Office of the Chancellor continues to exist beyond June 30, 2014 pending any additional change in the February 2014 legislative session. It will be a much smaller enterprise supporting the State Board of Higher Education and the technical/regional universities.

Q4: How will the State Board of Higher Education function be supported after June 30, 2014, and what will its authorities be?
A4: The State Board of Higher Education will continue to be supported by the Chancellor’s Office (or a similar central administrative unit depending on legislative changes) after June 30, 2014. The Board will govern the four technical/regional universities in the OUS and has authority to set tuition, develop budget requests, hire and evaluate the university presidents, among other authorities. New members may be appointed to reflect the new constitution of the System.

Q5: Will the title of "Chancellor" go away after June 30, 2014?
A5: The Office of the Chancellor continues to exist beyond June 30, 2014 pending any additional change in the February 2014 legislative session, as does the title of “Chancellor.”

Q6: What types of authorities will the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) assume from the Chancellor’s Office and the State Board of Higher Education?
A6: House Bill 3120, which passed in the 2013 legislative session and amended the charge of the HECC, outlines specific duties for the newly constituted commission. The commission is now charged with making a comprehensive funding request to the Governor for all postsecondary institutions, allocating the appropriation that the legislature makes to these institutions, approving significant changes to academic programs, and, for the public universities, approving mission statements and degree programs. The HECC also assumes an advisory role with regard policy matters facing postsecondary institutions. While the HECC has final authority over the funding request to the Governor, allocation of the legislative appropriation, approval of significant academic changes, mission statements, and degree programs, it is not yet defined how individual governing boards—including the State Board of Higher Education for the four smaller institutions—will present these matters for HECC consideration. For example, the HECC must consult the postsecondary institutions on administrative rules governing both allocation of appropriation and significant changes to academic programs.
Q7: Will the public resources on the OUS website, such as information for prospective and transfer students, system-wide data and reports, and legislative resources for example, be available on another website after July 1, 2014?
A7: OUS will be working with the HECC, the Shared Services entity, and the campuses to provide relevant information for use on their websites if they wish to use it.

Q8: Will there still be a centrally located audit division for the seven universities similar to what exists now in the Chancellors Office?
A8: No. Internal Audit serves a university governance function and as such, each institution or collection of institutions with their own governing boards will have their own audit division.

Q9: What types of centralized services will be provided through the Shared Services entity, and when will these begin?
A9: The university presidents’ Shared Services Work Group is recommending that payroll, benefits, financial reporting, risk management, labor relations, and possibly others, continue to be shared among the seven universities. These are services that are already being provided to the seven universities and we anticipate a seamless transition without service interruption prior to June 30, 2014.

Q10: Will the institutional boards for Oregon State University, Portland State University, and University of Oregon have the same authorities as the State Board of Higher Education on July 1, 2014.
A10: While the bulk of the authorities remain congruent, Senate Bill 270 which passed in the 2013 legislative session removed UO, OSU, and PSU from the many authorities conferred on the State Board of Higher Education and created a new scheme of authorities for those three institutions. Legislative counsel is waiting until future legislative sessions to determine if UO, OSU, PSU will be removed from ORS Chapter 351 entirely or if, depending on what happens to the four smaller institutions remaining in the Oregon University System, there will be a way to include the three larger institutions in a statutory chapter governing higher education generally.

Q11: Will Oregon public higher education data still be collected and accessible in a central place, to fulfill both federal data requirements and systemic data on OUS performance, students, faculty, financial and other data?
A11: OUS is working with HECC to provide information on the many reporting functions currently performed by OUS. The campuses will likely take on some of the reporting requirements and may elect to take on all reporting requirements. We also expect that HECC will continue to collect some data from all campuses. It is still to be determined if HECC or another entity(ies) will coordinate legislative data requests, etc.

Q12: Will OUS' relationship with community colleges change?
A12: Oregon's public universities will continue to have very strong relationships with our community college partners in order to facilitate student transfer opportunities. With the HECC there to focus on post-secondary collaboration, there may be further advances in programs and services that serve student needs and lead to more degrees, and make progress toward the 40-40-20 goal.

Q13: Will the federally funded Gear Up program continue to be administered by the Chancellor's Office after July 2014?
A13: The current GEAR UP grant will end on July 14, 2014, and Chancellor’s Office will no longer administer the grant. The Chancellor’s Office is working on transferring the responsibility for GEAR UP to a new fiscal agent for the grant and anticipate having that in place by the end of this year.

Q14: How will academic program approval currently done through the OUS Provosts’ Council and the State Board of Higher Education be done after July 1, 2014.

A14: The Chancellor’s Office is working closely with the HECC to understand the program approval process envisioned by HECC and how the process will operate the same or differently from the current process. It is expected that the Provosts’ Council will continue to meet and make recommendations for program approvals to the HECC.