



Background

The future of Greater Portland and of Oregon is linked to education above all else. The success of the Portland Metropolitan area depends upon education that enhances the capacity of the region to sustain economic vitality, guide urban growth, sustain and enhance environmental quality, and strengthen cultural vitality. The success of the region depends upon a higher education system that prepares all students for constructive roles in a highly competitive and changing world and which clearly identifies paths that students can follow to achieve their potential as income producers and as human beings.

The Portland Metropolitan area is the population center, the hub of economic activity, and the cultural leader of our state. The Portland Metropolitan area also contributes financial and other support to the rest of the state. Just as the future of Oregon will determine the future of Portland, so will the future of Portland determine the future of our state.

Portland has a rich endowment of public postsecondary education resources, including Portland State University, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland Community College, Clackamas Community College and Mt. Hood Community College. In addition, the Portland region is served by important programs from the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, Oregon Institute of Technology and many superior private colleges. In spite of this rich endowment of higher education resources, questions persist as to the adequacy, capacity and coordination of postsecondary programs in the region and the manner in which the area's growing research needs can be best addressed to meet the needs of a developing economy, a growing workforce and the cultural amenities needed to serve its growing and increasingly diverse population.

A global economy characterized by intensifying world economic competition places greater pressure on Oregon and Portland to sharpen its higher education strategies in this important metropolitan area. For Oregon to succeed in this competitive environment Portland must have comprehensive integrated higher education programs and services necessary to ensure that:

- **Accessible and affordable quality higher education services are available** to serve a growing and increasingly diverse population;
- **Increasing numbers of students graduate** with vocational, associate, bachelor, graduate and professional degrees to serve the citizenship and workforce needs of Oregon's business, industry and public employment sectors now and in the future;
- **Increased research and knowledge are created** to spawn new start-ups as well as to ensure the continued competitiveness of current businesses and industries in the region;

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

- **Enhanced community engagement and cultural amenities are available** to ensure that the metropolitan area continues to attract and retain citizens and industry necessary to support and improve upon the quality of life in the metropolitan region.

These four essential components of higher education programs and services must be enhanced to ensure an economically vibrant and livable Portland, and therefore a robust economy for Oregon. A review of the ways and means to adequately serve the educational, research and public service needs of the Portland Metropolitan area is necessary to make informed decisions for the future. These decisions will influence the deployment of current resources, the investment of new resources, and the roles and functions of the educational entities that exist in Portland today. The sum of the parts should be greater than the whole; however, this can only be true if institutions collaborate and complement one another in synergistic ways functioning as a coordinated educational enterprise in order to serve these needs now and into the future.

Subcommittee Charge and Scope of Work

This subcommittee will develop analysis and options to inform the deliberations of the Strategic Initiatives Committee of the State Board of Higher Education. The scope of the subcommittee's review will obviously include all public institutions of higher education that currently offer programs and services in the Portland Metropolitan area. However, the work must also consider what private providers of higher education programs and services bring to the region.

The outcome of this committee's work should not be a total reinvention of higher education programs and services in Portland. Rather the committee should focus on building from current strengths and programs to address the current gaps that exist in research capacity and production, doctoral programs, degrees in science and technology relative to other metropolitan areas, lack of an adequate funding base, etc. The outcome should build upon the diverse mix of institutional strengths using collaborative solutions rather than simply trying to fill the gaps with new stand alone programs. Collaborations featuring joint programs and joint appointments will be the hallmark of success for this endeavor.

Key Questions

1. How can we ensure that high quality higher education programs and services are accessible and affordable for all citizens in the Portland Metropolitan area, that we produce more graduates, and that the student bodies and graduates from higher education institutions located in the region mirror the demographic characteristics of the area?
2. How can we ensure that higher education programs and services available in the Portland Metropolitan area are aligned with the present/future workforce and research needs of existing business and industry in the region and new businesses likely to relocate in the region in the future?
3. How can we support Portland State University's development as a comprehensive urban university?
4. How can we support Oregon Health and Science University's mission as a premier health and science teaching and research institution?

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5. What should the relationship be between Portland State University and Oregon Health and Science University now and in the future? Specifically, what follow-up should occur with regard to the proposal and subsequent review to merge PSU and OHSU?
6. How can we expand doctoral and professional programs in the Portland Metropolitan area, and in what areas?
7. How can we encourage research collaborations among PSU, OHSU, OSU, UO and OIT? What is the potential for creating a common organizational entity with shared facilities, to advance strong research collaborations?
8. How can we strengthen to role of the community colleges in Greater Portland?
9. How can we increase the amount of externally funded research and sponsored projects and what other potential funding sources could we develop from local, regional, state, federal, and private sources to support higher education operations and capital needs in the Portland Metropolitan region?