

## Overview:

The Oregon Legislative Assembly convenes annually each February. As an even numbered year, the 2014 session will convene on Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>, and is scheduled to adjourn on or before Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. The session is not to exceed 35 days, however, a five day extensions is allowed by a two-thirds vote in each chamber.

In response to recent higher education reforms, the Oregon University System (OUS) is undergoing significant changes as various activities transition to institutional boards and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Changes to the OUS portfolio, including government affairs and advocacy, has led to a shift in how the System Office will provide coverage leading up to, and during the 2014 short session. OUS will continue to provide coordination, and serve as a conduit for communication and information sharing, however the System Office will not have a constant presence in the halls of Salem as in years past.

As a result, OUS is in the process of shifting in-house staff responsibilities and maximizing efficiencies in order to ensure that we are providing as much coverage as possible during this time of transition. As part of this shift, we will be handing off some of the responsibilities previously covered by the System Office to the campuses in order to align with the decentralization process ratified during the 2013 Legislative Session.

**Goals for the Transition:** OUS will continue to collaborate with our campus on a variety of initiatives, and work together to maintain lines of communication by way of a mutually beneficial working relationship. OUS intends to convene the Legislative Advisory Council (LAC), as we have done in previous sessions. This group will be convened by OUS staff, and provide a forum for the System Office and Campus LAC members to exchange information, discuss legislative issues, and flag for others issues that surface. In addition, the System Office will convene an internal working group, or Legislative Management Team, in order to timely respond to legislative inquiries and requests during Session.

**Projected Legislative Concepts:** OUS anticipates conversations and/or legislative concepts to surface in the areas listed below. Note: these concepts represent the "universe" as we currently know it, but are subject to change as they are vetted by the system.

a. Capital Construction Requests: Possible consideration by the Joint Committee on Ways and Means during January Legislative Days and/or continued work with LFO on recommendations for a hearing.

b. SEIU Incremental Appropriations for Technical and Regional Universities.

c. Possible expansion of Veterans Tuition Equity to include all enrolled undergraduates, and revise effective date.

d. Free Community College, *Oregon Promise*.

e. \$10k BA, Feasibility Study.

f. Fixed Cost Degrees Concept

g. Omnibus Measure: Makes technical changes and updates to existing law.

- *WICHE SARA. Authorize HECC to enter into interstate agreements.*
- *Updating composition of State Board of Higher Education (possible name change).*
- *Shorten the window for the TRU's to seek an institutional board under SB 270, with new date of June 30, 2014.*
- *ETIC transferring to OEIB.*

h. Ongoing Governance and Shared Services Discussions.

