

HB 2864 A -A8 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Meeting Dates: 5/16, 5/30

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Defines cultural competency. Directs public universities and community colleges to establish process for recommendation and oversight of cultural competency standards implementation for institution and employees. Specifies that process must include broad range of institutional perspectives; give equal weight to administrator, faculty, staff and student perspectives; require institution provide continuing training and development; propose institution-wide goals that seek to improve cultural inclusion climate; require biennial report regarding the institution's progress toward achieving goals; recommend mechanisms for assessing how well institution meets cultural competency standards; and ensure institution clearly communicates to new employees its commitment to inclusion of cultural competency standards in professional development. Requires each public institution of higher education to establish entity or process that will enable institution to recommend and provide oversight for implementation of cultural competency standards no later than December 31, 2019. Requires full compliance with requirements no later than December 31, 2020.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Providing safe, welcoming and inclusive learning environments for all students
- Student experiences with equity, disparities and name-calling on Oregon campuses
- Importance of establishing cultural competency standards at all public institutions in Oregon

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A8 Changes the word "respond" to "communicate." Changes definition of cultural competency from affirming and valuing the worth and preserving the dignity of individuals, families, and communities to tolerating and preserving the dignity of individuals, families, and communities.

BACKGROUND:

Currently, many - but not all - of Oregon's public universities and community colleges are engaged in cultural competency efforts. Some institutions offer cultural competency courses to students, while others offer cultural fluency and competency training to faculty, staff and/or administration. Some universities and community colleges include cultural competency training as a component of new employee and/or new student orientation programs. Other post-secondary institutions do not have the ability to support cultural competency progress at this time.

In 2015, House Bill 3308 was passed to help address student concerns regarding the occurrence and impact of micro-aggressions, racial slurs and inappropriate stereotypes at Oregon's public higher education institutions. The legislation directed the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to convene a work group to develop recommendations on these issues. House Bill 2864-A codifies one of the work group's key recommendations, the establishment of a process for cultural competency standards at each institution.