



Oregon Legislative Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education & Equity

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Oregon Equity Lens

The Oregon Equity Lens was adopted by the HECC in 2014 as a cornerstone to the State's approach to education policy and budgeting.

- **Purpose:** To clearly articulate the shared goals we have for our state; to assess the equity impact of policies and investments; **to make intentional policies, investments and systemic change to achieve an equitable educational system;** and to create clear accountability structures.
- Confirms the **importance of identifying and urgently addressing institutional and systemic barriers** that have limited access and success for many students.
- Emphasizes **historically underserved students**, with a **particular focus on racial equity**.



In 2021, the HECC is considering an update to the Equity Lens, now titled the Oregon HECC Equity Lens, with a renewed attention on application to postsecondary education and training. The primary focus areas described here remain consistent.

HECC Equity Stance

For the HECC, postsecondary education equity will be achieved once one's community or characteristic—including but not limited to racial/ethnic identity, socio-economic background, dis/ability status, gender, parental status, veteran status, sexual orientation, and geographic origin or location—no longer predict inequitable access to and success in postsecondary education and training. We will work towards this by addressing the root historical causes of systemic racism and inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes the intentional examination and elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that perpetuate the stark inequities in postsecondary education and workforce training we see today.

A New Consideration in Our Collective Work

Targeted Universalism Scholars and practitioners have been employing the phrase, “targeted universalism,” to successfully break through the binary of universal responses versus targeted solutions in these attempts to remedy the effects of inequity.



Universal or Targeted

UNIVERSAL RESPONSES AND STATEMENTS are a way of signaling the desire for a diverse and equitable society, but can strike people, especially people who have been oppressed for generations, as being too grand and ambitious without any direct way of helping those who are still being harmed.

TARGETED POLICIES are more direct and localized, but they often seek to meet the needs of a particular group, so can be viewed from a zero-sum perspective, causing hostility and resentment.

Approach to our Work



TARGETED UNIVERSALISM is an alternative framework to design policies and implementation strategies to achieve policy goals. Targeted universalism is sensitive to structural and cultural dynamics in ways that often elude both targeted and universal strategies.

Qualitative & Quantitative Data

There is a need to ask the right set of questions, collect the right data.

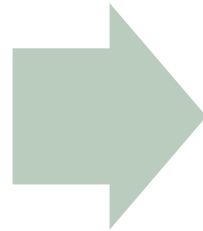
STREET DATA “calls upon readers to 'flip the dashboard' from a focus on big data to a focus on the voices at the margins – those learners and their families who have been most affected by deep-rooted systemic inequities. When we listen closely to these voices with curiosity, courage, and humility, we gain a greater understanding of the meaning and root causes of these inequities, as well as how they can be addressed in ways that transform and heal.”

-Linda Darling-Hammond, Professor Emeritus at Stanford University and President of the Learning Policy Institute

From Status Quo to Transformation

The system we work in:

- Prioritizes measurement and incremental improvement over learning and transformation.
- Shallow approach to the incorporation of student and community voices.
- Perpetuates tokenism and marginalization of their gifts and voices.



We are called to:

- Focus and work towards a transformational system.
- Authentically engage student voice.
- Value multiple ways of knowing and learning.
- See and understand community cultural wealth.
- Build relationships and work towards restoration and healing.

HECC Working Within an Asset Based Framework

Our strategies:

- Redefining success
- Getting out there, meeting people where they are at
- Building transparency in learning and in our processes
- Embracing vulnerability
- Calling folks in and up
- Recognizing that every moment is an equity moment



“Whenever we allow people’s identities to be a barrier, not an asset, we begin to see unnecessary distinctions; it’s important to value people’s unique identities as assets to a full fabric of a beautiful mosaic of difference, diversity, belonging, and humanity.” – Anonymous Educator