



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Ben Cannon, Executive Director

3225 25th Street SE

Salem, OR 97302

www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

April 9, 2021

Co-Chair, Senator Lew Frederick
Co-Chair, Representative Susan McLain
Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain,

Thank you for the opportunity to answer questions that arose during the **April 7, 2021** Higher Education Coordinating Commission's presentation to the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education.

In reference to slide 11, Representative Reschke asked how the greater earnings enjoyed by those with a postsecondary certificate or degree was related to the debt those certificates and degrees incurred. Recent analyses show that even when taking into account student debt and the costs of postsecondary education and training, the lifetime earnings of those with a postsecondary degree are still higher than the earnings of those without such a degree (Webber, 2015ⁱ; Abel and Deitz, 2014ⁱⁱ).

In reference to slide 15, Senator Dembrow asked whether our estimate of the 18.5% of Oregonians who have completed an associate degree or career certificate included formal apprenticeship completions. Yes, it does include credentials that involve apprenticeships. These estimates rely on an extensive analysis of the extent to which adults with different levels of educational attainment have certificates or licensures that would not be counted as degrees (Ewert and Kominski, 2014ⁱⁱⁱ). We apply these estimates to the group of adults who report "some college, no degree" on Census reports to gain a more complete estimate of progress toward the middle 40 of Oregon's 40-40-20 goal.

In reference to slide 21, Representative Alonso León asked whether the 18% of students who are the first in their families to attend college or university includes Oregon Student Aid Application (ORSAA) filers. Yes, it does. This percentage comes from questions on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and parallel questions on the ORSAA that ask about the educational attainment of students' parents or primary caregivers. Among ORSAA filers, 63% were first-generation, 6% were not first-generation, and 31% did not have sufficient information to determine this status. Among FAFSA filers, 34% were first-generation, 55% were not first-generation, and 11% did not have sufficient information to determine this status. The remainder of the 52% of students shown in slide 21 whose first-generation status is not known filed neither a FAFSA nor an ORSAA.

Errors and Omissions

Note that on slide 8, we stated that the portrayed equity in educational attainment and earnings data was Oregon data. This data is national data.

Note that on slide 10, we stated 97% of all Oregon jobs with above-average earnings will require a postsecondary credential or degree in the 2019-2020 period. In fact, 97% of these jobs will required a degree in the period from 2019-2029.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kyle Thomas, Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs, at kyle.thomas@state.or.us or at 503-480-9596.

Sincerely,



Ben Cannon
Executive Director

ⁱ D.A. Webber (2015). "Are College Costs Worth It? How Individual Ability, Major Choice, and Debt Affect Optimal Schooling Decisions." IZA Discussion Paper No. 8767, Social Science Research Network. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2554915

ⁱⁱ J.R. Abel and R. Deitz (2014). "Do the Benefits of College Still Outweigh the Costs?" *Current Issues in Economics and Finance*, Federal Reserve Bank of New York. https://www.newyorkfed.org/medialibrary/media/research/current_issues/ci20-3.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ S. Ewert and R. Kominski (2014). "Measuring Alternative Educational Credentials: 2012," U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC. <https://www.census.gov/prod/2014pubs/p70-138.pdf>