

# House Bill 3274

Sponsored by Representatives MORGAN, MARSH, Senator GOLDEN; Representatives BYNUM, GOODWIN, Senator FREDERICK

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Requires Southern Oregon University, subject to appropriation of sufficient moneys, to address state's behavioral and mental health needs by materially increasing number of mental health practitioners who graduate in southern Oregon and teaching behavioral and mental health competencies through alternative academic pathways.

Appropriates moneys to Higher Education Coordinating Commission for allocation to Southern Oregon University.

Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

1  
2 Relating to workforce development in fields relating to health care; and declaring an emergency.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) Subject to the appropriation of sufficient moneys by the Legislative As-**  
5 **sembly, Southern Oregon University shall address Oregon's behavioral and mental health**  
6 **needs by:**

7 (a) **Materially increasing the number of mental health practitioners who graduate in**  
8 **southern Oregon; and**

9 (b) **Teaching basic competencies in behavioral and mental health to workforce sectors**  
10 **not traditionally associated with behavioral and mental health through innovative alternative**  
11 **academic pathways, including but not limited to microcredentials.**

12 (2) **Southern Oregon University shall accomplish the increase of graduates described in**  
13 **subsection (1) of this section by:**

14 (a) **Establishing a fellowship program that offers a debt-free pathway to graduation for**  
15 **students pursuing behavioral and mental health degrees;**

16 (b) **Increasing the number of faculty, university staff and field staff who are assisting**  
17 **students who are enrolled in behavioral and mental health degree programs;**

18 (c) **Partnering with community organizations on pathways for behavioral and mental**  
19 **health student interns to work with rural, veteran or homeless individuals, students or per-**  
20 **sons from underserved communities; and**

21 (d) **Any other method determined by Southern Oregon University to be necessary to en-**  
22 **hance the state's capacity to educate behavioral and mental health practitioners in the**  
23 **manner described in subsection (1) of this section.**

24 (3) **As used in this section, "persons from underserved communities" means persons who:**

25 (a) **Qualify as underrepresented persons as defined in ORS 342.120;**

26 (b) **Are from low-income families; or**

27 (c) **Experience disability, including intellectual or developmental disabilities.**

28 **SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-**

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,  
2 2023, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$2,500,000, to be allocated to Southern Oregon  
3 University for the purposes set forth in section 1 of this 2023 Act.

4 SECTION 3. This 2023 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public  
5 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2023 Act takes effect  
6 on July 1, 2023.

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