

Memorandum

PREPARED FOR: Senate Interim Committee on Rules
and Executive Appointments

DATE: September 12, 2025

BY: Leslie Porter, Legislative Analyst

RE: Legislative Review of Executive Appointments



LPRO
LEGISLATIVE POLICY
AND RESEARCH OFFICE

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

The Governor has appointed the following individuals to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission subject to Senate confirmation.¹

New Appointees

Michel Dembrow of Portland
Devon Lawson of Springfield
Erick Njue of Eugene

Re-appointees

Arnel Fajardo of Beaverton
Gregory Hamann of Albany

Terms

Dembrow: October 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029
Lawson and Njue: October 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027
Re-appointees: July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2029

Appointment/Confirmation Authority

[ORS 350.050 \(2023\)](#)

Statement of Economic Interest²

Required.

Composition³

The commission consists of 15 Oregon residents serving as voting members who are well informed concerning the principles of higher education. Membership includes

- one public university undergraduate student (ARNOT);
- one public university graduate student (**NJUE**);
- one public university faculty member (SIMNITT);
- one community college student (**LAWSON**);
- one community college faculty member (MIDDLETON);
- one public university or community college nonfaculty staff member (SMITH);

¹ [Or. Const. art. III sect. 4](#), [ORS 171.562 and 171.565 \(2023\)](#).

² [ORS 244.050 \(2023\)](#).

³ [ORS 350.050 \(2023\)](#); [ORS 182.100 \(2023\)](#) for affirmative action policy; [ORS 236.115 \(2023\)](#) for diversity criteria.

- one member from each of the six congressional districts (**FAJARDO (CD1)**, **YAMASAKI (CD2)**, **KOCHER (CD3)**, **HAMANN (CD4)**, **PROCTER ANDREWS (CD5)**, **DEVLIN (CD6)**); and
- three members of the general public (**DEMBROW**, **EDWARDS**, **MARTINEZ**).

Appointees from the congressional districts and from the general public serve four-year terms and the remainder serve two-year terms. The Governor may, for cause, remove any member after notice and a public hearing, but not more than three members shall be removed within a period of four years, unless it is for corrupt conduct in office.⁴ The commission selects its chair and vice chair. A majority of the members constitutes a quorum. The commission must meet at least once every three months.⁵

Duties⁶

The commission works to ensure access to post-secondary education and academic success. The commission must:

- establish educational attainment goals for certain adults, and develop goals for post-secondary education;
- appoint an executive director;
- determine strategic investments, and adopt a strategic plan;
- coordinate post-secondary data collection and administer a longitudinal data system;
- recommend a consolidated higher education agency request;
- adopt rules governing the distribution of appropriations;
- approve or deny any significant change to academic programs;
- approve public university mission statements; review fee increases; advise the Governor and Legislative Assembly about university governance issues; and authorize degrees offered by independent post-secondary institutions;
- oversee the licensing of career schools;
- implement a review process for, and appropriately act on, student complaints;
- advise on specified policies, and administer specified funds and grant programs;
- ensure the implementation of diverse educator recruitment plans;
- make specified reports to the Legislative Assembly;
- monitor and report on participation of specified groups in higher education;
- conduct annual reviews of each public institution of higher education; and
- develop standards for transferring and awarding education credits.

⁴ [ORS 350.050 \(2023\)](#).

⁵ [ORS 350.060 \(2023\)](#).

⁶ [ORS 350.018 to 350.640 \(2023\)](#).



Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Agency: **Higher Education Coordinating Commission**

Authorization: **ORS 350.050**

Min Members: **14** Max Members: **15**

Term Length: **4** Term Limit: **2**

Senate Confirmation Required?: **Yes**

Policy Area: **Education**

Board Admin: **Ben Cannon**

Address:

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

255 Capitol Street NE

Salem, OR 97310

503-947-2379

Ben.CANNON@hecc.oregon.gov

Current Appointments

Arnot, Natalie

Public University Undergraduate Student

Position Number: **1**

Term(s): **7/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

7/1/2022 - 6/30/2024

Njue, Erick

Graduate Student (CD 4)

Position Number: **2**

Term(s): **10/1/2025 - 6/30/2027**

Simnitt, Emily

Public University Faculty Member

Position Number: **3**

Term(s): **7/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

7/1/2022 - 6/30/2024

Lawson, Devon

Community College Student (CD4)

Position Number: **4**

Term(s): **10/1/2025 - 6/30/2027**

Middleton, Mary

Faculty - Community College

Position Number: **5**

Term(s): **10/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

Smith, Jennifer

Nonfaculty Staff (Public University or Community College)

Position Number: **6**

Term(s): **7/1/2024 - 6/30/2026**

Mrs Edwards, Helen L

Public Member

Position Number: **14**

Term(s): **7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**

3/1/2025 - 6/30/2025

10/2/2020 - 6/30/2023

Mr Fajardo, Arnel M PhD

CD 1

Position Number: **7**

Term(s): **7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029**

7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025

Ms Yamasaki, Gayle S CD 2 Position Number: 8	Term(s):	10/5/2023 - 6/30/2027
Ms Rowe, Sandra "Sandy" M Public Member Position Number: 15	Term(s):	7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025 9/25/2017 - 6/30/2021
Kocher, Evelyn CD 3 Position Number: 9	Term(s):	10/5/2023 - 6/30/2027
Dr Hamann, Gregory J CD 4 Position Number: 10	Term(s):	7/1/2025 - 6/30/2029 7/1/2021 - 6/30/2025
Procter Andrews, Jennifer CD 5 Position Number: 11	Term(s):	2/16/2024 - 6/30/2027
Devlin, Richard CD 6 Position Number: 12	Term(s):	3/1/2022 - 2/28/2026
Martinez, Theresa Public Member Position Number: 13	Term(s):	2/16/2024 - 6/30/2027
Dembrow, Michael CD 3 Position Number: 15	Term(s):	10/1/2025 - 6/30/2029

Vacant Positions