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Introduction

The Oregon Student Association had a successful 2021 legislative session, in terms of policy and budgetary wins. 2021 was the first session to be held virtually, which meant students had to adapt to the myriad of challenges a virtual session brought. Regardless, we remained diligent and saw our priorities through.

The Oregon Student Association focused on the following main policy areas for our priority 1 issues:

- Accountability and transparency of administration
- Basic needs insecurities
- Textbook affordability
- Uplifting underrepresented student voices
- HECC voting rights
- Student fee autonomy

In addition to the above policy bills, students from across Oregon came together virtually to further our top budget priorities:

- Oregon Opportunity Grant
- Community College Support Fund
- Public University Support Fund with the accompanied ask of increased transparency and accountability of administration.

We were successful in passing all of our priority 1 bills and greatly increased funding for colleges and universities from what Ways and Means Co-Chairs originally planned to allocate this biennium. We increased funding to the Oregon Opportunity Grant. The hope is that this report will help students and staff celebrate our wins, identify missed opportunities for future sessions, and most importantly be a reminder of how student power impacts policy across Oregon.
Why We Lobby

The Oregon Student Association is known to be one of the most powerful organizations in Oregon. Over the years, OSA has been successful in passing legislation and a higher education budget that benefits all students in Oregon. Students have been able to uphold this power because we have been highly engaged in the electoral process by registering thousands of students to vote through our Vote OR Vote program.

The Oregon Student Association is one of a kind. There is no other organized group that lobbies the state legislature on the interest of higher education for students in Oregon and at the direction of students in Oregon. OSA is invited to be present at various policy development or workgroup meetings because decision makers want us to be present. As an example of how important OSA is, some legislators would only work on the introduction of new policies and changes in policies IF the Oregon Student Association was on board and involved in the policy development process. Don’t underestimate the power you have - we can create a great change in Oregon’s postsecondary institutions and to accomplish this, we need to continue having a strong base.

The Oregon Student Association has a history of creating meaningful impact but the key to be able to create this impact is to be invested in the issues and build a strong base by empowering students. Therefore, OSA board members and staff need to be present on campus, to be able to talk to students, learn their stories and offer opportunities to get involved thus helping with leadership development. Member campuses of OSA have always believed that organizing is the best way to engage people impacted by our priority issues. When students recognize their power and ability, they are unstoppable! Lobbying is just one tool for students to use their voice to better the lives of themselves, communities and students across the State.
HB2590 - Student Voice Bill
- Establishes Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. Directs task force to develop student success policy and funding proposals focusing on increasing likelihood of student success in higher education for students from populations that are underrepresented in higher education enrollment.

HB2835 - Basic Needs Navigators
- Requires each community college and public university to hire benefits navigator to assist students in determining eligibility and applying for federal, state and local benefits programs.

HB 2919 - Textbook On Time Adoption
- Relating to disclosure of costs to enroll in classes at public institutions of higher education.

HB2542 - Mandatory Fee Transparency
- Relating to disclosure of mandatory fees at public institutions of higher education.

HB3012 - Student Fee Autonomy
- Limits ability of public university to refuse new mandatory incidental fees or process for collecting mandatory incidental fees.

SB712 - HECC Voting Rights
- Alters commissioner composition of Higher Education Coordinating Commission by redesignating five current nonvoting positions as voting positions and by adding one additional position for graduate student attending public university.
HB2590 Student Voice Bill

Summary: Establishes Task Force on student success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. Directs task force to develop student success policy and funding proposing focusing on increasing likelihood of student success in higher education for students from populations that are underrepresented in higher education enrollment. Sunsets task force on December 31, 2023. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

Chief Sponsors: Representative Alonso Leon, Senator Dembrow, Senator Wagner

Path to Passage:
- House Hearing: 3/04/2021 @ 1:00 pm
- House Work Session: 3/25/2021 @ 1:00pm
- House Floor Vote: 9 Aye, 1 Excused
- Senate Hearing: 6/10/2021 @ 1:00 pm
- Joint Committee on Ways and Means Work Session: 6/16/2021 @ 3:00 pm
- Joint Committee on Ways and Means Vote: 21 Aye, 2 Nay

Coalition: The Oregon Student Association worked in great efforts with Representative Alonso Leon, Senator Dembrow, and Senator Wagnor as well as with students in higher education on helping move this bill through both the House and Senate side.

Challenges: The Student Voice Bill has garnered strong support since first introducing this legislation in 2020, thus there were minimal challenges to passing this bill.

Recommendations: Representative Alonso Leon has made it clear OSA will play a key role in the task force. OSA staff and students must continue working with her office to ensure we can assist her office's goals and prioritize centering the voices of our students.
HB2835 Basic Needs Navigator

**Summary:** Requires each community college and public university to hire benefits navigator to assist students in determining eligibility and applying for federal, state and local benefits programs.

**Chief Sponsors:** Representative Reardon, Senator Gorsek, Gelser, Representative Alonso Leon, McLain, Senator Dembrow

**Path to Passage:**
- House Hearing: The bill was first heard in the House Committee on Education on February 11.
- House Work Session: The bill successfully passed the House Committee on Education with 10 votes in favor.
- House Floor Vote: Carried by Reardon. Passed. Ayes, 49; Nays, 4; Excused 3; Excused for Business of the House, 3.
- Senate Hearing: This bill was scheduled for a hearing on June 21.
- Senate Floor Vote: Carried by Frederick. Passed. Ayes, 19; Nays, 10; Excused 1.

**Coalition:** OSA partnered with Portland Community College, Partners for a Hunger Free Oregon, and the Oregon Food Bank to pass this important legislation. Our original sponsor, Rep. Reardon, along with Rep. McLain assisted greatly in keeping this a main priority in their committees.

**Challenges:** With heightened basic needs insecurities across the State due in part to the pandemic, OSA and partners struggled to show the lived experience of college students today and the accompanied demand for increased services. The coalition increased messaging around the increased federal dollars going to Oregon if this bill was passed. This return on investment and after understanding the true need, Rep. Rayfield of Ways and Means uplifted this bill--helping it get to the finish line!

**Recommendations:** While this bill will help students across Oregon, it does not eliminate basic needs insecurities for students. We must continue building on this work with the listed partners above. OSA should utilize the data that comes from the navigators first two years and work to amplify those numbers to make sure we can secure continued funding next biennium.
HB2919 Textbook Affordability

**Summary:** Requires each public university and community college to prominently display, or establish link to a website that displays, estimated costs of all required course materials and directly related course fees for no less than 75 percent of total for-credit courses offered by public university or community college.

**Chief Sponsors:** Representative Reardon, Sollman, Senator Gorsek

**Path to Passage:**
- **House Hearing:** The bill was first heard in the House Committee on Education on February 25.
- **House Work Session:** The bill successfully passed the House Committee on Education with 9 votes in favor of the bill and 1 excused.
- **House Floor Vote:** Carried by Reardon. Passed. Ayes, 58; Excused, 2.
- **Senate Hearing:** The bill was scheduling for a hearing on May 3.
- **Senate Work Session:** This bill successfully passed the Senate Committee on Education with 5 votes in favor.
- **Senate Floor Vote:** Carried by Gorsek. Passed. Ayes, 24. Nays, 1. Excused, 5

**Coalition:** OSA worked closely with Representative Reardon and Sollman, who led the textbook affordability work group. In addition, university and college administrators, labor organizations representing faculty, and the Open Oregon Educational Resources librarian, Amy Hofer, played a key role in crafting this legislation.

**Challenges:** Originally, university administration tacked on a $1.2 million fiscal to implement this policy on campus. Conversely, community college administration filed a "minimal fiscal impact". After pushing back on the high fiscal and administration failing to provide a credible reason for this, they joined the community colleges at a "minimal fiscal impact".

**Recommendations:** OSA can reach out to students after course registration periods to inquire about what information was available for them regarding textbook prices. This will be important to make sure institutions are following the 75% minimum compliance rate for this bill.
**HB2542 Mandatory Fee Transparency**

**Summary:** Requires each public university and community college to prominently display mandatory fees charged. Requires each public university and community college to provide annual report to Higher Education Coordinating Commission detailing compliance with requirement.

**Chief Sponsors:** Representative Reardon, Senator Patterson, Representative Drazan

**Path to Passage:**
- House Hearing: 2/25/2021 @ 1:00 pm
- House Work Session: 3/25/2021 @ 1:00 pm
- House Floor Vote: 9 Aye votes, 1 excused vote
- Senate Hearing: 5/03/2021 @ 3:15 pm
- Senate Work Session: 5/10/2021 @3:15 pm
- Senate Floor Vote: 5 Aye votes

**Coalition:** The Oregon Student Association had effective communication with Representative Reardon, Representative Drazan, and Senator Patterson (the bill’s chief sponsors) which helped carry the success of this bill on both the House and Senate sides.

**Challenges:** Towards the beginning stages of introducing this bill, there was a lot of push back and a lack of common ground from institutions to work on this bill with OSA. In the end, there was an agreement that was established with public institutions on when the annual report would be sent to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and what would be asked within the report. This allowed for there to support from this bill from the institutional side which led to strong support from the legislative side as well.

**Recommendations:** A recommendation for a bill is to hold administrations on all campuses accountable to following through with this work. OSA staff should make it a yearly practice to review all campuses mandatory fee reports and act accordingly based on findings.
HB3012 Student Fee Autonomy

Summary: Limits ability of public university to refuse new mandatory incidental fees or process for collecting mandatory incidental fees. Limits ability of community college to refuse new mandatory student-initiated fees or process for collecting mandatory student-initiated fees.

Chief Sponsors: Representative Nosse, Evans, Senator Frederick

Path to Passage:

- House Hearing: The bill was first heard in the House Committee on Education on February 25.
- House Work Session: The bill successfully passed the House Committee on Education with 9 votes in favor of the bill and 1 excused.
- House Floor Vote: Carried by Nosse, Evans. Passed. Ayes, 50; Nays, 8; Excused, 2.
- Senate Hearing: The bill was scheduling for a hearing on May 3.
- Senate Work Session: This bill successfully passed the Senate Committee on Education with 4 votes in favor and 1 against.

Coalition: As HB3012 was a niche bill, OSA led this bill with the support from Representative Nosse, HD 42 in Portland. The bill was carried by Senator Patterson, representing Western Oregon University in SD 10.

Challenges: At the beginning of session, university administration was not supportive of this bill. Though, we managed to move them to "supportive" after working with them on an amendment.

Recommendations: As this bill strengthens the incidental fee statute, student governments must remain diligent in making sure administration does not wrongfully deny a student fee proposal. If this does occur and the student government and administration cannot reach an agreement, a complaint can be filed to the HECC for added accountability.
SB712 HECC Voting Rights

Summary: Alters commissioner composition of Higher Education Coordinating Commission by redesignating five current nonvoting positions as voting positions and by adding one additional position for graduate student attending public university


Path to Passage:
- Senate Hearing: The bill was first heard in the Senate Committee on Education on March 15.
- Senate Work Session: The bill successfully passed the Senate Committee on Education with 3 votes in favor of the bill and 2 votes against.
- House Hearing: The bill had a hearing on the House side on May 4.
- Senate Work Session: This bill successfully passed the House Committee on Education with 9 votes in favor and 1 vote against.
- House Floor Vote: Carried by Evans. Passed. Ayes, 50; Nays.

Coalition: We worked on this bill in collaboration with our labor partners, including AFT, SEIU, AAUP, AOF and OEA.

Challenges: This bill was introduced three times prior to passage in the 2021 session. After years of building a foundation, we finally saw it through. During the House Education vote count, we lost a Democrat's support, Rep. Sollman, but gained support from the three Republicans on the committee, Rep. Wright, Weber, and Brock Smith to ensure passage.

Recommendations: OSA and labor partners should work with the HECC to monitor the implementation of this bill. In the past, OSA has helped the HECC find the student representatives on the commission. OSA should help find a student to fill the new graduate student position.
SB854: University Governance

**Summary:** Changes composition of governing board for public universities and increases accessibility to the Board of Trustees for campus communities, including students, staff and faculty.

**Chief Sponsors:** Senator Frederick, Representative Evans, Mclain, Senator Gelser

The Fate of SB854

- The bill did not pass, though there was an agreement reached among the 7 universities that they will implement key policies listed in SB854 on good faith.

The Agreement Included:

- Setting aside specific time at all regularly scheduled meetings of the full Board of Trustees for live comments, either in person or remote, depending on the structure of the meeting;
- Allowing a representative from official student, faculty and non-faculty governance organizations to provide comment or report to the full board at regular board meetings.
- Allowing a representative from official campus labor organizations to provide comment or report to the full board at regular board meetings upon request.
- Inclusion of at least one member of each of the faculty, the non-faculty staff, and the student body on presidential search committees.
- Providing all trustees with institutional e-mail addresses and posting them to the universities’ websites immediately.
- Engaging in a collaborative review of best practices for institutional boards related to transparency and access, including review of the provisions in SB 854 ending no later than January, 2022.

**Recommendations:** As this bill was not passed, the agreement made does not have legal binding, which means no statutory consequences could be made in the case of noncompliance. The Oregon Student Association must ensure University board of trustees are following all areas of the agreement until we are able to solidify language in statute.
Budget Advocacy

The 2021 legislative session found OSA taking part in a historic coalition and increasing budgets from what legislators had recommended all in the midst of a very challenging political landscape for higher education and the State as a whole. The Oregon Student Associations advocated for funding amounts that would help them achieve no increases above 5%. The 2021 legislative session asks and actuals included:

- **OSA advocated for $290 million to the Oregon Opportunity Grant**
  - We secured a $25 million increase from past biennium funding, totaling $196 million for the 21-23 biennium

- **OSA advocated for $900 million to the Public University Support Fund**
  - The legislature fully funded the 7 universities at $900 million which will protect students from any tuition increase above 5%

- **OSA Advocated for $702 million Community College Support Fund**
  - We achieved full funding for community colleges at $702 million, ensuring no tuition increases above 5% statewide

**COVID-19 Stimulus Packages:**
- With unprecedented emergency funding going to Oregon communities, the Legislator had to allocate billions of dollars in emergency aid in addition to balancing the budget for state agencies and policy bills with fiscals. Students remained diligent in ensuring 50% of all emergency funds were used for direct student scholarships in light of work, class, and personal life disruptions from the pandemic.
Student Advocacy in Action

Eleazar Gamez, an OSA policy coordinators, testifying on HB2542 in House Education committee

Odalis Aguilar-Aguilar, ASUO third year secretary, and Liz Marquez, ASWOU Senate President, presenting at the 2021 Oregon Students of Color Conference

Isaiah Boyd, the ASUO student body president, testifying on HB2542 in House Education committee
Student Advocacy in Action

Kati Rodriguez Perez, an OSA Policy Coordinator, sharing out updates during the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's June meeting

Kierra Wing, ASPSU SFC Chair, testifying on our incidental fee autonomy bill, HB3012, in Senate Education committee

Elizabeth Braatz, a Western Oregon University student, testifying on our Mandatory Fee Transparency bill, HB2542 to Senate Education
2021-23 Biennium Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendations:
- Continue developing the DREAMers Access Program with Representative Alonso Leon and Representative Ruiz
  - During the 2021 session, Representative Alonso Leon said OSA can have an informational hearing on this topic during the interim to educate leaders on why this bill is necessary. OSA should follow up with her to solidify a date for this opportunity.
- Introduce a bill that would add language to state statute that defines the rights of students to have an elected student government and delineates who has say over the rules for that ASG regarding students and administration
  - this year, LCC student government had issues with administration around the very existence of a student government on campus. During this, OSA realized there is in fact no state statute mandating colleges have ASGs. To ensure the existence of student governments on every campus in Oregon, we need to solidify this in law.
- Collaborate with Oregon's OER librarian, Amy Hofer, and build onto past textbook legislation, such as HB2213 and HB2919, to increase textbook affordability in Oregon
- Ensure cultural competency continues to be implemented on campuses
- Work with labor partners, HECC, and higher ed champions to address accountability measures of the board of trustees and administration such as SB854
2021-23 Biennium Budget Recommendations

Budget Advocacy Recommendations:

- **Organize students to give input during the Student Voice tour** to ensure our campus communities needs are considered in future funding of the PUSF and CCSF

  - The purpose of HB2590 is to hear directly from students, with a focus on underrepresented student voices, to guide future policy and budgetary priorities. OSA will play a key role in the planning of the tour. It would be worthwhile to consider creating an OSA Student Voice committee to keep student's at the center of the conversation.

- **Advocate for full expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant.**

  - Currently, only 1 in 4 students who qualify for the grant end up receiving it due to lack of investment. In 2021, OSA advocated for a $290 million investment, which would cover students whose parents make a combined income between zero to $100,000 a year. Oregon’s 2021-23 commitment fell short of our goal with funding at ($196 million). All students deserve affordable education and a fully funded Oregon Opportunity Grant brings us closer to that ideal.

  - OSA should work toward increasing tuition equity eligibility to ensure more undocumented students can access financial aid in Oregon.
## Priority 2 Highlights

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill Name</th>
<th>Bill Title</th>
<th>Bill Summary</th>
<th>Bill Sponsors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HB2935</td>
<td>CROWN Act</td>
<td>Limits authority of school district to become member of voluntary organization that administers interscholastic activities unless organization implements <em>policy that prohibits discrimination based on race, color or national origin</em> equity focused policies that meet certain requirements.</td>
<td>Representative Bynum, Senator Frederick, Manning Jr, Representative Alonso Leon, Campos, Clem, Dexter, Grayber, Hudson, Kotek, Kropf, Levy, Lively, Marsh, McLain, Meek, Morgan, Neron, Noble, Pham, Power, Reardon, Reynolds, Ruiz, Salinas, Sanchez, Schouten, Smith Warner, Sollman, Stark, Valderrama, Wilde, Williams, Senator Lieber</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB282</td>
<td>Rental Housing Data</td>
<td>Extends expiration of grace period for tenant repayment of rental debt accrued during emergency period from June 30, 2021 to February 28, 2022. Restricts landlords from reporting tenant nonpayment accrued during emergency period to consumer credit agencies and from considering tenant nonpayment accrued during grace period in rental applications.</td>
<td>at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Human Services</td>
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<tr>
<td>HB3294</td>
<td>Menstrual Dignity Act</td>
<td>Requires every public education provider to provide both tampons and sanitary pads at no cost to students</td>
<td>Representative Ruiz, Grayber, Williams, Fahey, Reynolds, Salinas, Schouten, Senator Gorsek, Representative Alonso Leon, Bynum, Campos, Dexter, Gomberg, Heim, Hudson, Kropf, McLain, Meek, Neron, Nosse, Pham, Power, Prusak, Reardon, Sanchez, Sollman, Valderrama, Weber, Wilde, Senator Frederick, Lieber, Patterson</td>
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<td>HB233</td>
<td>Common Course Numbering</td>
<td>Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission to establish a common course numbering system for introductory and lower level courses with similar learning outcomes offered at accelerated college credit programs, public post-secondary institutions of education and participating nonpublic post-secondary institutions of education.</td>
<td>at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Education</td>
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## Priority 2 Highlights

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<th>SB778</th>
<th>Creation of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement</th>
<th>Establishes Office of Immigrant and Refugee Advancement to operate statewide immigrant and refugee integration strategy</th>
<th>Senator Jama, Wagner, Dembrow, Representative Campos, Meek, Pham, Ruiz, Senator Frederick, Gelser, Manning Jr, Patterson, Riley</th>
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<td>SB 564</td>
<td>Student Parent Data Collection</td>
<td>Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission to design question or questions allowing each student to identify whether student is parent or person acting as parent or legal guardian that may be placed on one or more forms used on annual basis to collect demographic information by public post-secondary institutions of education</td>
<td>Senator Gelser, Representative Evans, Neron, Senator Dembrow, Frederick, Manning Jr, Representative Alonso Leon, Dexter, Grayber, Power, Reardon, Reynolds, Sollman, Wilde</td>
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<tr>
<td>SB234</td>
<td>Second Chance PELL</td>
<td>Directs Higher Education Coordinating Commission to convene stakeholder group to study ways to best serve adults in custody who are recently eligible to receive student grants</td>
<td>at the request of Senate Interim Committee on Education</td>
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| SB713     | Ban the Box in Higher Education             | Prohibits public or private post-secondary institutions of education from requiring prospective students to disclose whether prospective student has criminal conviction before institution makes final determination on whether to admit student. | Chief Sponsors: Senator Dembrow, Manning Jr, Frederick  
Regular Sponsors: Representative Reardon, Ruiz, Sollman |
Remarks from Legislative Director

The 2021 legislative session was difficult terrain to navigate, where OSA staff and students worked hard to adapt to the ever changing impacts of the pandemic and the switch to a virtual session.

Regardless of the quick changing nature of the 2021 session, OSA managed to secure all of our priorities, including a fully funded PUSF and CCSF, the basic needs navigator bill, and more. The wins we secured this session will set us up for successful future sessions if we choose to leverage the student power built thus far.

On all of our priorities, OSA ensured students were central to decision making. We did this because students had a strong, unified front since the beginning. I urge you to continue building on this foundation. Continue listening to students on your campus. Continue to create space for underrepresented students, including Black, Indigenous, and other Students of Color, LGBTQIA+ students, low income/first generation students, and more. We must continue fighting for support services for our impacted communities, through HB2590 and beyond. Let’s find ways to address missed opportunities, build onto our wins, and consider future areas of advocacy as this session comes to a close.

As we close out the 2021 session, I want to thank the dozens of students who took time to write testimony, call their legislators, testify in committee, and share their stories. Student stories are pivotal in advancing policy and we could not have done it without you. A huge shout out to OSA’s policy coordinator interns, Kati Rodriguez Perez and Eleazar Olayo Gamez, who worked tirelessly for the past 6 months to get us to where we are today. I cannot wait to see where you go next and I am forever grateful to you both.