WHO ARE TODAY’S STUDENTS?

Nationally, today’s students are more diverse than any previous generation of college students: in age, race, and income level. They’re more mobile and may not live on campus. Most participate in the workforce, either full-time or part-time. Work and family responsibilities beyond the classroom—whether that is on-campus or online—often compete with today’s students’ educational goals.

NATIONWIDE, TODAY’S STUDENTS ARE:

- **37%** Older than 25
- **64%** Working while in college
- **24%** Parenting
- **13%** Living on campus
- **40%** Part-time

In Oregon, Portland State University (PSU) operates a traditional full-time child care center on campus that is available to student parents, and also offers free drop-in child care services to students when emergencies arise. The child care center and free drop-in care allows PSU student parents to leave their children for a few hours in order to attend study groups, classes, exams, or extracurricular activities.

To learn more, visit todaysstudents.higherlearningadvocates.org.
SNAPSHOT: How do Oregon’s numbers stack up?

To better understand how Oregon compares to the national higher education landscape, look to the data below detailing trends in enrollment, federal student aid, tuition and fees, earnings, and attainment comparing national and state level data.

ENROLLMENT

Oregon’s total student enrollment is **232,755**

63% Oregon students attend full-time.

FEDERAL STUDENT AID

About **61%** of Oregon’s college students and their families take out federal student loans,¹ compared to **70%** nationwide.²

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¹Includes Direct Subsidized Loan, Direct Unsubsidized Loans, Parent PLUS, Grad PLUS, and Perkins Loan.

²https://www.cnbc.com/2017/07/03/this-is-the-age-most-americans-pay-off-their-student-loans.html

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Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Enrollment by Student Level survey, Fall 2017 preliminary data. Includes undergraduate and graduate fall enrollment.

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SNAPSHOT: How do Oregon’s numbers stack up?

TUITION & FEES

Oregon’s institutions of higher education tuition & fees are above the national average.

Source: College Board. Trends in College Pricing 2018. Figure 5 and 6. https://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing
Source: College Board. Average Tuition and Fees and Room and Board in Current Dollars, 2017-18 and 2018-19.

ATTAINMENT

In 2016-2017, about-average rates of Oregon students obtained postsecondary degrees and credentials compared to the rest of the nation.

Note: Certificates only include less than one year and at least one year but less than 4 years.
ATTAINMENT continued

As of February 2019, 47.9% of Oregon residents ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.

NATIONALLY, 47.6% of Americans ages 25-64 have obtained a certificate or postsecondary degree.¹

Oregon Education Levels for Residents Ages 25-64

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Oregon</th>
<th>National Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate or less</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college, no credential</td>
<td>32.0%</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Oregon Residents Ages 25-64 with at least an Associate’s Degree by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>National Average</th>
<th>Oregon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian &amp; Pacific Islander</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹http://strongernation.luminafoundation.org/report/2019/#state/OR
SNAPSHOT: How do Oregon’s numbers stack up?

EARNINGS AND EMPLOYMENT

Americans who earn a postsecondary degree or credential have higher earnings potential.

Source: Georgetown University Center for Education and Workforce. Certificates: Gateway to Gainful Employment and College Degrees. https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/certificates/

Oregon workers with higher levels of postsecondary attainment have more earning power than their peers with less than a bachelor’s degree. However, the median earnings of Oregon residents is below the national average for high school graduates and residents with postsecondary degrees.


The majority of jobs nationwide in 2020 will require education beyond high school.

WHAT CHALLENGES DO TODAY’S STUDENTS FACE?

**AFFORDABILITY**
- **49%** financially independent
- **31%** at or below Federal Poverty Line

**PART-TIME VS. COMPLETION**
- **40%** part-time
- **38%** of students with additional financial, work, and family obligations leave school in their first year

**WORK**
- **64%** work while in college

**PARENTING**
- **24%**

**EMERGENCY COSTS**
Early data from the University Innovation Alliance (UIA), a coalition of eleven public research universities, shows that about 4,000 Pell-eligible college seniors, who are in good academic standing, are at risk of being dropped from their classes or not allowed to graduate because less than $1,000 is owed to their institutions.

**VETERAN-STATUS**
- **4%** undergrads are veterans

HOW CAN FEDERAL POLICY HELP SET TODAY’S STUDENTS UP FOR SUCCESS?

Outcomes are critical for today’s students—including completion, employment, equity, and value—to be gained from higher learning. Federal policy needs to catch up to the way that today’s students are learning and reward institutions and systems that deliver the strongest career and educational outcomes.

**FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID** should be redesigned with a focus on the needs of a wide range of students, especially those who work full- or part-time, are financially independent, or need to enroll in courses outside the traditional two-semester approach. Redesign approaches could include rethinking Pell eligibility for workforce programs, or simpler loan repayment to match today’s students’ needs.

**DATA** gathered through federal, state, and workforce data systems should cover the full spectrum of today’s students, not just first-time, full-time students. Today’s students, families, schools, and taxpayers need clear information to make informed choices about higher learning.

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4 https://www.insidehighered.com/sites/default/server_files/files/Completion%20Grants%20release%208_16_17%20FINAL.pdf
5 https://www.luminafoundation.org/todays-student-statistics