

## Tuition Equity

### What is "tuition equity" in Oregon's public universities?

Tuition equity in Oregon means that students who are not citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States are exempt from paying nonresident tuition and fees for enrollment in an Oregon public university, when they meet specific eligibility requirements.

When a student seeks information on this Oregon law, should they look up "tuition equity"?

While many people know this new law as "tuition equity," students will see it named here and in other documents as the "exemption from nonresident tuition and fees" for eligible undocumented students. To be exempt from nonresident tuition rates means that a student is allowed to pay the lower resident tuition rates instead.

### Who is eligible for the exemption from nonresident tuition and fees (otherwise known as tuition equity)?

A student needs to meet the following requirements in order to be eligible for the exemption:

- Student received a high school diploma or GED in Oregon.
- Student attended an elementary school or secondary/high school in Oregon during each of the three years immediately prior to earning a high school diploma or leaving school before earning a diploma.
  - Student attended an elementary school or secondary/high school in a state or territory of the United States, the District of Columbia, or the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in each of the five years immediately prior to earning a high school diploma or leaving school before earning a diploma.
- Student shows intention to become a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States.

### How does a student demonstrate the required "intention to become a citizen or permanent resident"?

The student needs to provide documentation in order to show this intention. The statements required are included in the Affidavit and Request for Exemption from Nonresident Tuition and Fees. The following documentation is required:

- Student submits (in the Affidavit) a statement that application has been made for a federal individual taxpayer identification number or other federal identification document, AND
- Student submits (in the Affidavit) a statement of intent to seek to obtain U.S. citizenship as permitted by federal law, OR
- Student submits an official copy of application for registration with a federal immigration program or federal deportation deferral program.

### If students transfer into an Oregon public university after beginning at a community college after high school graduation, will they be eligible for the resident tuition rates?

Yes, as long as they meet all the criteria (above).

### Can a student take a term or more time off school and still use the exemption?

Yes.

**Can a student attend a university part-time and still use the exemption?**

Yes.

**Can a student use the exemption for both undergraduate and graduate enrollment?**

Yes.

**When did the tuition equity law take effect—when can students begin paying resident tuition rates at Oregon public universities?**

The law took effect on July 1, 2013. Students who were found eligible for the exemption were allowed to pay resident rates starting in fall term, 2013.

**Which public universities in Oregon provide this exemption?**

Currently, the following Oregon public universities provide the exemption from nonresident tuition and fees for students as of fall term, 2013:

- Eastern Oregon University
- Oregon Institute of Technology
- Oregon State University
- Portland State University
- Southern Oregon University
- University of Oregon
- Western Oregon University

**How does an undocumented student request an Exemption from Nonresident Tuition and Fees?**

A student requests an exemption by completing an Affidavit and Request for Exemption from Nonresident Tuition and Fees, which is available at the Admissions Office of each Oregon public university. Students should note that part of this Affidavit must be completed in the presence of and notarized by a Notary Public. Students should also check with the campus admissions office to learn about any campus-specific procedures they will need to follow.

## STATE FINANCIAL AID

**What is state-funded financial aid?**

Like federally-funded financial aid, state-funded aid is funded primarily by taxpayers, in this case, by Oregonians. The Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) is Oregon's largest state-funded need-based grant program for students planning to go to college.

**Who is eligible to receive the Oregon Opportunity Grant?**

Qualified students include those who are residents of Oregon or those exempted from paying nonresident tuition (see above), who plan to attend an eligible Oregon college or university, and:

- are working towards an undergraduate credential, such as an associates degree or a bachelors

degree;

- are enrolled in an eligible program of study; and
- are making satisfactory academic progress.

### **Which colleges and universities participate in the Oregon Opportunity Grant?**

Eligible colleges and universities include all of the following:

- Oregon community colleges
- Oregon public universities
- the Oregon Health Sciences University
- eligible Oregon-based, private not-for-profit college or university

### **What is an "eligible program of study?"**

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission will define this term in 2015.

How can undocumented students apply to receive the Oregon Opportunity Grant?

Undocumented students who will be enrolled in an eligible institution may apply for the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Since tuition-equity students cannot submit a FAFSA, OSAC developed a separate application process and web portal that students will use to apply for the grant. Start [here](#) to see if you qualify.

## **OREGON PROMISE PROGRAM**

### **What is the Oregon Promise?**

Senate Bill 81 provides funds for grants to eligible students who are pursuing a one-year curriculum for transfer to another postsecondary institution, an associate degree, or a program in career and technical education at one of Oregon's 17 public community colleges.

### **Who qualifies as an eligible student?**

Eligible students include those who:

- have been an Oregon resident for at least 12 months prior to enrolling in community college;
- received a high school diploma or GED certificate, or who completed 12th grade;
- earned a cumulative high school GPA of 2.5+;
- enroll in qualified courses at an Oregon community college within six months of completing high school;
- have completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) for each academic year; and
- have not completed more than 90 credit hours or the curricula/programs listed above.

### **What are "qualified courses"?**

Qualified courses include those required for a one-year curriculum for students transferring to another postsecondary institution, an associate's degree, or a program in career and technical education.

### **Can a student receive the grant for more than one term?**

Yes. Students will continue to be eligible for the Oregon Promise if they

- maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better in their community college courses;
- make satisfactory academic progress;
- enroll at least half time each term for at least three terms each consecutive academic year;
- enroll at least half time each term for at least three terms each consecutive academic year; and
- have not completed more than 90 credit hours in the specified curricula.

### **Does the Oregon Promise mean that community college is free?**

No. Every student will pay at least \$50 per term. In addition, the Oregon Promise grant does not cover any nontuition costs, such as books and supplies, room and board, transportation, or other miscellaneous expenses.

### **What is the dollar amount for the Oregon Promise grant?**

The grant is meant to offset any remaining tuition after deducting the \$50 student fee each term, as well as any state or federal grants that a student receives. Grant amounts will vary. For a student enrolled full time, full year, the maximum award is the lesser of the student's actual cost for tuition or the average cost of tuition at an Oregon community college; the minimum award amount is \$1000. Grant amounts are prorated for students who are enrolled at least half time or who are enrolled for less than a full year.

### **How can undocumented students apply for Oregon Promise?**

Eligible undocumented students can apply for Oregon Promise by completing the [application](#) as well as the [Oregon Student Aid Application](#) (ORSAA) by March 1. DACA students should complete both the [FAFSA](#) and the ORSAA.

\*Information provided by Oregon GEAR UP – Undocumented Students