

Ask us about resources for your education by phone Monday through Friday 9 to 9  
1-877-848-4669



## Oregon's Adult Learner College Line

A partnership between the state of Oregon and the US Department of Education

State of Oregon  
Oregon University System  
[www.ous.edu](http://www.ous.edu)

Official web sites of Oregon's public colleges:

- [Eastern Oregon University](#)
- [Oregon Institute of Technology](#)
- [Oregon State University](#)
- [Portland State University](#)
- [Southern Oregon University](#)
- [University of Oregon](#)
- [Western Oregon University](#)

[17 OR Community Colleges](#)  
click above link for info on skills training, associates degrees, convenient learning centers and university partnerships

Many private colleges and universities belong to the Oregon Independent Colleges Association (OICA). For degree offerings and links to OICA member schools click below:  
[www.oicanet.org](http://www.oicanet.org)

### Inside this issue:

Finding Your Path	1
Things People Say	1
Online Education?	2
\$College Costs	2
OR Employment Trends	3
More Career Paths	4
Education Bits	4
Featured Links	4

## Finding Your Path

Embarking on a journey such going to college, especially later in life, can seem like a daunting task. There are so many questions, so many new terms to learn, endless options.

### Some Advice for Returning Adult Students:

- 1) Find a Mentor--a family member who has been to college, a staff person at school or someone in the community in your career area of interest can make all the difference.
- 2) Use tutoring services and study partners--it can be hard to make connections at first, but you will thank yourself for making the effort. And your study buddy will thank you, too!
- 3) Show your school spirit! There is more to college than books and exams. Get

involved on campus with student clubs that align with your career goals or interests. Plan or attend a social event or make positive changes by participating in student government.

Start a new community tradition or tutor a fellow classmate. Activities can help you meet people and relax; plus, an active student can make valuable social and career contacts.

You may even find yourself with a new friend, a path toward a major or a scholarship opportunity! You have the potential to make a difference!

### The Oregon Student Assistance Commission

One of the best resources for those in the beginning stages of this process comes from the Oregon

Student Assistance Commission or OSAC.

In 2009, OSAC, a state agency, is celebrating 50 years in service to Oregon students.

OSAC recently created several tip sheets to help prospective students understand college access terminology.

### Here are active web links to OSAC's five tip sheets:

- [3 Tips for College Students](#)
- [Facing Major Losses in Family Incomes](#)
- [Paying for College - What You Need to Know about Student Loans](#)
- [Dealing with Job Loss](#)
- [How to Analyze College Financial Aid Award Letters](#)
- [Youth in Foster Care can go to college - There is money for you!](#)

## Things People Say: There are many reasons to pursue college at any age!

You may hear from young people, "We have no money; scholarships are only for straight-A students, or nobody in my family has ever been to college."

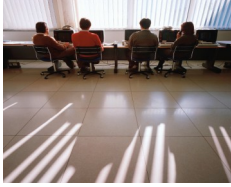
Adults may wonder if learning will be harder than when they were in

school before, or how they will manage work and family in addition to classes.

### Some reasons why we say, "You can go!"

- 1) There may be funding and scholarships available to pay for expenses.
- 2) [The Oregon Adult Learner College Line](#) is here to help!
- 3) You'll learn more about the world and how to make the best of your future.
- 4) People can expect to earn \$1,000,000 more in a lifetime with a college degree.
- 5) You'll be a role model for your friends and family members and start a tradition of education!

There are many alternative ways to obtain training!



“Online degrees from public and private colleges and universities must meet tough standards.”

Online courses or those with non-traditional delivery methods have been around for well over a decade. Some are delivered via the internet, by television or videotape/ dvd or a mixture of several media.

A major consideration: is this a rigorous program from a reputable college or university? “Diploma mills” still abound, where students essentially ‘buy ‘ a college degree. Selling these types of diplomas is unethical, and the recipients are restricted in many states from using the diploma as a legitimate document when applying for government and other jobs.

Online degrees from public and private colleges and universities must meet tough standards. They may be taught by the same professors as site-based courses and be even more intense in content and coursework.

Distance courses can take many forms. Many 'brick and mortar' courses, those held in actual classrooms, may also have an online component led by a class tutor or teaching assistant, with a real time chat function or a weekly discussion board event.

Still other courses are delivered entirely electronically, including term papers, quizzes and final exams.

How can you determine if this type of course is right for you? Here are some key questions to ask yourself:

Is your level of comfort with technology high enough to see you through the school term in case of any problems? Say your computer quits, do you have access to one at a nearby library or campus, or will you be stuck until next week??!

Do you do well studying on your own? Online courses can be a lonely endeavor,

especially if you are a social person. Courses can have a high level of interaction with the instructor and peers, or there may be little interaction.

Are tuition costs a factor? Online courses can be slightly to moderately more expensive than campus-based courses.

Can you avoid the distractions at home when your homework is due and your family dog wants to play?

Online course can be a time-efficient and rewarding endeavor with the right preparation and realistic expectations, so jump right in!

For more information about complete online degrees offered at Oregon's Community Colleges, click here: [Online degrees](#)

Most universities have distance education degrees or extended campus offerings See [page one](#) for links to Oregon's public and private universities.

## What should a college education cost?

Experts have various opinions about education: which universities are best for a certain career or where one should attend graduate school for the best credentials.

Most prudent financial professionals agree that a graduate should not take on more college debt than (s)he can reasonably ex-

pect to earn in a year's salary.

Is this a reasonable yardstick by which to measure the value of higher education? Often, that can depend upon whether the high range of your expected salary will be realized soon after graduation or further down the road. For example, if you expect

to earn \$25,000 right out of college, then you should plan to borrow no more than that amount in total for your education. Of course, professionals such as doctors and lawyers may accrue more debt in graduate school and reach salaries of six figures somewhat more quickly.

Choose to borrow wisely!



[www.oregonopportunities.gov](http://www.oregonopportunities.gov)

Chat or e-mail us a question!

## The Economic Value of Education

**Prediction:** "Every US state and 95% of the nation's metropolitan areas will end 2009 with fewer jobs than they started with, while only two sectors-- education & health services, and government--will add workers." (printed in USA Today from consulting firm Moody's web site, Economy.com)

Although the slow economy touches Americans in every corner of the country, according to Economy.com, many metropolitan centers that contain more diverse industries have been successful in withstanding the current

economic downturn.

Resilient areas are generally those with substantial education, health care or military institutions. Education and health care sectors showed gains in Oregon employment figures from April 2008 to April 2009, according to the Oregon Employment Department.

[Oregon Labor Force and Industry Employment data](#) shows only eight industrial areas with increases in

employment over these 12 months and only two, food manufacturing and wholesale trade (electronic markets) were outside the education and health care industries.

[www.qualityinfo.org](http://www.qualityinfo.org)

In December, 2008, nationwide unemployment sat at a "15 year high of 7.2%" reports the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Yet for those workers with college degrees, the unemployment rate was 2.3%!



Returning to college can help you earn valuable skills to go after that big promotion!

## Viable Careers For The Future

In rural areas where agriculture and tourism add to the economies, the diversity and flexibility of small businesses can make all the difference.

Careers 2009 magazine, a publication of Worksource Oregon Employment Dept. ([www.qualityinfo.org](http://www.qualityinfo.org)), lists 19 career areas with 'very large' numbers of people in Oregon's workforce that also have 'substantial' potential for hiring the most numbers of college-trained or trade-trained workers annually.

These industries provide essential services for rural life and have good potential for opportunities for new workers as record numbers of skilled workers retire in the next few years.

**Selected 2009 occupations in demand and median annual salaries for trained, experienced workers:**

- Accountants & auditors \$54,912
- Automobile mechanics \$37,440
- Bookkeeping & accounting clerks \$32,386
- Building maintenance & repair workers \$33,446
- Carpenters \$37,502
- Child care workers \$19,406
- College instructors \$71,510
- Computer support specialists \$41,413
- Dental assistants \$36,130
- Electricians \$60,486
- Elementary school teachers \$48,807

- High school teachers \$49,055
- Home health aides \$20,301
- Law enforcement officers \$55,827
- Middle school teachers \$49,774
- Plumbers & pipefitters \$59,966
- Registered nurses \$69,014
- Teacher assistants \$26,218
- Welders, cutters, solderers and brazers \$33,467



Freelance writer Robert Shannon writes that so called 'recession proof' occupations may be those with an eye toward the future and shifts in technology: "computer science, engineering, energy and environmental specialists..."

[Working For the Work; Job search strategies for any economy](#)



[www.oregonopportunities.gov](http://www.oregonopportunities.gov)

Chat or e-mail us a question!

**College courses are just one path toward a more stable future in the workforce. For certain groups of returning adults, higher education can take other forms.**

What we hope ever to do with ease we may learn first to do with diligence.

Samuel Johnson  
English Literary Figure  
(1709 -1784)



[www.oregonopportunities.gov](http://www.oregonopportunities.gov)

Chat or e-mail us a question!

## Other paths to better wages, stable employment

Short term vocational training at a for-profit school can be a time-efficient path to career advancement. Costs may be high, though, and credits may not always transfer to other schools. Other options may be **state-sponsored** retraining for displaced workers, those in declining industries or with physical limitations.

Young people (ages 17-24) needing training and a GED, may access [Job Corps](#), a free, nationwide

federal program.

For those who have earned a diploma or GED and have math skills, [trade apprenticeships](#) can lead to family wage jobs and marketable skills. **Building and construction trade apprenticeship training** is usually physically demanding, but can provide paid training with benefits and on the job training.

**Military service** can provide money for education either before active duty in the Reserve Officer

Training Corps (ROTC) while a student is in college, or with the GI Bill after service.

Returning veterans and their dependants have many options in paid training. Career fast track programs may include construction, law enforcement & teaching. Veterans should always contact their regular personnel advisor.

In Oregon, veterans can go to [www.oregon.gov/odva/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/odva/index.shtml)

## Education Bits

### Enrollment Is Up!

<sup>4</sup> Community colleges and Oregon University System (OUS) schools statewide are seeing more applicants of all ages than ever before.

Following a nationwide trend, increased student enrollment is also being seen at Oregon's private universities and trade schools.

### Financial Aid Terms:

What does it all mean?!!

Need help with the complex language of college financial aid? Use the government's comprehensive web site [Finaid.org](http://www.finaid.org)

Glossary of terms:

<http://www.finaid.org>

### Government web sites helpful for beginners

The very beginning of the college financial aid process involves filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Go to [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov)

For questions about how college financial aid at the federal level works, use [studentaid.ed.gov](http://studentaid.ed.gov)

## Oregon's Adult Learner College Line: [www.oregonopportunities.gov](http://www.oregonopportunities.gov)

Featured links to career search and training options, tips on applying to college and obtaining funding

**For Choosing College Majors and Careers**, look at the OLMIS site, **Oregon Labor Information Marketing System**. Here you can look at interesting

vocational or professional career options, find out how long training takes and see where schools and training facilities are located. [Click here for OLMIS](#)

[Oregon Student Assistance Commission](#)

(click above for web link) OSAC helps students find resources for higher edu-

cation. View OSAC's list of scholarships for the January 2010 application.

**ASPIRE**, an organization that works with volunteers in Oregon high schools to help prepare students for college, has links about accessing training and college for everyone at [www.aspireoregon.org](http://www.aspireoregon.org)