



Oregon PELL GRANTS:

Women Raise Rural Vigor

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in collaboration with Reine Thomas, Chemeketa Community College

Key Findings

- Oregon's 14 rural colleges, like those of other rural states, are heavily dependent on Pell Grant vouchers for enrollment, often 50% or more of the total.
- Pell Grants vouchers drive--by a growing margin--college access in Oregon, affirming this national trend.
- Pell Grant vouchers are propelling women using community colleges into the majority of undergraduate enrollments.
- Pell Grants vouchers are used for general education for transfer as well as for technical education programs that lead employment, making Pell critical to workforce training & economic development.
- Such research can benefit both higher education and the national interest by matching traditional degrees more closely with the skill demands of the 21st century, while making them equally attractive to men and women.
- The implications of these Pell studies on American economic competitiveness are an urgent call for expanded research.

INTRODUCTION

The Pell Grant voucher is the Federal Government's most significant program for access to Higher Education. This study of the Pell Grant voucher awarded by Oregon community colleges in the 2012-13 college year adds another graphic chapter to the series of such studies led by the Education Policy Center at The University of Alabama. Much of the series focus so far has been rural America. Of Oregon's 17 community colleges, 14 are classified as rural-serving by the Basic Classification of the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The other three are Portland, the largest urban community college of the Pacific Northwest, and the nearby suburban colleges of Mt. Hood and Clackamas.

Most conspicuous in the data is the heavy dependence of rural colleges on the Pell Grant voucher. On average, at rural Oregon's 14 colleges, Pell Grant recipients number more than half of the FTE enrollment. This is consistent with earlier state wide studies across Kansas, Arkansas, Alabama, and Mississippi, in which rural colleges commonly show half or more of their FTE enrollment earning credits through Pell.

This trend beckons much more extensive research, which is high priority for the Education Policy Center. It is obvious that community colleges and Pell Grants are making an important contribution to the economic and cultural fortunes of rural communities, counties, and states. Community college operations alone account for nearly 300,000 jobs in rural America. Additionally, Pell vouchers are spent almost entirely in the college and the surrounding community. The education that students receive at community colleges usually increase personal earnings, which in turn benefit the entire community and region.

Also conspicuous in the data is the lead women hold across categories in Oregon, except in Clackamas and Lane, where the genders essentially ran neck and neck with regard to enrollment, and at Clatsop, where men outnumbered women in headcount, FTE, and credits earned. *At every other college, women outpace men by varying margins in headcount enrollment, full-time equivalency (FTE), and college credits earned at 14 of 17 Community Colleges.*

The picture on Pell Grants is parallel but clearly different. Women outpaced men on Pell Grants by a significant margin at nearly every college. The same is true of credits completed by recipients of the Pell Grant voucher by gender.

| Oregon Community Colleges by Carnegie Classification | Total Pell Awards (\$\$) | Credits Earned | | Enrollment | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|-----------|------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| | | | | Unduplicated Headcount | | Full-Time Equivalent | |
| | | Total | % on Pell | Total | % on Pell | Total | % on Pell |
| Rural (14 of 17) | \$133,952,323 | 1,367,957 | 53 | 93,692 | 41 | 46,778 | 53 |
| Suburban (2 of 17) | \$30,853,727 | 483,044 | 41 | 33,960 | 28 | 16,690 | 40 |
| Urban (1 of 17) | \$64,512,664 | 887,072 | 44 | 59,572 | 35 | 30,383 | 46 |
| Totals and Averages | \$229,318,714 | 2,738,073 | 51 | 187,224 | 39 | 93,851 | 51 |

Oregon's Landscape: Pell Drives Female Enrollments

At Portland, the only urban-serving college in the state, men ran within 6% of women in FTE, yet trailed them in credits completed by roughly 12%. In Pell Grants, women led men 11,481 to 9,280, a spread of 25%. In credits completed by Pell recipients, women outworked men 213,332 to 171,217, a spread of nearly 25%. The Pell voucher is clearly driving Oregon's female enrollments.

This disparity remarkably is greatest at two of the smallest colleges. At Oregon Coast, with a headcount of just 783, 482 are women, and men trailed in credits completed 4,536 to 7,668. Pell Grant vouchers favored women 159 to 99, or by 60%, and in credits completed by Pell recipients, women led 3,671 to 2,095, a margin of 75%.

At Columbia Gorge, women earned almost twice the credits of men, 17,835 against 9,427. They were slightly less than double men in headcount, 1,106 to 632, yet more than double in Pell recipients. They completed 10,058 credits, nearly 70% of the total credits earned by Pell recipients.

State Capital

At Chemeketa in Salem, the state capital, where government is the largest employer, women were ahead in every category. Women earned 56% of total credits earned at the institution, while women Pell recipients garnered 60% of the 177,007 credits earned through Pell.

Salem and Chemeketa may well be a microcosm of the national pattern in which women are in ascendency in both higher education and the workforce. Today women are claiming three of every five new bachelor degrees nationally, and their penetration is growing in the graduate schools producing all the leading professions, with the exception of engineering.

Contrasting Suburbs

Clackamas and Mt. Hood offer a study in contrasts as major suburbs of Portland, in enrollment and the flow of Pell. While Mt. Hood is roughly one fourth larger in credit headcount enrollment, it's half again larger in credit FTE enrollment, and has some 80% more Pell Grants than Clackamas.

At Clackamas, women and men run essentially even in headcount enrollment, FTE enrollment, and credits completed. Men tallied 107,407 credits completed, and women 109,903. Yet women

held the advantage in the number of Pell Grant vouchers awarded, 1,974 to 1,511, and in credits Pell recipients earned, 41,000 to 31,000.

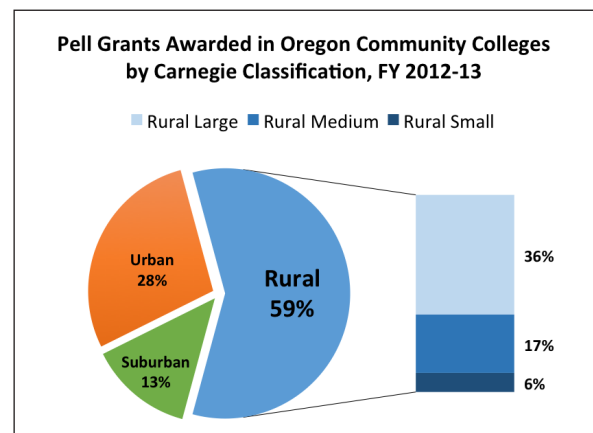
At Mt. Hood women held larger advantages in all the same categories. There were half again as many women as men on Pell Grants vouchers, 3,824 to 2,455, and they topped men in credits completed by almost the same margin.

A few studies have indicated that Pell Grant recipients who manage to give all their time to their studies, getting by without a job, are the better students, and have higher completion rates, than students who mix job and school. Yet the vast majority of community college students are already in the workforce, full-time or part-time. Deeper research in this area is sorely needed.

Rural Colleges

Among Oregon's 14 rural community colleges, Lane, Rogue, and Linn-Benton are deemed large rural-serving institutions by the Carnegie Classification. Central Oregon is categorized as a medium rural-serving college. Somewhat equal in unduplicated credit headcount, these four colleges naturally vary in the enrollment supported by Pell vouchers.

Lane, in Eugene, also home of the University of Oregon, has the largest headcount at 12,845. Linn-Benton, in Albany, near Oregon State University, is at 12,062 headcount. Their respective Pell grant counts are 60% at Lane and 24% at Linn-Benton. Pell Grant FTE at Lane is 65% of the total credit FTE, and those students earn 64% of the total college credits earned. A study of Pell students' dual-enrollment patterns between neighboring universities and community colleges warrants further research.



Central Oregon and Rogue are both above 11,000 headcount. Central Oregon is larger in FTE, with 6,571 to Rogue's 4,415, yet these colleges both have strong showings of Pell recipients, comprising 56% and 60% of total credit FTE, respectively.

At medium-sized rural colleges Blue Mountain, Clatsop, Southwestern, Treasure Valley and Umpqua, credit student headcount ranges from 4,734 at Treasure Valley to 2,716 at Clatsop. Pell Grant FTE registers a high of 66% of total college credit FTE at both Treasure Valley with 1,773 Pell FTE and at Umpqua with 936 Pell FTE.

In credits completed, women led men at all five colleges. The gap is wider in credits completed by the female Pell recipients as evidenced by 67% at Blue Mountain and 61% at Southwestern.

Blue Mountain Community College President Cam Preus, who championed the Oregon Pell Survey, underscores that Pell Grant investments contribute mightily to the development of human capital and economic development in rural communities.

At these rural colleges, women run well ahead of men on Pell Grant vouchers. At the typical college Pell Grants number more than half the FTE enrollment. Clearly, Oregon is a largely rural state, and this pattern is consistent with the other rural states for which the Education Policy Center has made similar Pell studies.

In Pell utilization in rural colleges, Oregon looks much like Kansas, where the original studies of Pell were made. Both are strong in agriculture, i.e., farming industries, and their colleges show less Pell dependence than those covered by similar EPC studies, including Maine and three in the deep South – Alabama, Arkansas the Mississippi.

All of these studies reflect a significant linkage between community colleges, Pell Grants, education attainment, and the economic and cultural fortunes of the areas they serve. The community college is often the largest employer in the county it serves, with both the payroll and Pell Grants spreading income from the campus to the community while cultivating an educated workforce in rural America. Community colleges are making a large contribution to rural life and the prosperity of the matchless American breadbasket.

see table on back page

Closing Remarks

This report, the latest in our series of the importance of Pell Grants to rural America, documents the critically important role of federal direct grant student aid to access with excellence for women in our country. It debunks the myth that the Pell Grant program serves only our nation's urban centers with majority-minority populations. The Pell Grant voucher helps all students, be they attending rural, suburban, or urban community colleges. And the Pell Grant voucher program is of special importance and relevance to female students, who now comprise 60 percent and more of the total student body at many U.S. community colleges.

Moving forward, the Education Policy Center and its partners will be continuing our research on Pell Grants. We have special interest in focusing on how students use Pell Grants to access for-credit programs that lead to Associate's Degrees that prepare persons for the world of work. We also will be investigating the role of Pell Grants in retaining students, and propelling students forward to graduation.

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About the Authors:

Frank Mensel in the 1980s and early '90s lead Congressional liaison for both the American Association of Community Colleges and the Association of Community College Trustees, the only leader ever to hold this dual appointment. He first served AACC 1968-73 when he was intensively involved with Sen. Claiborne Pell in the enactment and funding of the Pell Grant. Now with the EPC, he is spearheading research on Pell Grants' economic and cultural power, with the view that "they are the greatest benefit by far for colleges and students ever enacted by Congress." Mensel has an honorary doctor's degree from the Utah Board of Regents.

Michael Malley, an M.P.A. student and Research Associate for the Education Policy Center at The University of Alabama, has and continues to track the impact of Pell Grants at the state and national level. He recently co-authored the report, *Leveraging Federal Funding Streams to Build Rural Economies*, published by the Education Policy Center and the Rural Community College Alliance February 2014.

Reine Thomas, recently retired, has served as an instructional administrator at three Oregon community colleges over the past twenty-five years. She conducted her doctoral research on rural community colleges at Oregon State University.

| Oregon's Community Colleges | Class | Pell Grants Awarded In Dollar (\$\$) | | | | Credits Earned | | | Enrollment | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| | | | | | | | | | Unduplicated Headcount | | | Full-Time Equivalent | | |
| | | Total | Men | Women | % Women | Total | By Students (on Pell) | | Total | Students (on Pell) | | Total | Students (on Pell) | |
| | | | | | | | No. | % | | No. | % | | No. | % |
| Columbia Gorge | RS | 2,162,642 | 667,843 | 1,494,749 | 69 | 27,262 | 14,438 | 53 | 1,741 | 671 | 39 | 847 | 465 | 55 |
| Klamath | RS | 9,970,057 | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1,810 | 1,217 | 67 | 973 | - | - |
| Oregon Coast | RS | 829,851 | 314,516 | 515,335 | 62 | 12,204 | 5,766 | 47 | 783 | 258 | 33 | 430 | 201 | 47 |
| Blue Mountain | RM | 4,216,250 | 1,294,861 | 2,908,856 | 69 | 78,509 | 34,626 | 44 | 4,368 | 1,313 | 30 | 2,036 | 882 | 43 |
| Central Oregon | RM | 15,693,175 | 6,458,970 | 9,234,205 | 59 | 160,114 | 103,067 | 64 | 11,404 | 4,914 | 43 | 6,571 | 3,671 | 56 |
| Treasure Valley | RM | 7,589,613 | 2,861,718 | 4,724,249 | 62 | 72,469 | 47,397 | 65 | 4,734 | 2,492 | 53 | 2,664 | 1,773 | 67 |
| Umpqua | RM | 6,510,323 | 2,482,473 | 4,027,850 | 62 | 65,759 | 43,375 | 66 | 3,606 | 1,991 | 55 | 1,419 | 936 | 66 |
| Clatsop | RM | 1,819,919 | 605,371 | 1,214,548 | 67 | 30,299 | 11,591 | 38 | 2,716 | 540 | 20 | 1,049 | 431 | 41 |
| Southwestern | RM | 3,806,450 | 1,483,128 | 2,312,551 | 61 | 61,612 | 28,099 | 46 | 4,334 | 1,140 | 26 | 2,094 | 947 | 45 |
| Chemeketa | RL | 27,459,063 | 10,869,049 | 16,489,620 | 60 | 349,558 | 177,007 | 51 | 22,239 | 8,215 | 37 | 10,667 | 5,485 | 51 |
| Lane | RL | 31,194,161 | 14,057,742 | 16,936,017 | 54 | 174,209 | 111,946 | 64 | 12,845 | 7,718 | 60 | 7,830 | 5,124 | 65 |
| Linn-Benton | RL | 9,077,993 | 3,725,034 | 5,248,186 | 58 | 181,582 | 63,590 | 35 | 12,062 | 2,892 | 24 | 5,782 | 2,047 | 35 |
| Rogue | RL | 13,622,826 | 5,399,743 | 8,223,083 | 60 | 154,380 | 90,795 | 59 | 11,050 | 4,384 | 40 | 4,415 | 2,649 | 60 |
| Mt. Hood | SS | 19,663,916 | 7,689,694 | 11,974,222 | 61 | 265,734 | 127,514 | 48 | 18,827 | 6,279 | 33 | 9,985 | 4,538 | 45 |
| Clackamas | SM | 11,189,811 | 4,738,947 | 6,450,864 | 58 | 217,310 | 73,185 | 34 | 15,133 | 3,485 | 23 | 6,706 | 2,296 | 34 |
| Portland | UM | 64,512,664 | 28,431,907 | 35,552,119 | 55 | 887,072 | 387,734 | 44 | 59,572 | 20,944 | 35 | 30,383 | 14,072 | 46 |
| Total/ Avg. | - | 176,720,434 | 74,912,116 | 100,874,111 | 57 | 2,229,845 | 1,031,771 | 46 | 151,728 | 53,917 | 36 | 75,768 | 36,211 | 48 |

*Definitions: "Class" is representative of the Basic Classification of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; "RS"= Rural Small; "RM"= Rural Medium; "RL"= Rural Large; "SS"=Suburban Single Campus; "SM"= Suburban Multi-Campus; "US"= Urban Single Campus; "Um"= Urban Multi-Campus.
 Notes: Oregon CC FTE is clock-hour based, NOT credit-based and therefore is not comparable to non-Oregon community college FTE data.
 **Klamath Total Pell Dollars breakdown is not by dollar but awards by gender.
 ***Tillamook Bay data is embedded in PCC's data for this time period, and is not included in this table.*

ABOUT THE EDUCATION POLICY CENTER

The College of Education's Education Policy Center seeks to inform and improve education policy-making and practice, and our understanding of the roles education plays in a free and equitable society, through a coordinated program of research, topical and historical analyses of education-related issues, and services for education practitioners and policy-makers in Alabama and the nation. For more information call (205) 348-2470 or visit us at www.uaedpolicy.ua.edu.

On-Going Center Projects Include:

Annual Surveys of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges on finance and access issues:

see www.uaedpolicy.ua.edu/access--funding-surveys.html.

Rural community colleges: The Center hosts the Rural Community College Alliance's webpage, as it fulfills its role as RCCA's research arm.

History of education research: *More Than Science or Sputnik, the National Defense Education Act*, by Center Associate Director Wayne J. Urban, published in 2010. Urban is now completing a biography on former Harvard University Pres. James Bryant Conant.

Student access research: Since 2010, the Center has published 19 studies on Pell Grants, and student aid issues.

The University of Alabama Superintendent's Academy, a partnership with the Alabama State Department of Education, broadens the pool of diverse, well-prepared leaders for Alabama's 137 public city and county school districts.

Public access colleges research: The Center's work on Associate's Colleges classifications is included in the 2005 and 2010 Basic Classification published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, included in all federal education data sets.

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