GENERAL INFORMATION

History
Central Oregon Community College was founded in 1949 as part of the Bend School District. It is the longest standing community college in Oregon. The College District was formed in 1959 and officially established as the Central Oregon Area Education District by a vote of residents in 1962. The original Bend campus opened in 1964.

Donald P Pence served first as director of the College (from 1950 to 1957) and then as the first president (from 1957 to 1967). Dr. Frederick H. Boyle was president from 1967 through 1990. Dr. Robert L. Barber was the third president in the College’s history and served through 2004. Dr. James E. Middleton served for 10 years from 2004 to 2014. Dr. Shirley Metcalf became president in 2014 and served through June 30, 2019. Dr. Laurie Chesley began her tenure as the College’s sixth president in July 2019.

On the 25-acre Redmond campus, there are four buildings, housing administration, classrooms, and a computer lab. The Redmond Technology Education Center opened in Fall 2014 and houses state-of-the-art facilities and programs.

In 2011, the College opened campuses in Madras and Prineville. The Madras campus was funded by a 2009 bond measure and placed on land donated to COCC by the local Bean Foundation. The Crook County open campus was funded jointly by the bond measure and a grant to Crook County from the U.S. Department of Commerce Broadband Technology Opportunity Program and is on land donated by the county.

All campuses offer credit and non-credit courses and necessary student services.

The District
The Central Oregon Community College District encompasses all of Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson counties as well as the southern part of Wasco and northern portions of Klamath and Lake counties. A seven-member board of directors governs the College, with members of that board elected from geographic zones in the District. The District covers a 10,000-square-mile area making it larger than eight of the U.S. states.

Central Oregon Community College would like to acknowledge that the beautiful land our campuses reside on are the original homelands of the Wasq’u (Wasco) and Tana’nma (Warm Springs) people. The Wasq’u (Wasco) and Tana’nma (Warm Springs) people ceded this land to the U.S. government in the treaty of Middle Oregon of 1855 while retaining regular and customary hunting, fishing, and gathering rights. As a result of this treaty, the Warm Springs Indian Reservation was created.

In 1879 a small group of Numu (Paiute) people were placed on the Warm Springs Reservation by the U.S. government. In the years following, more Numu (Paiute) people were forcibly moved to the reservation as well. It wasn’t until 1937, in conjunction with the Indian Reorganization Act, that the three distinct tribes became known as the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs. It is also important to note that the Klamath Trail ran north through this area to the great Celilo Falls trading grounds. Although the Klamath people did not reside in this territory, they claim the trail as their own. It is crucial to recognize that the descendants of these original people are still here today, and they are thriving members of our communities. We acknowledge and thank the original stewards of this land. It is our hope that students, staff, faculty, and guests continue to honor and care for the land that we use.

The COCC Foundation
Education changes lives. For 65 years, Central Oregon Community College Foundation scholarships have enabled students to learn new skills, to earn technical certificates, to complete two-year associate degrees, and to be prepared to pursue the remainder of their undergraduate studies at a college or university. Students can apply for an annual scholarship for the next academic year from December 15 to July 15.

The Foundation is the oldest community college foundation in Oregon. Its assets have grown significantly over the years from the first gift of $500 in 1955 to nearly $25 million today. In addition to scholarship support, the Foundation also provides support in a variety of ways, from supporting departmental programs to providing support for the Nancy R. Chandler Visiting Scholar program. In 2019-2020, the Foundation offered more than $1.7 million in scholarships and program funds. For more information, call 541-383-7225 or visit cocc.edu/foundation.