



## COLLEGE DEGREES 101

College degrees are not one-size-fits all. The type of degree your student achieves and the type of school he will go to depends on the type of career he is interested in.

**2-YEAR COLLEGES** include vocational schools, technical schools and community colleges.

Degree Type	Certificate/Diploma	Apprenticeship	Associate's Degree (A.A., A.A.S.)
How long?	<b>1-2 years</b>	<b>2-3 years</b>	<b>2-3 years</b>
Description	Prepares students for entry-level professional jobs or supplements existing knowledge with new job skills.	Combines classroom study with on-the-job training.	Concentrates on the skills needed for a specific career or the transfer to a four-year college to complete a bachelor's degree.
Sample Careers	Computer Technician Medical Assistant Truck Driver	Automotive Technician Electrician Fire Fighter	Dental Hygienist Engineering Technician Legal Assistant
Avg. Salary	<b>\$37,388</b>	<b>\$37,388</b>	<b>\$39,936</b>

**4-YEAR COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES** offer a variety of undergraduate (Bachelor's degree) programs, and some schools might offer graduate degrees (professional, Master's and Doctoral degrees) too.

Degree Type	Bachelor's Degree (B.A., B.S.)	Master's Degree (M.A., M.S.)	Professional Degree (M.D., J.D.)	Doctoral Degree (Ph.D.)
How long?	<b>4-6 years</b>	<b>6-8 years</b>	<b>6-8 years</b>	<b>8-10 years</b>
Description	Requires general and specific coursework in one or two subjects for in-depth study.	Builds on information the student learned for the bachelor's degree, but is more focused.	Concentrates on advanced study of specific careers and often requires the student to pass a state or national exam.	Advanced study of specific subjects; highest degree offered. The student researches and writes a paper, which must be defended in front of experts.
Sample Careers	Accountant Architect Computer Engineer	Librarian School Counselor Physician Assistant	Dentist Veterinarian Lawyer	College Professor Physical Therapist Psychologist
Avg. Salary	<b>\$54,756</b>	<b>\$65,676</b>	<b>\$86,580</b>	<b>\$80,652</b>

## COLLEGE MYTHS (AND REALITIES)

**MYTH:** A 4-year college and degree is better than a 2-year college and degree.

**REALITY:** The experiences and degrees offered by 2-year and 4-year colleges will be different, but one is not necessarily “better”. Students should choose the type of college they attend and degree they get based on what they might be interested in doing and the kind of college experience they are interested in. As the chart shows on the first page, a higher degree usually translates to increased income, although there are many 2-year degree programs whose graduates earn more than those with a Bachelor’s degree.

## DID YOU KNOW?

The majority (61%) of Oregon high school seniors enroll in college or a university within a year of graduating. The state has set a goal that by 2025, 80% of students will go on to postsecondary education.



## PARENT CHECKLIST

- Talk about future career options with your student.**  
Discuss interests and research the type of degree needed for potential occupations. Check out [mynextmove.org](http://mynextmove.org) to browse careers and get a sense of how much education your student will need.
- Explore college options.**  
After choosing the type of degree your student is interested in, visit [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org) to search for schools that offer the programs and other characteristics your student might be interested in (close to home or out-of-state? big or small?)
- Continue talking to your student about the importance of college and doing well in school.**  
Your opinions and high expectations matter!

## EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

For more information, contact:

GEAR UP stands for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs and is a federally-funded program that helps rural, low-income middle and high schools prepare students for education after high school.

Visit [oregongearup.org](http://oregongearup.org) to learn more and access resources to help your students make a plan.

**COLLEGE.** It's not a dream, it's a plan.