Statement from the President

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT MARK WEISS

We, at Western Oregon University (WOU) are proud of our ability to successfully serve a diverse community of students. That valued attribute is an important component of our core mission. For example, the success rates for our Latino students at WOU are notable and have received national recognition. We are determined in providing a supportive environment for students who are the first in their families to attend college. In addition, we recognize that a commitment to diversity extends beyond our student populations - to staff and faculty; and should inspire a curriculum and campus culture that values inclusiveness and recognizes our differences as an advantage.

As President of Western Oregon University, and the first in my family to attend college, I am proud to support and communicate the WOU Diversity Action Plan on campus. The WOU Diversity Action Plan focuses our attention on how we can continue to help WOU students succeed and to overcome economic, language, and learning barriers that stand between themselves and college completion. This Plan will also help guide our actions in support of an accessible, inclusive, and diverse campus community enjoyed by students, staff, and faculty alike.

Although some elements of the Diversity Action Plan lend themselves to measurable outcomes, we recognize that no one action is sufficient and that there is not some moment in time at which we will be able to cease our efforts and say the job is done. Instead, the Diversity Action Plan reflects a culture we embrace and the way we will carry out our educational mission every day at Western Oregon University.

WOU Preamble

Western Oregon University offers exemplary undergraduate and graduate programs in a supportive and rigorous learning environment. Oregon’s oldest public university, WOU works to ensure the success of students and the advancement of knowledge as a service to Oregon and the region. The University works in partnership with pK-12 schools, community colleges and other institutions of higher education, government, and local and global communities.

WOU Mission

Western Oregon University is a comprehensive public university, operating for the public good, which:

- Provides effective learning opportunities that prepare students for a fulfilling life in a global society;
- Supports an accessible and diverse campus community; and,
- Improves continuously our educational, financial, and environmental sustainability.
Western Oregon University Diversity Statement

Western Oregon University emphasizes diversity as a matter of institutional priority and an integral component of academic success.

As we continue to increase our understanding and commitment to diversity we strive to:

- create respect for and appreciation of all persons and ideas as a key characteristic of our campus community;
- increase the diversity of all parts of our University community through commitment to diversity in our recruitment and retention efforts;
- promote active engagement among all members of our campus and surrounding communities; and
- foster a campus environment that is inclusive and accessible to students, faculty, staff and administration across the campus community;

In order to achieve our aspirations at Western Oregon University, we will:

- sustain a safe and welcoming environment that supports diversity;
- support full and equitable educational access;
- increase our efforts to recruit and retain a diverse campus community;
- prepare effective citizen-leaders for a pluralistic world;
- confront and resolve institutional barriers to social justice;
- challenge instances of prejudice, bias and discrimination;
- enhance current and create new systems of support for the success of the University; and
- dedicate resources to the diversity initiatives.

Desired Outcomes

WOU will implement and institutionalize this Diversity Action Plan which has been designed to increase campus-wide awareness of diversity and social justice issues. Progress on the Diversity Action Plan requires both the systematic involvement of all campus units and the regular dissemination of results among all stakeholders. It also requires the identification and commitment of funding and resource allocation. In our ongoing process to address diversity and social justice issues, we have identified the goals below as a foundation for our current plan.

Goals

**Goal 1:** *Create a climate and culture of leadership, inclusivity, excellence and preparedness for our changing world by providing direction and training for the campus community founded upon and supporting the evolution of WOU’s Diversity Statement*

**Objectives:**
- Formally budget adequate funding to support educational opportunities about diversity and social justice across campus

• Implement ongoing diversity and social justice training for all faculty, staff, and students
• Include diversity and social justice training in all new employee orientations
• Develop and reinforce diversity infrastructure (e.g., assistive technology, physical access, foreign language learning opportunities, closed captioning, gender-neutral facilities)

Assessment/Measurement:
• Develop the Diversity Action Plan as a means to record and review training opportunities and number of attendees
• Survey campus divisions and departments to identify current status of diversity infrastructure, prioritize needs, and make recommendations to the University Advisory Council
• Periodically survey and analyze campus climate data to establish targets for improvement

Goal 2: Recruit and retain a diverse student population

Objectives:
• Increase the percentage of enrolled and graduated racial/ethnic minority students
• Seek out, recruit, recognize and support marginalized student populations
• Enhance services that result in retention of students with a focus on those who are first-generation and/or of low socio-economic status
• Increase campus-wide awareness and involvement in student retention activities
• Monitor and respond to state and national trends in the areas of recruitment and retention of diverse student populations

Assessments:
• Monitor student enrollment, persistence and graduation rates compared to our state demographics using the OUS Student Centralized Administrative Reporting File (SCARF)
• Conduct an annual inventory of student retention efforts
• Examine university supports for marginalized student populations
• Gather and analyze data from various required annual reports and regulations, including but not limited to: Title IX, Affirmation Action, graduation rates disaggregated by various diversity categories, financial aid, and scholarships awards

Goal 3: Build a welcoming campus community that supports recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff and administration

Objectives:
• Advocate for the allocation of resources to recruit and retain underrepresented staff and faculty
• Increase search committees’ attention to diversity considerations that impact hiring

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1 For the purpose of this document we use the term *marginalized populations* to refer to a person’s non-majority status in such areas as: race, ethnicity, color, national origin, language, religion, spiritual beliefs, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, socio-economic, and veteran status
• Annually review data and identify needs from reports compiled and monitored by the WOU
  Affirmative Action Officer
• Recommend solutions to issues and challenges identified by WOU constituents, the Office of
  Affirmative Action and compliance reports

Assessments:
• Annually review and report on the achievement of Goal 3 objectives

Goal 4: Develop and strengthen the University’s relationships with diverse communities

Objectives:
• Recognize and strengthen existing relationships with diverse communities and build new
  relationships to support equity, inclusion and multicultural awareness
• Recognize and advocate for the development of supports needed for our marginalized
  populations
• Promote increased student involvement for study abroad, service learning (locally, nationally,
  and internationally), international studies, and collaborative projects with other universities
• Promote increased involvement of faculty in teaching and research programs in diverse
  communities
• Track instances of WOU’s partnerships with diverse communities and determine necessary
  infrastructure and resources

Assessments:
• Determine awareness and establish instances and baseline counts in each of the above
  categories via surveys of WOU departments, colleges, and programs
• Share progress on Goal 4 objectives through annual reports to the university community, the
  WOU website, the Oregon University System, alumni, and public media

The University Diversity Committee

The UDC is responsible for fulfilling the following tasks:
1. Provide a clearly stated actionable diversity plan for the campus community
2. Provide a set of goals, objectives, and actions to realize the diversity plan
3. Implement surveys on various aspects of diversity to gather data to measure and assess the
   goals articulated in the Diversity Action Plan
4. Use the data gained from the surveys to evaluate WOU’s decisions and policies on diversity
5. Advocate for policies and actions that support diversity at Western Oregon University

2011-2012 University Diversity Committee:
Malissa Larson  Director, Office of Disability Services (Chair)
Angie Barry  Office Coordinator, Werner University Center, Student Leadership &
  Activities
Don Boderman  Director, Student Enrichment Program
Tina Fuchs  Dean of Students; Director, University Housing

On an annual basis the UDC will review and reevaluate the goals and objectives of the WOU Diversity Action Plan