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## **WOU students perform West Side Story**

**MONMOUTH** – Western Oregon University' Theatre/Dance and Music Departments will present seven performances of the Broadway classic "West Side Story" in early March; performed by WOU students, directed and choreographed by Dance Professor Sharon Oberst, with vocal and music direction by Solveig Holmquist, music professor.

The performances will be held in Rice Auditorium on WOU's campus at 7:30 p.m. on March 2 through 4, and March 9 through 11. There will also be a matinee performance at 2 p.m. on Sunday, March 5. The March 10 performance will be interpreted for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" is transported to 1950's New York City, as two young idealistic lovers find themselves caught between warring street gangs, the American Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks. Their struggle to survive in a world of hate, violence and prejudice is one of the most innovative, heart-wrenching and relevant musical dramas of our time.

"West Side Story" was based on a book by Arthur Laurents, music by Leonard Bernstein, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and based on conception by Jerome Robbins.

"The students in the cast and in the orchestra have eagerly taken on the challenge of the large amount of music and dance pieces in the performance, and have tackled very difficult material," Oberst said. "Dr. Holmquist has done fabulous work with the 22 musicians in the orchestra. And although working with a cast of 38 is daunting at times, I've had such a great time working with such an enthusiastic and talented group.

General admission tickets are \$11, senior citizens are \$8 and students are \$6. For more information contact the Box Office at 503-838-8462 between 12:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m.

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