

# Western Oregon UNIVERSITY

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## CHAPTER 1 MISSION, CORE THEMES, AND EXPECTATIONS



Submitted by  
John Minahan, President  
Kent Neely, Accreditation Liaison Officer

Submitted to  
The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU)  
1 March 2011: 16 September 2011

# WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY

1 March 2011

Dr. Sandra E Elman, President  
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
8060 165<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Suite 100  
Redmond, WA 98052

Dear Dr. Elman:

Western Oregon University is pleased to submit Chapter 1 of the Comprehensive Accreditation Report. This report includes the Mission, Core Themes, Objectives and Desired Outcomes. All were determined through a nearly continuous process of collaboration across the university over a nine-month span.

Our Core Themes reflect what we are and what we want to become. We firmly believe that having them institutionalized in this process provides a tool to guide us through mission attainment. We expect that we may need to refine our objectives and desired outcomes as evaluations unfold. Likewise, we will set numerical thresholds for key performance indicators once the requisite amount of data is collected, analyzed and interpreted. Moreover, we know that as the newly created committee-structure becomes fully engaged the awareness and utility of the Core Themes, Objectives and Desired Outcomes will become an integral part of the way we conduct business at WOU. Our decisions on academic planning, effective teaching, student learning and student services will be informed by the data and information generated across the university through this process. We are committed to the revised standards and process for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

We look forward to the informative review of this chapter by our evaluation team, Drs. Thomas, Sherman and Machlis, and hearing from the Board of Commissioners.

Sincerely,



John P. Minahan  
President

**Office of the President**

345 North Monmouth Avenue • Monmouth, Oregon 97361 • (503) 838-8888 • Fax: (503) 838-8600 • <http://www.wou.edu>

# Chapter One – Mission, Core Themes, and Expectations

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## INTRODUCTION

### **The Oregon University System**

Quality educational opportunity has been a priority for Oregonians even before Congress granted statehood. In 1856, the roots of Oregon public higher education were established when the Territorial Legislature acknowledged Monmouth College (later to become Western Oregon University) as the state's first chartered campus.

As the state and its network of public universities grew in stature and complexity in the early 1900s, Oregonians developed a new approach to public higher education that would become a national model. On 1 March 1929 the Legislature established the Oregon State Board of Higher Education to provide oversight to the established schools and to eliminate unnecessary duplication. It took nearly two years for the Board to study curricula and reorganize a unified structure of higher education in Oregon. At that time, the Board hired the system's first chancellor and effectively began to administer the Legislature's vision for a unified State System of Higher Education.

Today, the Oregon University System's seven diverse and quality-focused institutions provide higher education opportunities to all Oregonians who in turn enrich the economic and cultural base in the state.

### **Western Oregon University**

Western Oregon University (WOU) is a comprehensive, public, midsize university awarding endorsements, certificates, bachelor's, and master's degrees. WOU offers 51 undergraduate degree programs and 10 graduate programs. We currently serve more than 6000 students, including 5300 undergraduates and 750 graduate students. The faculty consists of approximately 194 regular (tenure track and full-time non-tenure track) members and 223 part-time (non-tenure track) members with a support staff of 400 full-time and 62 part-time classified and unclassified employees.

WOU operates for the public good, with a strong history of providing effective learning experiences through teaching excellence. As a University community, we continue to strive to adapt and transform ourselves to the ever-changing social, political, environmental, and economic conditions that affect our ability to serve our constituencies.

President John Minahan and his Executive Staff (comprised of the Executive Vice President of Finance and Administration, Provost & Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Vice President of Student Affairs) lead WOU. This leadership team serves as trustee of the common good for all community members and constituents--past, present and future. They are committed to providing the resources and eliminating the obstacles to mission attainment. Moreover, they are dedicated to the concepts of stewardship, transparency, and trust.

## INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Since submitting its April 2010 Progress Report to the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, Western Oregon University has experienced continued growth and development. This continued improvement stems directly from our ongoing efforts to support and engage the communities we serve. Examples include:

1. Economic decline and high unemployment continue to encourage students to attend college so as to be prepared to enter the workforce when the economy improves. This is reflected in our significant enrollment growth. The unduplicated headcount at WOU increased 10.2% to 6,233 in fall 2010 compared to 5,654 in fall 2009. Double-digit increases occurred in all undergraduate categories: first-time freshmen, transfers, residents, and nonresidents. The new student cohort of 2,185 was 13.2% larger than fall 2009. Previous years of growth and a 75.7% retention rate kept the unduplicated headcount rising. With two-year growth of 16.5% and four-year growth of 27.5%, WOU continues to attract and retain an increasing percentage of students attending Oregon state universities.
2. The State of Oregon currently faces a \$3.5 billion deficit for the 2011-13 biennium. Some believe that new Governor John Kitzhaber will not allow any of the seven Oregon University System (OUS) institutions to fail because of the state's goals for an educated citizenry and the economic impact that each of the institutions has on its regional communities. However, in a time of reduced governmental appropriations, OUS resources to those institutions most at risk could jeopardize WOU's fiscal stability. Barring circumstances outside of our control, WOU's current fund balance could keep the university solvent through a turn-around in the state's economy, as determined by WOU budget-forecasting models.
3. The Oregon Legislature (Senate Bill 242) will consider whether to end the OUS status as a state agency. Should this occur, OUS institutions would likely enter into a performance contract with the state. That contract would determine the basis for receiving funds from state tax dollars, among other things. For two decades, since the passage of Ballot Measure 5 in 1990, support for Oregon higher education has been declining, and it is challenging to predict how ending state agency status would affect WOU's stability and sustainability.
4. WOU's FY2011 budget addresses the following:
  - a. Government Appropriations reductions of \$2.3 million, or 14.63% for FY11: This presents a significant shift in contribution ratios from state appropriations to tuition revenue. In FY11, state appropriations contributed 26.7% of the Education and General (E and G) budget compared to 33.5% in FY10.
  - b. Due to revenue shortfall, the state over-spent and cut the Oregon Opportunity Grant. To prevent WOU students from suffering from this shortage/elimination of previously awarded funds, fee remissions were budgeted at \$2.85 million, including \$356K in a onetime backfill.
  - c. To serve WOU's growing enrollment, total budgeted Education and General (E and G) expenditures—the general budget for each university—increased \$2.9M, or 6% above FY10 actual expenditures. This increase is primarily due to salary and fringe benefits (OPE) budgets, which increased \$2.5M, or 5.9%.
5. Most recently, as part of his plan to correct a \$3.5 billion deficit in state spending, newly elected Governor Kitzhaber announced a possible funding formula for higher education, less money for graduate and professional programs, cuts in state employee benefits, and a reduction in the state workforce, whose wages have been frozen for two years.

## PREFACE

### Accreditation Specific Changes

Campus groups have been formed to utilize the talents of community members. For example, the University Data Matrix (UDM) team is comprised of administrators and staff members who regularly access and use data. The institution has created an integrated Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW), which is a single repository of data accessible by members of this group. Members of the group come from the University Computing Services department, the Oregon University System Fifth Site Project, and Oregon State University's Enterprise Computing Services, Warehouse Integration and Training unit. UDM members have informed the building of the EDW to meet the needs of WOU, and they are trained to be expert users of the system. As co-creators of the EDW, they advise in the development of reports specific to WOU's needs. They also serve as the system's beta-testers, providing necessary feedback to ensure the validity, reliability and peer-review of the data entered in the EDW.

With the EDW, WOU is now able to view university data through dynamically integrated electronic dashboards. The dashboards provide easy-to-use graphic access to data to help track performance and optimize decision-making. Dashboards appear on the user's computer with color-coded key performance indicators (KPIs) correlated to aspired levels of performance. Decision-makers identify which KPI needs to be monitored regularly, its desired outcomes, and the numerical thresholds that define acceptable (green), warning (yellow), and unacceptable (red) levels of performance. The institutional level indicators for this process are critical to mission attainment. They are to be monitored daily to ensure corrective action, as necessary. The multiple layers of information and data informing these graphic representations are not yet developed.

The University Advisory Council (UAC) includes representatives from across the campus community. Their charge is to collect, analyze, and interpret data needed to drive decisions at the executive level of the University. They develop recommendations that are vetted through Campus Conversations. The UAC oversees the practice of regular and continuous assessment and evaluation. Using the results of this system-wide process, the council advises the President and his executive staff on how best to allocate resources to advance instructional programs, institutional services, and activities. The council also acts as the Accreditation Steering Committee. These efforts ensure the continuous improvement of effective teaching and learning.

Recently the UAC established the University Diversity Committee (UDC), which is charged with the development and institutionalization of a diversity action-plan vetted through the Campus Conversation process.

The newly revised WOU preamble and mission statement will be taken forward to the OUS Chancellor for approval, then to the Academic Strategies Committee and the Oregon State Board of Higher Education (OSBHE). Both documents guide the revision of the strategic plan and are reflected in the Core Themes, Objectives, and institutional indicators.

Coupled with the implementation of our collaborative decision-making model,<sup>1</sup> implemented prior to and presented in the 2009 Interim Report to NWCCU, the university has made sustained progress in improving performance through shared governance, accountability, and responsibility.

The current financial stability of the university was accomplished over the past six years through increased international student enrollment and the establishment of the Western Tuition Promise<sup>2</sup>. WOU continues to reevaluate business and education practices as we seek to increase revenue and improve efficiencies in alignment with our mission statement.

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<sup>1</sup> [decision-making model](#)

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.wou.edu/student/admissions/video/tuition\\_promise.php](http://www.wou.edu/student/admissions/video/tuition_promise.php)

## CHAPTER ONE: MISSION, CORE THEMES, AND EXPECTATIONS

### Section I: Mission

*The institution articulates its purpose in the form of a mission statement and identifies Core Themes that manifest essential elements of that mission. It defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it identifies an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.*

**Standard 1.A.1** *The institution has a widely-published mission statement—approved by its governing board—that articulates a purpose appropriate for an institution of higher learning, gives direction for its efforts, and derives from, and is generally understood by, its community.*

*The Oregon University System (OUS) is comprised of seven universities and the mission of each must serve the OUS mission:*

#### **OUS Mission**

The Legislative Assembly declares that the mission of all higher education in Oregon is to:

1. Enable students to extend prior educational experiences in order to reach their full potential as participating and contributing citizens by helping them develop scientific, professional, and technological expertise, together with heightened intellectual, cultural and human sensitivities and a sense of purpose.
2. Create, collect, evaluate, store and pass on the body of knowledge necessary to educate future generations.
3. Provide appropriate instructional, research and public service programs to enrich the cultural life of Oregon and to support and maintain a healthy state economy. ORS 351.009 (1993 c.240 §5)

#### **Oregon State Board of Higher Education (OSBHE) Strategic Plan**

The Board, on behalf of OUS, seeks to accomplish four goals to produce the highest level of educational outcomes for Oregonians<sup>3</sup>:

1. Create in Oregon an educated citizenry to support responsible roles in a democratic society and provide a globally competitive workforce to drive the State's economy, while ensuring access for all qualified Oregonians to quality postsecondary education;
2. Ensure high quality student learning leading to subsequent student success;
3. Create original knowledge and advance innovation, and

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<sup>3</sup> [http://www.ous.edu/state\\_board/meeting/dockets/ddoc070412-SILRP.pdf](http://www.ous.edu/state_board/meeting/dockets/ddoc070412-SILRP.pdf)

4. Contribute positively to the economic, civic, and cultural life of communities in all regions of Oregon.

#### **WOU Preamble<sup>4</sup>**

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.

**Standard 1.A.2** *The institution defines mission fulfillment in the context of its purpose, characteristics, and expectations. Guided by that definition, it articulates institutional accomplishments or outcomes that represent an acceptable threshold or extent of mission fulfillment.*

The preamble and mission statement declare WOU's commitment to continuous improvement in providing effective learning opportunities, support for greater diversity and accessibility, and the stability and sustainability of the university. The purposeful alignment of the three elements of the action plan, Preamble, Mission and Core Themes, guides all efforts toward attainment of the Objectives and Outcomes. The key performance indicators (KPIs) are visual illustrations of how effectively we fulfill the Objectives and illuminate the impacts that the university experience has on students' lives and the communities we serve.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of these indicators will provide the opportunity to set benchmarks, promote progress, and strategize how best to overcome impediments to success. Assessment of achievement includes the reliance on verifiable, reliable, valid, and peer-reviewed data. Some indicators are established with well-defined values and analysis methods. Others are recently developed and will take additional time and thought to establish appropriate thresholds and strategies for attainment.

The evaluation of mission fulfillment requires a comprehensive view across the university community, taking into consideration all constituents and the quality and relevance of services. This view is captured in the selected Objectives, Outcomes, and KPIs listed in this document. WOU expects its assessment of performance to be significantly positive in all Objectives before declaring mission attainment. The constant monitoring of indicators and corresponding corrective interventions will ensure continuous improvement, high performance, and the achievement of outcomes.

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<sup>4</sup> Both the WOU Preamble and Mission Statement are in the approval process.

## **Section II: Core Themes, Objectives, and Desired Outcomes**

### **WOU Alignment**

This institution was founded as Monmouth University by early pioneers on 18 January 1856, only seven years after the Territorial Government of Oregon was organized in 1849. Over the years the name and mission of the university has evolved but the spirit of the enterprise has remained constant. WOU provides quality-learning opportunities in a supportive and rigorous environment to all students. WOU reaches out to under-represented populations, first-generation students, and other at-risk student populations. We have been publically recognized for such practices, especially for our efforts involving Latino/Hispanic outreach. Our future is predicated on our history but is not constrained by it. WOU will continue to evolve in a manner consistent with our values and vision.

### **WOU Core Values**

We adhere to the following core principles: effective teaching and learning; a healthy campus community and environment; academic freedom and diversity; and fiscal health, accountability, and continuous improvement. These principles inform and inspire WOU's Vision, Strategic Plan, Preamble, and Core Themes.

### **WOU Vision**

We will continue our commitment to provide students a personalized education in a public university setting. Students from all backgrounds excel in academic programs recognized at state, regional, and national levels. Students enjoy personalized advising, encouragement, and direction to guide them to self-discovery, intellectual development, service to their community, and timely degree completion. Our campus life supports each student with a challenging curriculum, productive interactions with professors and peers, and enriching collegiate activities. Our alumni are invaluable contributors to society.

Our collaborations with partners in education, business, and government provide lasting mutual benefits. Our faculty and staff thrive in an energizing, collaborative, and creative academic climate. This collegial environment encourages professional innovation and community involvement.

### **WOU Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan at WOU includes the following goals:

1. Preserve and enhance academic distinction—Build a distinctive, first-choice, comprehensive university that is widely recognized for its high-quality academics, strong programs, and student success. Implement programs to achieve standards and recognize outcomes.
2. Achieve student-centeredness—Create a supportive, personalized and responsive environment that prepares students for continued university, career, and life success.
3. Acquire and retain diverse and distinguished people—Increase the recruitment and retention of outstanding and diverse students, faculty, and staff.
4. Focus on meeting cross-unit needs—Provide an efficient and reliable infrastructure that meets physical, human, technological, and financial needs.

## 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 its educational, financial, and environmental sustainability.

## Core Theme 1: Effective Learning

**Brief Description:** Learning is the primary mission of the university; it is not only what we do, but what we do best. To accomplish this, WOU sets and implements rigorous standards and assessment measures to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning experiences, and student success. We encourage and support distinctive and innovative programs and delivery methods, which respond to the changing needs of students and society. We create an environment in which student success is paramount and a shared responsibility of everyone at the university. WOU supports learning with a coordinated system of academic and non-academic programs, processes, and resources. We ensure that student advising is consistent, accurate, timely, personalized, and collaborative. We encourage greater participation in programs that facilitate understanding and the exchange of people and ideas in international, multicultural, and cross-cultural arenas.

### 1. Objective: WOU students acquire, analyze, and apply knowledge

#### (a) KPI: Assess students' growth in higher order competencies between freshmen and senior years *(Provost and Deans)*

***Rationale:*** The Council for Aid to Education's CLA assessment service measures an institution's contribution to the development of key competencies in undergraduates, including the effects of changes to curriculum and pedagogy. The CLA presents realistic problems that require students to analyze complex materials and determine their relevance to specific tasks. Students' responses to the tasks are evaluated to assess their critical thinking, analytical, problem solving, and communication abilities. CLA therefore facilitates institutional benchmarking, correlating student progress across multiple colleges.

***Desired Outcome:*** In relation to its comparator institutions, WOU will rank as "near expected" or "above expected" **using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) analyses**<sup>5</sup>

#### (b) KPI: Achieve and maintain a significant percentage of students engaged in challenging academic learning experiences. *(Provost and Deans)*

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.collegiatelearningassessment.org/index.html>

**Rationale:** Challenging intellectual and creative work is central to student learning and collegiate quality. Colleges and universities promote achievement by emphasizing the importance of academic effort and setting high expectations for student performance. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provides a composite benchmark of this measure based on 11 individual questions encompassing such items as coursework emphasizing: analysis of the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory; synthesis and organizing of ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships; making judgments about the value of information, arguments, methods; application of theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations, among others.

**Desired Outcome:** WOU's score on the Academic Challenge benchmark will be equal to or greater than the mean score for comparator institutions **using the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA) analyses**<sup>6</sup> .

**(c) KPI: Achieve and maintain a significant percentage of students involved in active and collaborative learning experiences.** (*Provost, VP Student Affairs and Deans*)

**Rationale:** Students learn more when they are intensely involved in their education and are asked to apply their knowledge in different settings. Collaborating with others in solving problems or mastering difficult material prepares students to deal with the messy, unscripted problems they will encounter during and after college. The NSSE composite includes seven indicators that measure whether the student reports contributing to classroom discussions; making class presentations; working with other students on class projects; working with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments; tutoring other students; participating in a community-based project as part of a regular course; and, discussing ideas from readings or classes with others outside of class.

**Desired Outcome:** Will achieve and maintain a significant level of student participation success as measured by the NSSE assessment tool. 'Significant' is defined as a mean score equal to or above the midpoint on the response range.

**2. Objective: WOU students participate in high impact learning experiences.**<sup>7</sup>

**(a). KPI: Achieve and maintain a significant percentage of student participation in credit-bearing, high-impact, outside the classroom learning experiences** (i.e., Study Abroad and International Exchanges Program, National Student Exchange (NSE), and Internships) (*Provost, Deans, VP of Student Affairs, Assistant to VP Student Affairs and Director, Study Abroad and International Exchanges Program*)

**Rationale:** High-impact learning experiences such as study abroad,<sup>8</sup> service learning, internships and domestic exchanges are linked to program-specific learning outcomes. Participation in these programs facilitates international, multicultural and cross-cultural understanding and advances the exchange of ideas in diverse arenas. National Student Exchange (NSE)<sup>9</sup> offers students tuition-reciprocal exchanges across the U.S. and Canada at accredited, four-year colleges and universities. Assessment consists of using university-developed surveys assessing student participation success.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.collegiatelearningassessment.org/index.html>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm>

<sup>8</sup> [HTTP://WWW.WOU.EDU/STUDYABROAD](http://www.wou.edu/studyabroad)

<sup>9</sup> [HTTP://WWW.WOU.EDU/STUDENT/NSE/](http://www.wou.edu/student/nse/)

***Desired Outcome:*** Number of participating students will increase by 5% each year over the prior year. The Service Learning and Career Development office will initiate an online form for faculty to report **credit-bearing** service learning activities and internships so that campus-wide results can be collected. Furthermore, WOU's score on the NSSE 'Enriching Educational Experiences' benchmark will be equal to or greater than the mean score for comparator institutions.

**(b) KPI: Achieve and maintain a significant percentage of student participation in non-credit-bearing, high-impact outside classroom learning experiences** (i.e., Alternative Break, Service Learning, Learning Communities, Leadership Certificate Program.) *(VP Student Affairs and Assistant to VP Student Affairs)*

***Rationale:*** High-impact learning experiences such as alternative break and service learning programs, live and learn communities, and the Leadership Certificate program<sup>10</sup> are linked to enhanced student learning outcomes. The Alternative Break and Service Learning programs<sup>11</sup> afford students the ability to reflect critically about their experience and to work with varying organizational cultures while working in conjunction with volunteer and community agencies both domestically and internationally. Live and Learn communities at Ackerman Hall<sup>12</sup> provide themed program experiences for students such as multiculturalism and global citizenship, pursuit of a greener way of life with a focus on sustainability, the Arts, and leadership. The Leadership Certificate Program formally incorporates existing student leadership experiences on campus and combines them with learning outcomes and core competencies to create an experience tailored to each student's individual leadership future. Assessment consists of using university-developed surveys assessing student participation success in these activities.

***Desired Outcome:*** . Number of participating students will increase by 5% each year over the prior year as measured by the office of the VP Student Affairs. (Faculty report credit-bearing activities under Objective 2a.)

**(c) KPI: Achieve and maintain an effective Freshman Year Experience Seminar course.** *(VP Student Affairs and Associate Provost)*

***Rationale:*** The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has identified first-year seminars (e.g. freshman experience) as a high-impact learning experience that contributes to student retention and academic achievement. Assessment consists of measuring the persistence rate of participating students.

***Desired Outcomes:*** First-year students participating in the Freshmen Year Experience Seminar will achieve a persistence rate (from freshman to sophomore year) at least equal to that of students not enrolled in the Seminar.

**(d) KPI: Increase participation in Academic Excellence Showcase** *(Provost and Deans)*

***Rationale:*** High-impact learning experiences such as embedded student research/creative enterprise opportunities (including, but not limited to, research and service learning projects) are linked to enhanced student learning outcomes. These types of experiences are presented annually at the annual Academic Excellence Showcase.

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<sup>10</sup> [HTTP://WWW.WOU.EDU/STUDENT/SLA/LEADERSHIP/CERTIFICATE.PHP](http://www.wou.edu/student/sla/leadership/certificate.php)

<sup>11</sup> [HTTP://WWW.WOU.EDU/STUDENT/CAREER/STUDENTS.PHP.](http://www.wou.edu/student/career/students.php)

<sup>12</sup> [HTTP://WWW.WOU.EDU/STUDENT/RESIDENCES/ACKERMAN.PHP](http://www.wou.edu/student/residences/ackerman.php)

***Desired Outcome:*** Increase number of student submissions annually by 5% over the prior year's submissions. Increase the total overall attendance annually by 10% over the prior year's attendance at the AES events.

**3. Objective: WOU students are highly satisfied with their learning experiences.**

**(a) KPI: Achieve and maintain a significant level of student satisfaction with a supportive campus environment.** *(Dean of Students, Director, WUC/SLA and Assistant to VP Student Affairs)*

***Rationale:*** Students perform better and are more satisfied at universities that are committed to their success and cultivate positive working and social relations among different groups on campus. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) provides a composite benchmark of this measure based on six campus environment indicators that include support for students to succeed academically; support for students to cope with non-academic responsibilities; support for students to thrive socially; and students' quality of relationships with other students, faculty, and administrative offices.

***Desired Outcome:*** WOU's score on the NSSE 'Supportive Campus Environment' benchmark will be equal to or greater than the mean score for comparator institutions.

**(b) KPI: Students' evaluations of course and instructors will reflect perceptions of quality instruction.** *(Provost, and Deans)*

***Rationale:*** Evaluating classroom instruction provides feedback to assist instructors in providing highly effective teaching that results in quality learning experiences. Evaluation will be predicated on the analysis of a valid and reliable instructional evaluation survey that quickly and objectively captures students' perceptions of their instructors' teaching performance. Faculty who consistently earn lower level ratings will be offered professional development assistance to improve performance to ensure that University-wide level does not fall below 3.0.

***Desired Outcome:*** Evaluation results will demonstrate achievement of a minimum mean of 3.0 (moderately effective and above) on each of four subscales of Course Organization and Planning, Communication, Faculty/Student Interaction, and Assignments, Exams & Grading.

## **Core Theme 2: Supports Diversity**

**Brief Description:** By providing a multicultural campus community, WOU offers students the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to function effectively within and beyond their cultural boundaries as required in today's global society. To accomplish this WOU has developed active communities of learning representing diverse populations and perspectives. We provide access to an array of diverse and inclusive populations to foster a quality workforce and well-educated citizens. WOU has developed and maintained partnerships that broaden our vision, increase our potential, and enhance our professional relationships. These include academic and non-academic programs to promote diversity and meet the needs of all constituencies, especially non-traditional and racial/ethnic minority students and staff.

1. **Objective: WOU is an institution that is accessible to diversity of student populations across the campus community.** *(Chair, University Diversity Committee and Associate Provost)*

(a) **KPI: Achieve and maintain a percentage of all racial/ethnic minority students and students enrolled at WOU reflective of the demographics in Oregon** *(Chair, University Diversity Committee, Associate Provost and Director, Graduate Programs)*

**Rationale:** Enrollment rates of all racial/ethnic minority students as defined in the OUS Student Centralized Administrative Reporting File (SCARF) report will help WOU examine and document our success in implementing strategic recruitment, admissions, and enrollment plans reflecting our regional demographics (contiguous counties: Polk, Marion, Yamhill, Benton, Linn and Lane).

**Desired Outcome:** The percentage of racial/ethnic minority students will mirror the regional demographics of the college-age population in our region (based on Census data for ages 15-24). Persistence rates will also be tracked using WOU's enterprise data warehouse (EDW). In the first two years, these two processes will be compared and major discrepancies analyzed in order to determine the most effective tracking and measurement system.

(b) **KPI: Increase the persistence rates of undergraduate racial/ethnic minority students enrolled at WOU compared to peer comparator data** *(Chair, University Diversity Committee and Associate Provost)*

**Rationale:** Use of persistence rates (fall freshmen to fall sophomore retention data) for undergraduate racial/ethnic minority students will help WOU examine and document our success in implementing strategies to support students' success and persistence. SAT/ACT data from public institutions with similar size, admissions selectivity, and degree offered will be used for comparison.

**Desired Outcome:** The persistence rates among the racial/ethnic minority students will be the same or higher than non-minority students. Persistence rates will also be tracked using WOU's enterprise data warehouse (EDW). In the first two years, these two processes will be compared and major discrepancies analyzed in order to determine the most effective tracking and measurement system.

(c) **KPI: Achieve and maintain graduation rates of racial/ethnic minority students enrolled at WOU compared to peer comparator data** *(Chair, University Diversity Committee and Associate Provost)*

**Rationale:** Six-year graduation rates of undergraduate racial/ethnic minority students will help WOU examine and document our success in implementing strategies to support students' success and progression towards graduation. SAT/ACT data from public institutions with similar size, admissions selectivity, and degree offered will be used for comparison.

**Desired Outcome:** The graduation rates of racial/ethnic minority students at WOU will be equivalent to or exceed the graduation rates of non-minority students.

- (d) **KPI: Increase the percentage of first-generation undergraduate college students who persist from freshman to sophomore year at WOU** (Chair, University Diversity Committee and Associate Provost)

**Rationale:** Examining and documenting persistence rates for WOU's undergraduate first-generation students is one way to assess the success of existing strategic supports (e.g. Student Enrichment Program) to support first-generation students and their families. SAT/ACT data from public institutions with similar size, admissions selectivity, and degree offered will be used for comparison.

**Desired Outcome:** The persistence rates for first-generation undergraduates will be equal to or greater than the non-first-generation students. Persistence rates will also be tracked using WOU's enterprise data warehouse (EDW). In the first two years, these two processes will be compared and major discrepancies analyzed in order to determine the most effective tracking and measurement system.

2. **Objective: WOU is an institution that promotes diversity across the campus community including students, faculty and staff.** (Chair, University Diversity Committee and Associate Provost)

- (a) **KPI: Develop, implement, and institutionalize a university diversity plan through the University Diversity Committee** (Chair, University Diversity Committee, Director, Human Resources, and EVP Finance and Administration)

**Rationale:** The newly created University Diversity Committee will develop an actionable Diversity Plan predicated on research, data, and information collected from various sources, including an organizational diversity survey being administered during the 2010-11 academic year. Other data and information will be gathered, evaluated, and used to inform the plan. The University Diversity Committee's Action Plan will provide the goals, objectives, and actions to realize the campus community's desire for diversity.

**Desired Outcome:** Implementation of the plan will begin by or before September 2012.

- (b) **KPI: Achieve greater diversity in faculty and staff applicant pools.** (Chair, University Diversity Committee, EVP Finance and Administration, and Director, Human Resources)

**Rationale:** WOU will sustain its affirmative action efforts. However, additional efforts are necessary such as hiring outreach to targeted groups, making good faith efforts to consider and advance applications from underrepresented groups, educating hiring committees on areas of unintentional bias, reviewing with faculty hiring committees the questions to ask and not ask or including diverse members on selection committees.

**Desired Outcome:** Initially, the plan for these actions will be incorporated into the 'Diversity Plan' and all materials available online for hiring committees by September 2012. Reporting results of increasing diversity will be expected beginning September 2013 and at least annually thereafter.

**3. Objective: WOU successfully partners with diverse communities outside of campus.**

*(Chair, University Diversity Committee and Director, Human Resources and Associate Provost)*

**(a) KPI: Create, sustain, and document partnerships involving WOU students, faculty, and staff that benefit diverse communities.** *(Chair, University Diversity Committee, and Associate Provost)*

***Rationale:*** WOU will enhance its commitment to diversity through involvement with external partnerships in which the University's faculty, staff and student efforts benefit individuals from diverse communities.

***Desired Outcome:*** A system will be in place by fall 2012 to accurately track the number of students, faculty, and staff engaged in partnerships that benefit diverse communities as well as the beneficiaries of those partnership activities.

### **Core Theme 3: Sustainable Institution**

**Brief Description:** WOU understands that the university is a living organism that must maintain its stability and sustainability through good educational, financial, and environmental practices. To accomplish this WOU has developed a systematic and inclusive approach to improving the campus infrastructure, facilities, and services. We continue to create a working environment that fosters open communication and recognizes individual and collective contributions. WOU ensures the rigorous application of ongoing evaluation to improve all aspects of campus life, assure quality, and make decisions predicated on reliable, valid, peer-reviewed data. We nurture connections with our alumni that engender pride, loyalty, and good will, and we enhance technology strategies and capacities to improve teaching, learning, communication, management, and cooperation.

**1. Objective: WOU uses educational practices that continuously improve educational sustainability and are in the best interests of serving the community.**

**(a) KPI: Maintains instructionally effective faculty-to-student ratio** *(Provost and Deans)*

***Rationale:*** WOU understands that the ideal faculty-to-student ratio depends upon the classroom model of instruction. Effective faculty-to-student ratios are assumed to enable faculty's ability to give individualized attention to students, respond to student requests or questions, or fully assist students during office hours. Thus, increasing class size (beyond an effective ratio) holds potential to reduce students' evaluations of instruction.

***Desired Outcome:*** Achieve and maintain an appropriate faculty-to-student ratio (based on model of instruction and efficient use of resources) that maintains an overall student mean rating of 3.0 or higher on the 'Faculty/Student Interaction' subscale by course, regardless of the assigned instructor. Thus, if the course size is increased and subsequently the student ratings consistently drop below a mean of 3.0, it is presumed that the faculty-to-student ratio is problematic.

**(b) KPI: Optimize petitions for degree audit exceptions** *(Provost and Deans)*

***Rationale:*** Delivery of efficient and effective educational programs depends upon successful management of course offerings that enable students to expeditiously complete required coursework. A high number of course substitution/waiver filings with the Registrar's Office or the Graduate Programs Office can reflect inefficient curricular programming and/or incomplete transfer articulations. Reducing the number of exception forms filed each year would signify improvement in these areas.

***Desired Outcome:*** Conduct an analysis of exception forms filed annually. Track purposes and sources of forms in order to identify what or if problems exist.

**(c) KPI: Maintain high student satisfaction rates in academic advising.** *(Associate Provost)*

***Rationale:*** Academic advising is a highly effective academic development and degree completion activity. Working with well-informed advisors every academic term ensures that students make positive and timely progress toward degree completion. For undergraduate advising, the measure of effectiveness is survey data gathered annually.

***Desired Outcome:*** Work to ensure at least 90 percent of undergraduates will rate the quality of academic advising as very good or excellent on WOU's survey. (This is equivalent to 90% of ratings above the mean score). **Furthermore, the outcome of WOU's survey will be compared to Item #12 on NSSE that asks students for their overall satisfaction with advising on campus. Any major discrepancy will be investigated to make improvements in how advising is assessed.**

**2. Objective: WOU uses business practices that continuously improve financial sustainability and are in the best interests of serving the community.**

**(a) KPI: Maintain a sufficient fund balance pursuant to economic circumstances** *(Director, Budget and Payroll and EVP Finance and Administration)*

***Rationale:*** Responsible fiscal management requires adequate fund balances, or reserves, to mitigate financial risks. Adequate fund balances are essential to protect against negative impacts to the university's mission due to cyclical variations in revenues and expenditures; catastrophic events; unexpected revenue declines or expenditure requirements; and unexpected legal obligations.

***Desired Outcome:*** Maintain a fund balance between 10%-20% of annual operating revenue with a target of 15%, which complies with directives issued by the Oregon Board of Higher Education and Oregon University System. However, economic uncertainty may prompt the university to reevaluate appropriate levels of fund balance.

**(b) KPI: Increase the alumni participation rate and philanthropy** *(University Advancement Operations Coordinator)*

***Rationale:*** Alumni participation helps establish a culture of philanthropy that is vital to the success and sustainability of the institution. Alumni participation is viewed as a barometer of satisfaction, and parents and future students often compare rankings when making enrollment decisions. The 3-5 year average WOU alumni participation rate (APR) and average alumni donation amount is

compared to the Council for Aid to Education (CAE) Voluntary Support of Education (VSE) Survey. This survey is the authoritative national source of information on private giving to higher education and private K-12, consistently capturing about 85 percent of the total voluntary support to colleges and universities in the United States.

**Desired Outcome:** Increase the annual alumni participation rate and maintain a donation amount per alumnus equal to, or above, the mean of comparator institutions.

**(c) KPI: Ensure that enrollment numbers reflect WOU's Strategic Enrollment plan** *(Associate Provost and Director, Graduate Programs)*

**Rationale:** Student enrollment is WOU's primary revenue source. State funding for public universities will continue to decline in the near future due to the economy. Long-term support for higher education also cannot be expected to be robust. Predictable growth in enrollment enables the university to plan effectively its fiscal resources and academic needs to provide an effective education.

**Desired Outcome:** Achieve a strategic enrollment rate within +/- 10% of targeted enrollment so that enrollment can be relative to university resources, enabling sufficient student support.

**(d) KPI: Maintain sufficient indirect cost recovery** *(Director, Sponsored Research)*

**Rationale:** Indirect costs cannot be easily attributable to specific sponsored projects such as building depreciation, janitorial services, accounting, purchasing, library expenses, etc. The appropriate recovery of facilities and administrative (indirect) costs enables the university to reinvest in its infrastructure and provide services aligned with its mission.

**Desired Outcome:** Maintain (within 5%) or increase WOU's indirect cost recovery from the previous fiscal year. The indirect cost recovery was \$881,575 for the fiscal year ending 30 June 2010.

**3. Objective: WOU uses practices that continuously improve its operational sustainability and are in the best interests of serving the community.**

**(a) KPI: Maintain system reliability during peak hours of operation** *(Director, University Computing Services)*

**Rationale:** University Computing Services maintains campus-computing systems 24/7 in support of academic and administrative objectives. The reliability of this service is critical to mission achievement.

**Desired Outcome:** maintain a high degree of system reliability during peak hours of usage: 0700 – 0000 hours PST. High reliability is defined as meeting a standard of 99.9% uptime for peak hour usage.

**(b) KPI: Reduce the metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per FTE emissions** *(Director, Physical Plant)*

**Rationale:** American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) Greenhouse Gas Report will list the total Carbon Dioxide Equivalent produced at WOU. The sum of

Scopes 1 and 2 (the OUS Goal is to reduce Scopes 1 and 2 to zero by 2020) will be divided by FTE—faculty, staff and students—to show our effect on the planet and correlate our progress to our 2020 zero-emissions goal.

***Desired Outcome:*** Achieve the minimum emission of carbon dioxide equivalent produced by the campus community.

**(c) KPI: Minimize utility usage per square foot** *(Director, Physical Plant)*

***Rationale:*** Utility usage (Water, Sewer, Natural Gas, and Electricity) directly affects WOU's budget and demonstrates the campus community's commitment to reducing our carbon footprint.

***Desired Outcome:*** Track and report utility usage over time, including detail by building if possible. Create and implement action plan to reduce utility usage including posting telephone number for service problems, communicating to staff and students the benefits to conservation, encouraging competition in conservation across divisions or buildings or other such engagement with the campus community.

**(d) KPI: Optimize refuse collection per FTE** *(Director, Physical Plant)*

***Rationale:*** The amount of refuse collected is a reliable indicator of the campus's commitment to environmental sustainability and carbon footprint reduction.

***Desired Outcome:*** Reduce collection rate of refuse and increase recycling for both large scale (e.g. construction) and small scale (e.g. paper, glass, plastic) items per FTE students and staff.

Track and report garbage and recycling levels by some standardized unit (e.g. weight in pounds), Create and implement action plan to reduce garbage and increase recycling such as communicating value to staff and students , encouraging competition across divisions or buildings or other such engagement with the campus community.

**(e) Recommended KPI: Reduce environmental impact related to commuting** *(Director, Physical Plant)*

***Rationale:*** Faculty, staff and students commute to WOU from various points in the Polk, Marion, Linn-Benton or greater Portland area. In addition, faculty and administrators commute to meetings, seminars or other events from WOU. Thus, this effort can improve the broader community by reducing the number of vehicle trips per person.

***Desired Outcome:*** Establish a dynamic online carpool match site that will enable staff and faculty to find and share transportation to and from campus. Investigate and establish a parking site on campus that will provide access to electric 'Zip cars' to be used when faculty or administrators must travel to local areas.

### **Section III: Concluding Comments on Core Themes, Objectives, and Expectations**

Western Oregon University's campus community has identified three Core Themes, nine Objectives, and twenty-eight Key Performance Indicators that capture what we are and to what we aspire.

We believe the Core Themes reflect our institutional priorities, the Objectives our goals and the Key Performance Indicators specific measurements and all will inform our decisions, drive our strategic plan and guide us through mission attainment. We are confident that the accumulated evidence of achievements will demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement in quality student learning through effective teaching, providing a supportive environment that fosters a diverse campus community, and maintaining a sustainable institution in all aspects of what we provide and how we provide it to all of our stakeholders.

We are confident that this new accreditation model will assist us in improving our planning, service, management and academic processes. It provides us a process of clearly demonstrating our accountability and responsiveness to our constituencies: past, present and future.