



**PUBLIC MEETING OF THE WOU BOARD'S
EXECUTIVE, GOVERNANCE AND TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE (EGTC)**

Meeting No. 24

April 7, 2021 | 3:30pm-5:00pm

Public Meeting: [WebEx](#)

For audio access: 1-415-655-0002 | Meeting ID: 133 432 7212

AGENDA

- I. CALL-TO-MEETING AND ROLL CALL**
- II. CHAIR'S WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS**
- III. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS:**
 - 1) [Board Statement on Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Accessibility](#)
 - 2) Reopening Plan Update
 - 3) Interim Presidential Search Update
- IV. ADJOURNMENT**

Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility

At the Board's September 11, 2019 retreat, as a part of the day's exercises, each of the Board's standing committees worked to devise a draft workplan for the upcoming year. The committees were to outline all of its required and standing business, but, also, to identify initiatives to undertake over the course of the academic year to advance the university and its strategic plan. In addition to its required items, such as the president's performance evaluation and audits, the Board's Executive, Governance and Trusteeship Committee (EGTC) identified the approval of a Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility as a key objective. The docket for the September 11, 2019 retreat may be viewed [here](#). The meeting minutes of the September 11, 2019 retreat may be viewed [here](#).

At its November 5, 2019 meeting, the EGTC started deliberations on a draft Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility, as well as heard from the University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee or UDIAC. UDIAC is a presidential advisory committee that advises President Rex Fuller on diversity, equity and inclusion efforts as on campus, as well as drafts and recommends the university's Diversity Action Plan for the president's consideration. EGTC continued the conversation at its January 31, 2020 meeting as it considered information and updates regarding the university's efforts regarding HB 2864 on cultural competence. To comply with the statute, and separate from the UDIAC, the university established the University Cultural Competence Advisory Committee or UCCAC.

Amid the Board and EGTC's consideration and discussion of the Board Statement, UDIAC, and UCCAC, both advisory committees served as a resource to edit and offer suggestions regarding the draft Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility. UDIAC and UCCAC specifically were forwarded drafts of the Board Statement for comments and suggestions on June 8, 2020, October 27, 2020, December 15, 2020, and February 4, 2021. The Board was updated on the status and condition of the draft at its November 18, 2020 meeting. While UDIAC and UCCAC offered many iterative comments on the draft, as the draft was prepared to present to this committee (and eventually the full Board), the draft was presented to the president's cabinet in March 2021. Finally, in March 2021, the draft was sent to Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASWOU for suggestions and comments. It is possible that final comments from UDIAC, UCCAC, Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and ASWOU will come in after the committee meeting; any of these comments will be shared with the Board Chair with the possibility of amendment or inclusion at the April 21, 2021 full Board meeting.

As a reminder, a Board Statement is the university's highest level of policy authority. As stated in Section 4.3 of the Board Statement on the Delegation of Authority: "Board Statements are broad, strategic statements communicating the Board's expectations.

As opposed to University Policies or Procedures, which could communicate delegated, operational or transactional authority or procedures, Board Statements communicate the fundamental strategic, fiduciary, and structural expectations of the Board.” Because diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility are fundamental institutional values and featured prominently in the university’s strategic plan, it is appropriate to memorialize the Board’s expectations in a Board Statement.

The proposed Board Statement is organized in three general areas. First, in order to offer a touchstone and consistent approach to key terms and definitions, the Board Statement takes care to define various terms relevant to effective and efficient diversity/inclusion/equity/accessibility work. In perhaps the heart of the Board Statement is an enumeration of the Board’s seven priorities and expectations. These expectations are: climate, employees, students, curriculum and pedagogy, business practices, community partnerships, and facilities and physical plant. Finally, the third section of the draft requires accountability and steps the university will take to ensure that it is meeting the Board’s expectations.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Executive, Governance and Trusteeship Committee recommends that the Board approve the Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility as presented and included in the written docket materials.



Board Statement on Diversity, Inclusion, Equity, and Accessibility

1.0 Policy and Purpose

The Western Oregon University Board of Trustees wishes to demonstrate the essential and paramount necessity of incorporating the values and imperatives of diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility throughout the University enterprise.

2.0 Definitions and Key Terms and Concepts

2.1 *Diversity* encompasses the similarities and difference between individuals accounting for all aspects of one's personality and individual identity. These similarities and differences include individual differences, such as life experiences, learning styles and personality types and group or social differences, such as age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation or veteran status.

2.2 *Equity* is the fair and just treatment of all members of a community. Equity requires commitment, is the goal of our work, and requires deliberate attention. It is, collectively, a step toward recognizing past exclusion and achieving genuine inclusion. Equity is not the natural state of things. The University must deliberately apply time, resources, and consideration to achieve this goal.

2.3 *Inclusion* is the active, intentional and ongoing engagement with diversity—with people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in intellectual, social, cultural, and geographic communities in which individuals might connect—in ways that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathetic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact—and change—systems and institutions.

2.4 *Accessibility* is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses the broader meanings of compliance and refers to how the University makes spaces for the characteristics that each person brings.

2.5 *Cultural Competence* is an understanding of how institutions and individuals can respond respectfully and effectively to people from all cultures and backgrounds, races, ethnic backgrounds, disabilities, religions, genders, gender identifications, sexual orientations, veteran statuses, and other characteristics in a manner that recognizes,

affirms and values the worth, and preserves the dignity, of individuals, families, and communities. See HB 2864 (2017).

2.6 *Unconscious or implicit bias* are social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness. All individuals hold unconscious beliefs about various social and identity groups and these biases stem from one's tendency to organize social worlds by categorizing.

2.7 *Underserved or underrepresented* includes anyone in the campus community—faculty, staff, students, stakeholders, vendors, or licensees—who have historically not received equitable resources when compared to other groups. Typically, these groups include those who have been underserved and underrepresented due to their age, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

2.8 *Anti-Racism* is the active process of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate individual and systemic racism. It does so by examining the power imbalances between racialized and non-racialized or differently racialized peoples.

3.0 Priorities and Expectations

3.1 *Climate*. The Board of Trustees expects purposeful and intentional action by the University and its employees and students to create and sustain a climate of respect, civility, and acceptance to allow all members of the University community—administrators, faculty, staff, and students—to succeed as a University employee or student.

3.2 *Recruitment and Retention of Employees*. The Board of Trustees expects purposeful and strategic prioritization of the recruitment and retention of University employees, including administrators, faculty, and staff. The Board expects measurable and demonstrable action and progress throughout all steps of an employee's relationship with the University, including but not limited to job announcements, the consideration of minimum and preferred qualifications, the composition and training of search committees, application and interview question, professional development, formal and informal mentor relationships, and the incorporation of the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, as appropriate, in the performance evaluation of all employees.

3.3 *Recruitment and Retention of Students*. The Board of Trustees expects the purposeful and strategic prioritization of a diverse student body, as well as the primacy of culturally competent and inclusive practices, programming, and resources to retain as many students as possible. The Board expects measurable and demonstrable action

and progress in admission practices, financial aid practices, programming, student organizations, student resources, and new student orientation.

3.4 *Curriculum and Pedagogy.* The Board of Trustees—recognizing the faculty’s unique role in the development and stewardship of the University’s curriculum—expects the curriculum, academic departments and divisions, majors and minors, degree and certificate programs, pedagogies, and modalities to prepare students as citizens of an increasingly diverse and inclusive community, state, nation, and world. The Board expects pedagogies and modalities of instruction to challenge and educate students in culturally competent, inclusive and equitable ways. The Board expects measurable and demonstrable action and progress in incorporating the concepts of diversity, inclusion, equity, accessibility, and cultural competence into the curriculum, including but not limited to general education requirements, first-year seminars, major requirements, the development of elective courses, degree and certificate programs, and modalities of instruction.

3.5 *Community Partnerships.* The Board of Trustees expects the University to assume a prominent and obvious leadership role in embracing and embodying the strength of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in the community and with external partners. This includes purposeful and intentional engagement and support of affinity organizations, speaking engagements, federal, state and local initiatives, the WOU Foundation and the WOU Alumni Association.

3.6 *Business Practices.* The Board of Trustees expects the University to incorporate and sustain the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in its business practices. This includes, but is not limited to purposeful and intentional action and process in engaging minority, women and emerging small business (MWESB) vendors, making key documents accessible to the vendor community, and incorporating and upholding the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility in its budget proposals and deployment of scarce resources.

3.7 *Facilities and Physical Plant.* The Board of Trustees expects the University’s maintenance of its facilities and physical plant to embody and uphold the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, including prioritizing physical accessibility to buildings, venues, and campus, proposals for art and installations on campus buildings and on campus grounds, and in the development of capital construction projects and engagement and procurement of vendors to perform construction, repair or work on campus facilities.

4.0 Accountability

The Board of Trustees expects the University to account for its intentional and purposeful elevation of diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and cultural

competence as core institutional values. The Board of Trustees expects multiple avenues of reinforcing demonstrable accountability to ensure the University does not lose sight of the essential imperative of a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and accessible enterprise. These include, but are not limited to:

- Demonstrable primacy of these values in the University's strategic plan;
- Clear and demonstrable expectation that every member of the University community is responsible and accountable for these values;
- Clear and easily accessible avenues to share concerns, file grievances or complaints, or report bias without the fear of retaliation;
- Clear and demonstrable incorporation of data, evidence, and surveys in upholding and incorporating these values into University practices, processes, and initiatives;
- Clear and demonstrable availability of relevant training to assist members of the University community to uphold and incorporate these values into their relationship with the University; and
- Clear and demonstrable mechanisms to assess the University's progress in upholding and incorporating these values.

5.0 Reports

The Board of Trustees recognizes that the University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (UDIAC) and the University Cultural Competency Advisory Committee (UCCAC) assume critical roles in upholding and advising the University and the President on strategies, tactics, and goals to ensure the Board's expectations in this Board Statement. The Board expects periodic updates, as appropriate, from the President and the president's advisory committees, including UDIAC and UCCAC, among other campus stakeholders.

6.0 Document History