



**Western Oregon University Board of Trustees:  
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Committee (DEIAC)  
Meeting No. 17  
April 10, 2025 | 12:30pm – 1:45pm  
To Observe This Meeting [Click Here](#) | By Phone: 1-253-215-8782**

**AGENDA**

**I. CALL-TO-MEETING AND ROLL CALL**

**II. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S WELCOME**

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

- 1) [Approval of the January 30, 2025 Meeting Minutes](#)

**IV. REPORT & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- 1) Accessibility Conversation:
  - a.) [Student Services](#) | Rian Gayle, Director Disability Access Services
  - b.) [Human Resources Access](#) | Emily Herb, Director of Faculty & Staff Access Services
- 2) [Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Update](#) | Dominique Vargas
- 3) [Committee Charter Review](#)

**V. ADJOURNMENT**



**Western Oregon University Board of Trustees:  
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Committee (DEIAC)  
Meeting No. 16– January 30, 2025  
1:00pm – 2:30pm**

**Minutes**

**I. CALL-TO-MEETING AND ROLL CALL**

Chair Ambris welcomed everyone to the January 30 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility Committee, called the meeting to order at 1:06pm and asked Secretary Sorce to call the roll.

**Committee Members Present:** Chair Jerry Ambris, Trustee Paige Jackson Trustee Viviana Romero, Trustee Jim Vu

**Others Present:** President Peters, Executive Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Dominique Vargas, Board Secretary Evan Sorce

**II. COMMITTEE CHAIR Welcome:**

Chair Ambris acknowledged the recent political climate and developments from Washington DC and expressed appreciation to President Peters and his team for the communication regarding the changing political landscape. Chair Ambris mentioned that he has full faith that President Peters and his team will continue to monitor the situation. President Peters has emphasized that this is an uncertain and tumultuous time for many people in Higher Education based on Federal changes through executive orders, including situations where the state and federal laws are going to conflict, and we will have to seek guidance from the State on how we proceed.

Secretary Sorce announced that this will be the first meeting where we record and post online in compliance with state law.

**III. CONSENT AGENDA**

**1) [Approval of the October 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)**

Chair Ambris asked for any corrections or discussion on the October 17, 2024 meeting minutes. Trustee Jackson pointed out that she is marked and being present and excused at the same time. Secretary Sorce mentioned he will get that fixed. Trustee Romero moved to approve the October 17, 2024 meeting minutes as presented in the docket, Trustee Jackson seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion.

Roll Call Vote:

Chair Ambris;	Aye
Trustee Jackson	Aye
Trustee Romero	Aye

**Motion Passes 4-0-0****IV. REPORT & DISCUSSION ITEMS****1) Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Update | Dominique Vargas**

Executive Director Vargas presented her board update, which can be found on page 4 of the docket. Executive Director Vargas discussed the ongoing work on the equity assessment action plan, the development of a digital accessibility policy, and the update of the restrooms map. She also mentioned creating a community-based advisory group and continuing work around the equity assessment. Executive Director Vargas also highlighted the inauguration of Western Oregon University's first-ever class of Tri Alpha (1st generation student honor society) induction ceremony, and we inducted 39 students.

Chair Ambris then moved the discussion to the climate survey, highlighting the importance of returning the findings to the university's strategic plan. Executive Director Vargas shared that the next steps would involve developing a new equity assessment team and revisiting the climate survey data to make recommendations for the action plan. Executive Director Vargas also mentioned the importance of communication and the need for more innovative ways to reach students. Lastly, the conversation ended with Executive Director Vargas expressing excitement about the growth potential identified in the report.

**2) Climate Survey Findings and Report | Dominique Vargas**

Chair Ambris then moved the discussion to the climate survey results presented earlier that week by Dr. Shelby West, highlighting the importance of tying the findings back to the university's strategic plan. Executive Director Vargas shared that the next steps would involve developing a new equity assessment team and revisiting the climate survey data to make recommendations for the action plan. Executive Director Vargas also mentioned the importance of communication and the need for more innovative ways to reach students. Executive Director Vargas concluded her initial remarks by expressing excitement about the constructive feedback and growth potential identified in the report.

The committee then had a robust discussion that included contributions from Chair Ambris, President Peters, Trustee Romero, and Trustee Jackson. They highlighted the need for improvement in student support, basic needs, faculty-staff relations, and communication. Chair Ambris emphasized the importance of setting priorities and allocating resources for these improvements.

Trustee Romero expressed concern about the negative experiences the Faculty and Staff highlighted in the report. As a student, Trustee Romero also wanted to emphasize that although the students who completed the survey are more likely to give positive feedback, it is important to consider the perspectives of students who may not have completed the survey because of fear, frustration, or other barriers. Trustee Jackson mentioned a stark difference in support levels between departmental units and the university. They expressed that it might be because they feel more supported by their colleagues, with whom they spend most of their time working, but not the university as a

whole. Executive Director Vargas suggested that the full report would provide more context and insights into these issues.

The President discussed the perception of accessibility and collaboration within the school, noting that while they strive to be present and engaged, everyone may not feel that they are. Chair Ambris and Trustee Vu mentioned that they are struggling to find that balance between being accessible and present and the perception of not being at everything. Trustee Romero shared her perspective as a student, noting that she felt intimidated by the board but appreciated their approachability. Executive Director Vargas and Secretary Sorce discussed the need for more opportunities for students to engage with alumni and family and the importance of creating a welcoming environment for all. The committee also discussed the challenges of recognition and appreciation within the university and should strive to improve.

The committee discussed strategies to increase student participation in extracurricular events and improve communication. Trustee Romero highlighted the need to focus more on physical and digital accessibility. Executive Director Vargas assured the committee that accessibility will be a focus of the action plan.

### **3) Interests of DEIAC Members for 2024-2025 Academic Year**

Executive Director Vargas and Secretary Sorce brought this agenda item forward. Both asked the committee if there were any speakers or expanded information on any item that the Office of DEI is working on that we can bring forward to this committee. Chair Ambris mentioned that he would be interested in looking into the utilization of physical spaces on campus and identifying potential ways to make better use of these physical spaces. Secretary Sorce proposed a focus on digital access, and Executive Director Vargas suggested inviting HR and disability access services to share their work and perspectives. President Peters emphasized that the discussions in this committee are some of the most important. We need to lean into the importance of innovative thinking and the potential for significant changes, considering ideas such as offering free housing or food to students on campus.

Trustee Vu emphasized the importance of understanding the value proposition of attracting students to Western University, particularly first-time college students and those from diverse backgrounds. He highlighted the need to focus on the needs of students who aren't currently at the university rather than just those already enrolled. Chair Ambris agreed, suggesting that the university identify its target audience and cater to their needs to remove barriers. Trustee Jackson shared data from their AI Chatbot, revealing that financial concerns were a significant reason for students leaving the university. President Peters suggested innovative ways to reach potential students, such as leveraging AI or scheduling appointments in community centers. The committee agreed on a more student-centered approach to better understand their target audience's needs.

Lastly, the committee discusses the importance of focusing on a few key initiatives rather than trying to do too many things simultaneously. Trustee Vu and Trustee Jackson emphasized the need to identify areas with the best return on investment and align them with the existing strategic plan. The committee agrees on the value of doing fewer things better and intentionally improving current successful practices.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

No additional announcements were made.

## **V. ADJOURNMENT**

Trustee Ambris adjourns the meeting at 2:36 pm.



**Western Oregon**  
UNIVERSITY



Rian Gayle  
Director

April  
2025



# Mission

**Disability Access Services (DAS) intentionally provides individually tailored, reasonable accommodations for the Western Oregon University (WOU) community and its programs. Acting under the values of DAS, we aim to cultivate lifelong learning, personal growth, and self-advocacy.**

**We currently serve around 450 students.**



# Outline:

- Awareness building
- Committees
- Strategic plannings
- Partnerships
- Paradigm shift
- Adapting





# Human Resources Access

**Emily Herb, Director of Faculty and Staff Access**

- **Employee Accommodations (ADA)**
- **WOU Open Access Events**
- **Accessibly / Accommodations Policy Work**



# Access at WOU Working Group\*

- **Tina Fuchs** - Vice President of Student Affairs
- **Desiree Noah** - Chief Human Resources Officer
- **Dominique Vargas** - Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- **Rian Gayle** - Director, Disability Access Services
- **Stacey Rainey** - Assistant Director, Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services (DAS)
- **Emily Herb** - Director, Faculty and Staff Access Services (HR)



# Policy Work

- **Guided by the strategic plan and equity assessment**
- **Using comparisons from Oregon Public Universities**
  - Unified Accessibility Web Page
  - Workplace Accommodations Policy
  - Student Accommodations Policy
  - Digital Accessibility Policy
  - Inclusive and Accessible Events Guidelines
  - Accessibility Committee



## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report**

**April 3, 2025**

Dominique Vargas, Executive Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Goal: Enhance the financial stability and sustainability of the institution through strategic financial planning, responsible resource allocation, and innovative revenue-generation initiatives, ensuring long-term resilience and success.

#### Activities & Accomplishments

- **Equity Assessment.**
  - *Team.* The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion has been convening the new equity assessment team to review Jane Cameron-Jenson (Staff Senate), Justice Gloria (Student Affairs), Emily Herb (Human Resources), Amy Rizo (The Research Institute), Michael Gonzalez (Athletics), Daniel Rockwell (Academic Affairs), Diana Valdovinos Cabrera (ASWOU Director of Equity & Advocacy), Fernando Robles (Vice President ASWOU), Diana Valdovinos Cabrera (ASWOU Director of Equity & Advocacy), Kathy Espino Perez (College of Liberal Arts & Sciences), Pete Hoffecker Mejia (Faculty Senate), Danielle Lane (College of Education).
  - *Action Plan.* Accountability leaders continue to work on equity assessment action plan initiatives with an updated plan included in the April board docket.
- **Funding for HSI Initiatives.** The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion collaborated with the foundation to secure a \$40,000 donation from the Oregon Community Foundation to support this year's Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Summit and Cesar E. Chavez Leadership Conference. Additionally, they worked with the Higher Education Coordination Commission to secure \$5000 to support the HSI Summit.

### STUDENT SUCCESS

Goal: Enhance degree completion rates for undergraduate, graduate, and transfer students, through strategic initiatives focused on academic support, streamlined pathways, and the necessary services that ensure timely and successful attainment of their educational goals.

#### Activities & Accomplishments

- **Accessibility Working Group.** Work continues on the accessibility policy draft, the digital accessibility policy (led by the University Technology Advisory Committee), and the event accessibility guide. This group is also reviewing service animal and emotional support animal policies.
- **Empowering Communities Working Group.** Work continues on the freedom of expression website. Focus for this group has shifted to academic freedom with increased involvement with faculty and outreach to senate.



- **Freedom Center Reimagined.** The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion and Student Affairs continue to engage students to reimagine the Freedom Center as well as discuss culturally relevant spaces more holistically. A draft proposal for a new Mosaic Center that is supported in partnership with Student Engagement, ASWOU, and Multicultural Student Services and Programs has been developed. This proposal will be shared with students in current multiculturally affinity ASWOU chartered student organizations this spring for additional feedback. The proposed Mosaic Center mission is to support and connect students and friends of multicultural affinity ASWOU chartered student organizations. It provides space for organization business, socializing, studying, hosting events, and rest. This kind of environment can help with recruitment and retention, as it offers students a place to engage with others who share similar experiences or interests and foster a sense of belonging. It also serves as an information hub for those who may want to learn more about or get involved with multicultural affinity student organizations. The goal is to have this Mosaic Center ready by Fall 2025. Additionally, with the development of the Mosaic Center the Freedom Center as we know it would sunset. However, the office of diversity, equity, and inclusion is proposing employing students to continue student involvement in diversity, equity, and inclusion educational opportunities for students by students.
- **Inside Track.** [Inside Track](#) received grant funds from the Ford Family Foundation to support three Oregon higher education institutions (Western Oregon University, Klamath Community College, and Treasure Valley Community College). The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion is collaborating with Enrollment Management and Student Success to develop this partnership. This partnership will be free to WOU for three years and hopes to support the matriculation of students to WOU as well as the coaching of WOU advisors/counselors to expand capacity and skill building.

## TRANSFORMATIONAL DIVERSITY

Goal: Foster an inclusive educational, living, and work environment at Western Oregon University, ensuring that students and employees feel a profound sense of belonging and have abundant opportunities for growth and success.

### Activities & Accomplishments

- **HSI Designation.** The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion completed the process for confirming eligibility for Title V/HSI funding. On March 10, we received a letter from the U.S. Department of Education confirming our eligibility for Title V programs. This is confirmation of our HSI status for the next academic year.
- **HSI Summit.** As of this report 218 individuals are registered for the annual HSI Summit on Friday, April 18, 2025. These individuals represent more than 35 different entities from across the state of Oregon. [Doctora Gina Ann Garcia](#) is our keynote presenter and workshop facilitator.



## COMMUNITY STRENGTH

Goal: Cultivate and maintain a culture at Western Oregon University that embraces collaboration, connection, and communication as we build meaningful partnerships with internal and external communities, while enriching the educational experience of our students.

### Activities & Accomplishments

- **Civics Training.** The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion partnered with [OCTPET](#) for the third time to engage in civics training. Jaime Rodriguez and Teresa Alonso Leon brought three interns to support this opportunity for WOU students. On March 6, 12 WOU students and four faculty/staff engaged in this effort with OCTPET in preparation for civic engagement and more specifically upcoming advocacy days in Salem.
- **Celebrate Your True Self (GSA Day).** The office of diversity, equity, and inclusion, GSA Day Committee, Safe Zone Advisory Board, and Admissions partnered to present Celebrate Your True Self on Friday, March 7. 131 high school students from 11 area high schools participated in this one-day event at WOU. [Karelia Stetz-Waters](#) was the keynote presenter.
- **Cesar E. Chavez Leadership Conference.** As of this report 1067 individuals are registered for our returning CECLC. This number includes 963 students and 104 chaperones from 49 different high schools. There are at least 15 entities signed up for the college/career fair and 25 concurrent session presentations. [Alejandra Campoverdi](#) is our keynote presenter.
- **Oregon Hispanic Serving Institution Consortium.** The executive director of diversity, equity, and inclusion continues to co-chair the steering committee for the Oregon Hispanic Serving Institution Consortium, which has been given the green light from the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.



## **Western Oregon University Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee (DEIAC) Charter**

### **MISSION**

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Committee (DEIAC) of the WOU Board of Trustees is charged with ensuring the Board and University prioritize the values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility throughout the university enterprise and that, as fiduciaries of the University, elevate those values as essential to the successful functioning of the Board and the University.

### **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### ***Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility***

The DEIAC under the guidance of the full board, is responsible for reviewing, monitoring, and advising progress on the Board's expectations enumerated in the *Board Statement on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility*, including climate, students, employees, curriculum and pedagogy, community partnerships, business practices, and facilities and the physical plant.

#### ***Diversity Action Plan***

The DEIAC, is responsible for reviewing, recommending, monitoring, and advising on the University's progress on its Diversity Action Plan (DAP), including but not limited to amendments and new versions of the DAP as advised and presented by the President and the Executive Director for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

#### ***University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (UDIAC)***

The DEIAC, in concert with the President, is responsible for receiving periodic updates from the University Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Committee (UDIAC) regarding its activities and its role in the development of the University's Diversity Action Plan. The UDIAC is a presidential advisory committee.

#### ***University Cultural Competence Advisory Committee (UCCAC)***

The DEIAC, in concert with the President, is responsible for receiving periodic updates from the University Cultural Competence Advisory Committee (UCCAC) as required by HB 2864 (2017) and its activities and its role in the development of the University's HB 2864 standards, including but not limited to the biennial board report required by HB 2864. The UCCAC is a presidential advisory committee.

#### ***Dashboard***

The DEIAC, with the assistance of campus units, such as Institutional Research, will formulate, monitor, and receive periodic updates on a Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility dashboard to track progress on DEIA goals and measures, including but not limited the development of any institution goals and any assistance the Board's Executive, Governance and Trusteeship Committee (EGTC) requires in its duty to conduct the performance evaluation of the university president.

### ***Training***

The DEIAC, is responsible for proposing and recommending relevant diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility training for the Board and its trustees.

### ***Policies***

The DEIAC is responsible for any and all recommendations to the WOU Board of Trustees regarding Board Statements including, but not limited to any topic or initiative related to diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility.

### ***Workplan***

The DEIAC will adopt an annual workplan, in concert with the Board's strategic planning retreats, to describe the work, consistent with the **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES** section of this Charter, it plans to accomplish for that year.

## **ORGANIZATION**

### ***Membership; Structure; Quorum***

The DEIAC, consistent with the *Board Statement on Committees*, will consist of five members. The Board chair appoints members of the committee, including the committee chair. A quorum of the DEIAC will be three committee members.

### ***Meetings***

The DEIAC will meet at least four times each year. DEIAC meetings will be conducted in substantial compliance with the *Board Statement on the Conduct of Public Meetings*. Because committees may meet more frequently than the full Board of Trustees, the chair or staff are encouraged to convene meetings by telephone or videoconference for the convenience of the committee members.

### ***Agenda, Minutes, and Reports***

The chair, in collaboration with the staff designee, is responsible for establishing the agendas for meetings. An agenda, together with relevant materials, will be sent to committee members at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting. Minutes for all meetings shall be drafted by the staff designee, reviewed by the Secretary to the Board,



reviewed by the committee chair, and approved by committee members at the following meeting.

### ***Staff Designee***

The Executive Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and/or his/her/their designee will be staff to the DEIAC.

### ***Review of Charter***

This charter shall be reviewed and reassessed by the DEIAC at least annually, and any proposed changes shall be submitted to the board for approval.

### ***Document History***

- Discussed and revised at January 13, 2022 DEIAC Meeting
- Approved by the Board of Trustees at February 16, 2022 Meeting
- Discussed and revised at October 20, 2023 DEIAC Meeting
- Approved by the Board of Trustees at November 15, 2023 Meeting