



**REGULAR MEETING OF THE WOU BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**NO. 65– February 25, 2025**  
**3:00PM-5:00PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

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

Chair Fasana calls the meeting to order at 3pm on February 25, 2025 and asked Secretary Sorce to do a roll call.

The following Trustees are present: Board Chair Angela Fasana, Board Vice Chair Kari Nelsestuen, Trustee Jerry Ambris, Trustee Evans, Trustee Hunter Hall, Trustee Paige Jackson, Trustee Leah Mitchell, Trustee Rey Perez, Trustee Viviana Romero, Trustee Dana Schowalter, Trustee Kate Schwarzler, Trustee Jim Vu, Trustee Mark Zook

The following Trustees were excused: Trustee Juan Larios

The following staff are present: President Jesse Peters, Evan Sorce, Ema Aros, Stewart Baker, Maggie Bartosovsky, Kwabena Boakye, Maureen Brakke, Rebecca Chiles, Dr. Jose Coll, Michael Ellis, Tina Fuchs, Lindsay Gibson, Dr. Mark Girod, Michael Gonzalez, Michael Green, Mike Hanson, Kella Helyer, Dr. Kristin Latham-Scott, Sierra Logan, Malissa Larson, Tom Litterer, Randi Lydum, Antonio Macias, Sydney Maller, Cameron Mortensen, Brenda Rocio Martinez, Dr. Becka Morgan, Desiree Noah, Belen Santiago Hernandez, Dr. Judy Silva, Jackson Stalley, LouAnn Vickers, Maddy Wilson, Katie Wojke,

**II. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

Chair Fasana starting everyone by welcoming to the beautiful campus and welcomed everyone to her ancestral homeland as a Member of the Confederated Tribe of the Grande Ronde. Chair Fasana reflected on all the hardships faced since the last meeting in November. She encouraged resiliency and unity with the theme 'Wolves Rising'. Lastly Chair Fasana reminded folks that this meeting is lived streamed and due to the implementation of a new state law this will be the first Board Meeting that will be posted on our YouTube Channel.

**III. PRESIDENT'S WELCOME**

President Peters introduced the incoming VP of Finance and Administration Kwabena Boakye and welcomed him to campus. He expressed concerns over national policy changes, potential funding losses, and institutional challenges. He



emphasized the university's core values: centering students, embracing diversity, fostering accessibility, and valuing community. He shared insights from his rural Georgia upbringing and Indigenous literary studies, encouraging perseverance, shared responsibility, and hope amid uncertainty.

**IV. STUDENTS AT THE CENTER:** Staff and students within Housing and Residential Life share their experience regarding serving on campus Students.

Vice President of Student Affairs Tina Fuchs introduced a panel of five student leaders in housing and residence life. Lindsay Gibson and Sierra Logan explained RA and RHA roles in student support, community building, programming, and leadership development. Student leaders Maddy Wilson, Belene, Sidney, Antonio, and Emma shared personal experiences about their roles, challenges (e.g., late-night calls), growth in leadership, and connections to future careers. Trustees and attendees expressed deep appreciation for their service and impact on campus.

**V. STAKEHOLDER UPDATES**

**1) SHARED GOVERNANCE**

**a) ASWOU | Brenda Rocio Martinez**

ASWOU President Brenda Rocio Martinez and Senate President Maggie Bartosovsky delivered the Student Government report. They reported that they now have a full membership of the student judicial board and nine student senators. Senate President Bartosovsky talked about how the Senate has adopted Senate Bill 1.25 which clarified the Student Trustee nomination process. Senate President Bartosovsky also mentioned that the Senate is now working on an upcoming bill to enhance student club requirements to include an advisor and 3 officers. They also mentioned Resolution 1.25 which urged inclusion of student voices in university decisions. They emphasized the need for transparency, representation, and ongoing student feedback. They are planning a student town hall in which they will invite Senior Leadership to participate.

**b) Faculty Senate | Dr. Steve Scheck**

Due to Faculty Senate meeting at the same time as Day 1 of the Board of Trustees meeting, Dr. Steve Scheck, President of the Faculty Senate, was not able to provide a update. However, Mr. Scheck's report can be found on page four of the docket.

**c) Staff Senate | Alexis Morrison**



Alexis Morrison, President of the Staff Senate, gave the Staff Senate report which can be found on page five of the docket Staff Senate President Alexis highlighted two goals: fundraising for student/staff scholarships and building staff community. The scholarship fund is close to goal thanks to a match donation. Challenges include staffing turnover and difficulty filling committees due to overwork. She emphasized recognition and morale support, encouraging leadership to acknowledge staff contributions.

## 2) **UNION**

### a) SEIU | Jackson Stalley

Jackson Stalley, President of the WOU082 Union, spoke on behalf of the classified staff union. Mr. Stalley shared both positive and critical reflections. He highlighted recent staff/faculty events which have been well attended and wonderful ways for the WOU campus community to connect and break bread together. Mr. Stalley emphasized the burden on classified staff amid staffing shortages. He strongly opposed potential layoffs of low-paid staff, urging trustees to advocate for sustainable alternatives. He warned of the institutional damage from repeated reductions in essential staff roles.

### a) WOUFT | Dr. Melanie Landon-Hayes

Dr. Melanie Landon-Hayes and Stewart Baker presented the WOUFT report to the Board. The faculty union reported on efforts to implement new workload agreements from the latest CBA. They cited implementation issues, unclear communication, and surprise instructional faculty cuts. Concerns were raised over loss of revenue-generating faculty, transparency in budgeting, and decision-making criteria. They requested collaboration, data sharing, and provided a list of faculty questions to trustees. They acknowledged recent administrative openness but emphasized the need for earlier and clearer engagement.

## VI. **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Chair Fasana reminded the Board members as well as the audience that there will be a board reception at the new Student Success Center at 5pm and that Coffee with Trustees was going to be at 9am the next day across from the Freedom Center.

Secretary Sorce reminded the audience that Public Comment will be available two times the next day. Once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Trustee Romero mentioned that the RHA is working on an upcoming project honoring women who shaped Western Oregon University and invited Trustees to participate.



**VII. RECESS**

Chair Fasana recessed the meeting until Wednesday February 26 at 10am.

---



**April 23 2024**

**CAMPUS COFFEE CHAT**

**9:00-9:45AM**

**WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER | FIRST FLOOR, ACROSS FROM THE FREEDOM  
CENTER**

**PUBLIC MEETING 10:00AM-3:00PM**

**WERNER UNIVERSITY CENTER | COLUMBIA ROOM**

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

Chair Angela Fasana called the meeting to order at 10:05am and asked Secretary Sorce to do a Roll Call

The Following Trustees were Present: Chair Angela Fasana, Vice Chair Kari Nelsestuen, Trustee Jerry Ambris, Trustee Gale Evans, Trustee Hunter Hall, Trustee Page Jackson, Trustee Ray Perez, Trustee Viviana Romero, Trustee Dana Schowalter, Trustee Kate Schwarzler, Trustee Jim Vu

The Following Trustees were Excused: Trustee Juan Larios

The following staff are present: President Jesse Peters, Evan Sorce, Kwabena Boakye, Maureen Brakke, Rebecca Chiles, Dr. Jose Coll, Kristin Diggs, Michael Ellis, Tina Fuchs, Dr. Mark Girod, Michael Green, Michael Hansen, Dr. Kristin Latham-Scott, Malissa Larson, Shadron Lehman, Tom Litterer, Randi Lydum, Cameron Mortensen, Desiree Noah, Emily Plec, Dr. Judy Silva, Dr. Stephen Scheck, LouAnn Vickers, Katie Wojke,

**II. CHAIR'S WELCOME**

Chair Fasana welcomed everyone back to WOU's beautiful campus. She reminded the Board and the audience that the meeting was being live-streamed and would be posted on the Board of Trustee's website, consistent with a newly implemented state law.

Chair Fasana also honored Mr. Jake Whisenhunt, who passed away in January. She has known Mr. Whisenhunt since he was four. He and his brother were roughly the same age as one of Chair Fasana's brothers. Chair Fasana shared personal memories about Mr. Whisenhunt and acknowledged his 14-year service to the WOU community, his dedication to his family, and his church community. He will be missed by many across the State of Oregon.

**III. CONSET AGENDA**



- 1) Meeting Minutes:
  - a) **November 19-20, 2024 Meeting Minutes**
  - b) **December 13 2024 Special Meeting**
- 2) **FY25 Management Report (As of December 31, 2024)**
- 3) **FY2024 Financial Statements Audit**
- 4) **FY 2024 Single Audit**

Trustee Mitchell moved and Trustee Schowalter I seconds to approve the consent agenda as listed in the docket. There was no additional discussion.

Roll Call Vote on the motion:

Chair Fasana	Aye
Vice Chair Nelsestuen:	Aye
Trustee Ambris:	Aye
Trustee Evans	Aye
Trustee Jackson	Aye
Trustee Hall	Aye
Trustee Larios:	Aye
Trustee Mitchell	Aye
Trustee Perez	Aye
Trustee Romero	Aye
Trustee Schowalter	Aye
Trustee Schwarzler	Aye:
Trustee Vu	Aye
Trustee Zook	Aye

Motion Passes 14-0-0

#### **IV. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT**

Emily Plec spoke in public comment. She addressed the board with concerns regarding her view that the faculty workload is imbalanced and there was a need for service restructuring. She expressed concern in her perception of growth in administrative roles while there is discussion of cuts in other areas. She also expressed concerns about her perception of a lack of visibility in marketing and admissions strategy, she urged the trustees to serve as institutional watchdogs and to enhance accountability and transparency.

#### **V. STAKEHOLDER UPDATES**

- 1) **WOU FOUNDATION REPORT** | Katie Wojke, Vice President for Advancement





Katie Wojke presented her report, which can be found on page 46 in Appendix B of the Docket for review. Vice President Wojke updated the Wolves Rising campaign for WOU at \$17.5 million, or 88% of the \$ 20 million goal. The campaign has exceeded the scholarship pillar, which is at 119% of the goal, 80% of the student success pillar, and 31% of the athletics pillar. Ms. Wojke highlighted planned events, focusing primarily on Giving Day, in which she showed a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted new tracking tools and community engagement strategies. Ms. Wojke then shared a video made on behalf of the foundation to advertise for Giving Day. Trustee Romero asked why there is such a large focus on athletics for Giving Day. Ms. Wojke emphasized that our over 60 different clubs and activities have goals for Giving Day.

## 2) **LEGISLATIVE REPORT** | Evan Sorce, Acting Director of Government Relations

Evan Sorce presented the legislative update. He started by discussing the search process for a new Executive Director of the Oregon Council of Presidents. Mr. Sorce mentioned that the timeline for hiring is the end of the legislative session.

Mr. Sorce then walked through the context and current environment of the Oregon State Legislature coming into the legislative session. The Democrats have a supermajority in both chambers and the Governor's office. He mentioned there are several new members, including new leadership in the various educational committees. Mr. Sorce expressed that legislative leaders are very concerned about the rhetoric coming from the Federal Government regarding closing programs and cutting federal allocations to the State. Historically, Oregon has prided itself on making strategic investments to maximize federal match and investments. It has been so successful that federal allocations represent roughly 33 percent of the Oregon Budget. This, however, makes the State particularly vulnerable to proposed federal cuts to Medicaid, transportation, and education funding. The Governor's proposed budget highlights these concerns by emphasizing investments to stabilize healthcare and other social service programs, housing, mental health, and k-12 education. Public Universities did not fare well in the Governor's proposed budget.

So far in the legislative session, over 3,000 bills have been introduced, 900 of which are being tracked by the OCOP. Mr. Sorce highlighted the priorities of OCOP, including \$1.275 for the Public University Support Fund (PUSF), \$450 million for the Oregon Opportunity Grant, \$7-10 million for Strong Start, \$20 million to support early childhood education workforce initiatives, and \$25 million to help behavioral health workforce. Lastly, Mr. Sorce talked about WOU's capital construction priorities.

Trustee Ambris asked, with all the uncertainty going on at the federal level and



potential tariff conversations happening that can have a massive impact on the economy, how accurate do you think these economic forecasts will be? Mr. Sorce answered by saying that the State has hired a new economist and reconfigured the formula that the state economist uses, but Mr. Sorce said it is unknown how close they will be; no one has a crystal ball. Trustee Vu asked if the Governor has prioritized K-12 over Higher Education funding, and the answer is yes, k-12 education, behavioral health, housing, and transportation are the state priorities. Legislators need to hear that an investment in Higher Education will create a higher tax base and, more likely than not, reduce the need for future investments in certain government programs.

Note: President Peters had to step out of the room so Chair Evans jumped to the Finance and Administration Committees

## **VI. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE (FAC)**

### **1) Committee Chair Report | Trustee Gayle Evans**

Trustee Evans gave the Finance and Administration Committee Report to the Finance and Administration Committee meeting on February 11, 2025. This was our Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration, Mike Green, last meeting. Trustee Evans thanked Mr. Green for being willing to come out of a very short retirement to help WOU. While Mr. Green was here, he provided critical guidance and contributed significantly during his brief time on our campus. Chair Expressed her excitement to work with our Vice President for Finance and Administration Kwabena Boakye to join WOU. During the Feb 11th meeting, the committee discussed the need to recast the five-year sustainability plan. Chair Evans emphasized that the administration has made a real commitment to engage stakeholders in the conversation. The committee also reviewed the investment programs, walked through the alignment of the FAC's strategic plan, and discussed the importance of the FAC's role in oversight. Chair Evans mentioned at the next FAC in April, there will be recommendations for an update of the Board Statement on the Quasi-Endowment as well as a draft of a new Board Statement on the Investment of Operating Expenses.

Chair Evans asked Mr. Green to come up and give highlights of his report, which can be found on page 12 of Appendix B for review. The Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration presented opportunities for improvement, especially in grant drawdown systems, liquidity management, and investment strategies. Mr. Green mentioned that there is a need to move pretty quickly on the new five-year plan because there is much uncertainty past the next biennium. The priority is to ensure that any reorganization or budget balancing has as little impact to student graduation and progression through their programs as possible. Everyone is committed to that.

## **VII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT | President Jesse Peters**





President Jesse Peters presented his report, which can be found on page 10 of the docket for review. President Peters summarized institutional challenges and progress. He reaffirmed WOU's commitment to Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion principles and institutional values, which are integrated into the university's strategic plan. A 30 percent increase in application rates was noted yearly and admits are up 37 percent. It is essential to remember that increased applications and admissions do not guarantee increased enrollment, but it is an encouraging sign. Persistence rates are very encouraging; it is 4 percent up term to term, with 94 percent of students returning. The President highlighted a couple of grants that contribute to Student Success, including the Title III grant that is around supporting student success and persistence, and a state grant from the Oregon Department of Education around Latinx student success grants that enhance partnerships with school districts. The President highlighted some information about Student-Athletes. 13.5 percent of our student population are student-athletes, and 437 student-athletes are on campus. They are also more diverse than the general student population and have higher GPAs and persistence rates. The President outlined alignment efforts with strategic goals across university units. Finally, President Peters emphasized community building and reaffirmed WOU's role in our students and the state of Oregon's success despite fiscal uncertainties.

Trustee Romero asked President Peters how the university is educating students. President Peters listed several services that the university provides to support students. Trustee Romero asked if it would be possible to ensure students are involved in the conversations around budget cuts because they ultimately impact them. President Peters responded yes and emphasized that the students have an organization in their student government that is the shared governance partner involved in these conversations. Students are also involved in search committees and other decision-making boards.

Additionally, all budget information is publicly available and accessible for review. It is an open and transparent process that has and will include the shared governance process. Both Trustees Ambris and Schwarzler emphasize that budget challenges are not unique to WOU; they are felt in the non-profit sector, counties, and cities. What is happening on this campus is that it does not occur in a vacuum.

Trustee Perez asked about the everyday conversation of someone applying to WOU to enroll in WOU and whether we know the top reasons why they decide to go elsewhere. Trustee Jackson mentioned this is a critical question. We do not have data compared year to year because this is the first year WOU is on the common app. WOU also implemented an enrollment fee to help with some data, but it's all about the yield rate. We think we will have roughly a 20 percent yield rate, but the data is changing, and it's harder to predict than it historically has been for various factors. It is important to note that about one-third of students who applied to WOU and didn't end up enrolling at WOU last year



ended up not going to college, and one-third ended up going to community college. Another important thing to know is about 60% of our students come from our region (Mid-Willamette Valley). There was an additional conversation about the numerous things WOU can strategically do to improve enrollment from those who applied. There was a further conversation about enrollment projections for our graduate programs.

**VIII. LUNCH / SHOWCASE PRESENTATION:** First Generation Student Resources and Support: Presenters Include:

- Jennifer Koshnick, Director of Student Success and Advising
- Dana Nunez-Silva, First Generation Coordinator & Advisor
- Brenda Rocio Martinez, Student & Member of WOU's Tri Alpha Chapter
- Isaac Garcia, Student & Member of WOU's Tri Alpha Chapter
- Jaidah Garcia, Student & Member of WOU's Tri Alpha Chapter
- Tiffany Marx, Student & Member of WOU's Tri Alpha Chapter

Chair Fasana introduced Dana Nunez-Silva, Western Oregon University First Generation Coordinator & Advisor. Ms. Nunez-Silva started the showcase by thanking the Trustees for the opportunity to present. She then walked through her presentation, which can be found on page 20 of the docket for review. After Ms. Nunez-Silva's part of the presentation, the four students on the panel introduced themselves and answered questions that were prewritten for them, including major, year in school, what being a first-generation student means to you, and finally, what inspired you to seek a higher education degree, what does being inducted in the Tri-Alpha honor society mean to you?

Students gave wonderful answers to the questions asked of them. This highlighted the diversity of the students' lived experiences at WOU. Trustee Ambris mentioned that as a first-generation alum at WOU, he appreciated this presentation, all the programs that are still at WOU, and the additional services that WOU has added since his graduation.

Trustee Mitchell asked the students why they picked WOU out of all the universities they could have picked. Students mentioned the diversity of the student body, the close proximity to home, the small class sizes, the high first-generation student body, the lower cost to attend, and the support for rural communities like Monmouth and Independence.

**IX. SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF WOU TRUSTEE BETTY KOMP:**

Chair Fasana acknowledged that Trustee Betty Komp has decided to retire from the Board of Trustees and read a long list of Trustee Komp's contributions to Western Oregon University. The University gave her a blanket; Secretary Sorce emphasized that included in the gifts was a word collage of words Senior Leadership thought best described Trustee Komp. Words like driven, kind, passionate. Supportive. Secretary Sorce shared a personal story about how



much he appreciated Trustee Komp and said he would miss working with her. Dr. Peters said on a professional note your impact on this campus will last for many decades. President Peters has appreciated her support and guidance and allowed for the working relationship. Trustee Komp was also the winner of the Distinguished Alumni Award. Chair Fasana also added that Trustee Komp always appreciated her straightforwardness and the example that Trustee Komp has set. Trustee Ambris mentioned he has known Trustee Komp since sixth grade. He has always enjoyed her advocacy for WOU and Woodburn and being a champion for the little guy. Trustee Komp said that any activity you are involved in gives you a piece of your heart. Her service has been a joy, and she thanked everyone so much for being incredible advocates for WOU.

**X. ACADEMIC & STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (ASAC)**

1) Committee Chair Report | Trustee Leah Mitchell

Trustee Mitchell gave an update on the last Academic & Student Affairs Committee held on February 4th, 2025. The committee heard two informative updates on how the university supports its students. The first presentation was on the Wolf Ride program, a complementary service providing shuttle services to students. Student fees fund it; it is wheelchair accessible and has an app for drivers and students. In the fall term, there was an 181% increase in usage over last year, which is impressive. They also heard an update about the National Student Exchange (NSE), which facilitates collegiate study at an affordable price. There are 170 campuses across the globe. WOU sends out 10 to 15 students a year in this program, while on exchange, students usually pay either WOU tuition and fees or in-state tuition and fees, and most choose to use the WOU tuition fee. Also, we have four incoming students from the program from Florida, New Mexico, and Hawaii. In the second half of the meeting, they reviewed unit strategic plans in alignment with the university plan for academic affairs, athletics, and student affairs.

**XI. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, & ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE (DEIAC)**

1) Committee Chair Report | Trustee Jerry Ambris

Trustee Ambris mentioned a bit of what happened on January 30th and briefly mentioned Dr. Shelby West's climate survey presentation on campus earlier that week. He mentioned a few of his thoughts on the presentation and the report. Trustee Ambris also expressed excitement for the HSI Summit, especially with all the uncertainty at the federal level. And the report then introduced the Executive Director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Dominique Vargas, to provide an additional update.

2) Committee Recommendations for Board Discussion/Action

- a. Climate Survey Update | Office of Diversity Equity Inclusion Executive Director Dominique Vargas



Executive Director Vargas gave her update, which can be found on page 24 of the appendix b. Specific to the climate survey, Dr. Shelby West had her campus presentation; she also met with senior leadership and then hosted a student lunch that the administration was not allowed to attend. All the report materials and the assessment are live on the WOU portal for anyone in the WOU community to access. Next steps: WOU has formulated an Equity Assessment team with faculty leaders, staff leaders, and student leaders from across the campus to look at the data from the climate survey to assess the equity assessment action plan and look at the strategic plan to work through the alignment of the action plan into the strategic plan to make new recommendations or to reprioritize recommendations moving forward.

Trustee Evans asked if there was access to technology was a barrier to participating in the survey. Executive Director Vargas responded by saying access to technology in general has dramatically increased. The library has doubled the number of laptops available to check out. There was the opportunity to fill out a paper survey across the campus and in WOU Salem, but Executive Director does not have an answer for that. The intention is to provide another study, but it will be created in-house in roughly three years.

## **XII. EXECUTIVE, GOVERNANCE & TRUSTEESHIP COMMITTEE (EGTC)**

### **1) Committee Chair Report | Board Chair Angela Fasana**

Chair Fasana gave the Committee Chair Report. The Executive, Governance, and Trusteeship Committee (EGTC) met on February 10, 2024. A major portion of the meeting was filling the board vacancies with Trustee Evans's resignation, asking what the characteristics of Trustees were, taking a look at the roster, and highlighting the diversity of the board; most live on the I-5 corridor. The campus community can go to the Board Website and fill out the ideal board member characteristics. The second topic was around the 360 comprehensive reviews and looking at additional Trustees to serve on a subcommittee. Interested trustees can reach out to Vice Chair Nelsestuen. Finally, we had a robust conversation about goal setting. The committee asked Secretary Sorce to create a goal-setting alignment with the Strategic Plan.

## **XIII. SECOND PUBLIC COMMENT**

- 1) Dr. Steve Scheck signed up for public comment to give a quick Faculty Senate report. His update can be found on page four of the docket. Dr. Scheck spent his time in public comment to focus on the Academic Sustainability Committee, which has been reactivated to examine the academic aspects of the institution's sustainability. He emphasized that his presentation was an alternative to WOUFT. He focused on the quality of the



educational programs at WOU. It's an assurance that the program will provide essential academic nutrition to have a sound mind and skills to be successful in life regardless of whether they continue their education in graduate school or go into the workforce. It has to be done on a balanced budget. How large is a class? How often does it need to be offered? Do we need all the classes we offer? What about all the programs? These are the questions the committee needs to take on and answer.

- 2) The Last public comment was from Toby Winkler, a second-year biology and honors student. Toby had to go to class, so he asked Secretary Sorce to read their comments on their behalf to the Board. Trustee Fasana agreed to allow Secretary Sorce to do this, and he read Toby's comments regarding their concern about potential budget cuts into the record.

#### **XIV. ANNOUNCEMENT/COMMENTS**

Secretary Sorce reminded the Board that it is almost Statement of Economic Interest season. Secretary Sorce will work with the Trustees and Senior Leaders, who must fill them out by the April 15th deadline.

Vice Chair Nelsestuen challenged every board member to participate in Giving Day. The Board has had a 100 percent participation rate for the last two years, and we want to get that trend going.

#### **XV. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Fasana adjourns the meeting at 2pm