

Western Oregon University Foundation 2026-2027 Competitive Grants Program *Award Recipients*

Theatre Department

Summer Theatre Production

Total award: \$1,000

Since the summer of 2024, the Western Theatre department has offered a community-oriented WOU Summer Theatre. In these offerings, we seek to create a theatre production that is truly accessible to everyone in the community. We select shows that would be enjoyable for adults but also appropriate for children. The motto for these summer productions is "Theatre for All" - a theatre offering where everyone would feel welcome – ages 6 through 100. To remove any barrier to students and the community, our tickets to these productions are completely free. This year we are hoping to produce Schoolhouse Rock. I am requesting a \$1000 grant to support the Theatre Summer Production to replace lost funding due to current budget constraints.

Submitted by Sandra Hedgepeth

Division of Education & Leadership

AAPJ Heritage Month Keynote Event

Total award: \$1,000

Requested funds to support the College of Education's 7th annual Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPJ) Heritage Month event in May 2027. The \$1,000 funding will help book a nationally renowned AAPJ keynote speaker to center AAPJ history and celebrate AAPJ heritage.

Submitted by Lin Wu and Ya-Fang Cheng

Early Childhood Program

WOU Early Childhood Program Social Justice and Equity workshops

Total award: \$500

WOU Early Childhood (EC) Program will continue to host a series of Social Justice and Equity Workshops in the following academic year. Supported by the Competitive Funds, the EC program was able to host two workshops in the past year. This year funding has been requested to offset the costs of hosting a series of Social Justice and Equity Workshops by the WOU Early Childhood Program for WOU students, faculty, staff, potential students, education partners, and community practitioners.

Submitted by Ya-Fang Cheng

Admissions

Campus Ambassador Retreat

Total award: \$1,000

We are seeking funding to support a Campus Ambassador retreat that strengthens student leadership, team cohesion, and the overall quality of the prospective student experience. The Western Oregon University Admissions Campus Ambassador program is designed to provide prospective students and families with an authentic and engaging introduction to campus life. Campus Ambassadors lead tours, support events, and serve as the primary student connection for visitors.

Submitted by Kodee Hardwood

Writing & Research Center

From Campus to Conference: Showcasing WOU Writing Tutor Innovations

Total award: \$1,000

The WOU Writing and Research Center requests funding to support student tutors in presenting their original, peer authored OER manual chapters at the Pacific Northwest Writing Centers Association (PNWCA) conference, bridging the gap between open-access publication and professional academic engagement. This project, a collaboration between the WOU Writing and Research Center and the WOU OER Librarian, empowers student tutors to transition from practitioners to published scholars.

Submitted by Vanessa Petroj

FEM in STEM

FEM in STEM

Total award: \$1,000

FEM in STEM continues to build a community of students, faculty, staff, and community members to support and celebrate our WOU STEM students of all underrepresented genders and other underrepresented identities through graduation and beyond. This project facilitates a community for underrepresented students in STEM programs at WOU. The central mission of support for underrepresented genders in STEM will continue from past years, with updates to have more student interaction and to be inclusive of more STEM student needs.

Submitted by Kristin Latham-Scott

TRIO Teacher Prep Student Support Services (TPSSS)

TRIO Teacher Prep Student Support Services

Total award: \$1,000

The TRIO Teacher Preparation program serves first-generation future educators, many of whom come from financially marginalized backgrounds. This grant would enable us to alleviate or reduce the financial burden associated with ORELA testing for up to 10 students. The goal of this grant is to reduce the

financial burden associated with required ORELA examinations for first-generation and low-income future educators.

Submitted by Amber Logan

Early Childhood Program

Community College Visit Days

Total award: \$700

Requested funding to help offset costs for our Early Childhood Community College Visits days, where we invite early childhood students in EC programs at community colleges to spend the day with us and our students. We invite these students and their faculty to join us for a visit day that includes participating in a class, meeting with admissions, campus tour, lunch, and overview of our program.

Submitted by Cindy Ryan

Occupational Therapy Department

Wellness & Healthy Living Fair

Total award: \$996.50

WOU's OTD program has had a very collaborative relationship with Center 50+, providing several opportunities to serve community-dwelling older adults. Next spring, during OTD734 Practice in Geriatrics and Productive Aging, we are planning a health and wellness fair in alignment with the eight dimensions of wellness that Center 50+ embraces and delivers to its patrons. OTD students will create and deliver health-focused OT services to promote wellness and productive aging. Patrons of the center will be able to learn more in-depth about the dimensions of wellness and engage in activities to reinforce learning. This health fair also serves as experiential learning and demonstration of the program's curricular threads.

Submitted by Brianne Salvati

Gerontology: Aging and Older Adulthood Department

Careers in Aging Week - March 2027

Total award: \$662.84

Our proposed program includes five activities offered over four days for Careers in Aging Week in March 2027, including: tabling in the Werner University Center; a behavioral health career panel; an occupational therapy career panel; a Gerontology alumni panel; and an intergenerational social event hosted by our WOU Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Student Chapter, and Kappa Eta Omega (WOU's chapter of the Sigma Phi Omega international honor society for gerontology).

Submitted by Melissa Cannon

Library & Academic Innovation - Hamersly Library**Bridging the Gap: Gathering Data to Support Textbook Affordability Plan Revision****Total award: \$500**

This project will gather and analyze stakeholder feedback to revise WOU's Textbook Affordability Plan, ensuring it meets current legislative requirements and effectively reduces financial barriers for students. Oregon House Bill 2213 requires that each public university develop a Textbook Affordability Plan. The work for maintaining this plan is the responsibility of faculty and staff on the Textbook Affordability Committee (TAC).

Submitted by Lisa Taylor

Psychological Sciences**WOU-Talmadge Middle School Mentoring Program****Total award: \$900**

Funds were requested to support the WOU-Talmadge Middle School Mentoring Program allowing us to provide social family events, afterschool snacks, and small activity gifts for mentors to help motivate middle school student mentees' success and family involvement that strengthen their mentoring relationships. The WOU-Talmadge Mentoring Program emphasizes the high-impact practice of a service-learning collaboration for WOU undergraduate students, Psychology faculty, students, families, and staff of Talmadge Middle School in Independence.

Submitted by Brooke Dolenc Nott

Athletics**Campus and Local Community Engagement****Total award: \$1,000**

The funds will be used throughout the year at all sporting events and creating a cohesive community allows for a successful community. Athletic events are important for the community to come together in support for the university. Providing an atmosphere of unity and belonging is essential to student success.

Submitted by Michael Gonzalez

Athletics - Sports Performance**New Spin Bike****Total award: \$1,000**

We are in desperate need for some new spin bikes, all of our bikes we currently have are broken in some fashion and it's not worth it to spend the money to replace them or parts are not made for these bikes anymore as they are 10+ years old. All of our student-athletes here use these bikes, especially our injured athletes who cannot run yet. It would be so amazing to get a brand new bike since we've never bought a new bike, we've always bought used bikes so we have at least one bike that is fully functional and has a warranty.

Submitted by Cori Metzgar

WOU Equestrian Team

WOU Equestrian Outreach, Advertising, and Recruiting

Total award: \$1,000

The WOU Equestrian Team is requesting funding to support outreach, advertising, and recruitment efforts with the goal to increase awareness and engagement among current WOU students, while also providing prospective students with the opportunity to learn about the team and consider attending Western Oregon University to participate.

Submitted by Sarah Glascock

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Celebrate Your True Self Visit Day

Total award: \$1,000

Western Oregon University (WOU) hosts high school students for a full day leadership conference style visit day, which includes a keynote presentation, panel discussions, campus tours, a department/organization fair, and more. The day is centered on the LGBTQ2SIA+ community and friends. High school students and teachers/advisors/counselors are provided the chance to engage separately to talk about expectations, fears, challenges, and opportunities. High school students from around the state of Oregon will have time to connect with each other and learn about LGBTQ2SIA+ life and services from current college students and employees. Advisors/counselors engage in constructive dialogue to support each other as they learn to better engage and support our future students.

Submitted by Dominique Vargas

Student Engagement

Paw Points Program

Total award: \$1,000

Fall 2026 we introduced "Paw Points", a program where students earn points by attending events. These points can then be redeemed for WOU gear. We made some exclusive enamel "Paw Pins" and lanyards, and purchased items at a significant discount from the former bookstore liquidation. Fall 2026 we are launching a "Competencies and Skills" feature to help students track experiential learning. These also come with a higher number of points so we need more higher-end items. Over 25,000 points have been earned since September 2025. Most were earned 5 at a time through event attendance.

Submitted by Edward Webb

New Student & Family Programs

PACK Welcome Week Prizes

Total award: \$1,000

We are requesting \$1000 to purchase prizes as incentives for students to engage and attend PACK Welcome Week educational events along with quarterly orientation events for WOU's incoming non-traditional and transfer students. PACK Welcome Week (PWW), welcomes the incoming class of WOU students each year offering events focused on introducing them to WOU's culture, values, and resources.

Submitted by Shelby Worthing

New Student & Family Programs

Family Weekend Tickets

Total award: \$1,000

This request seeks funding to subsidize or fully sponsor Family Weekend tickets for students and their family members, including siblings, who may not be able to participate due to cost. Ticket prices are set at the actual cost of attendance, which limits our ability to offer discounts or complimentary tickets within our current budget. As a result, some families face difficult decisions, such as limiting attendance to one parent or opting out entirely.

Submitted by TJ Rabosky

Student Engagement

WOU Fight Hunger Games

Total award: \$1,000

The WOU Fight Hunger Games was a successful event, raising 80% of the food collected during the Governor's Food Drive last March, and this grant will help us build awareness to more students on campus and more members of the community. For 2027, we want to expand entertainment options to include cosplay, tournaments and even vendors, and we primarily want to expand our marketing to reach more students especially in housing and more members of the community

Submitted by Edward Webb

Student Conduct

Student Conduct Committee Recognition Pins

Total award: \$200

I am requesting \$200 to order at least 50 scales of justice pins to recognize graduating students' service to the Student Conduct Committee during their time at WOU. The Student Conduct Committee is a unique opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to volunteer their time to support accountability at Western. We would like to recognize the students who have served in this capacity by awarding them a scales of justice pin when they graduate

Submitted by Antonia Scholerman

Office of Student Conduct, Dean of Student's Office, Student Affairs

Soda Soiree: Bubbly Connections Begin Here

Total award: \$450

This project will support the Fourth Annual Italian Soda Soiree event during PACK Welcome Week designed to help students feel welcomed and connected as they start their college journey here at WOU! Professional staff from all over campus will prepare and serve custom made Italian sodas to students while engaging them in friendly conversation! By creating a fun and approachable environment, the event encourages students to build relationships with staff, ask questions, and learn about services that support their well-being and academic success. Grant funds will be used to purchase supplies such as syrups, carbonated water, cups, and other materials needed to host the event and serve many students, last year we made over 125 Italian sodas - so many flavor combinations and good conversations!

Submitted by Maria Bonifacio

Multicultural Student Services & Programs Department

PACE Winter Gathering

Total award: \$1,000

We are requesting funds to hire a mental health professional outside of WOU to facilitate a wellness workshop surrounding stress management and wellness for our first-generation/underrepresented and underserved students who have historically struggled during the Winter term period. At this session, the facilitator will speak about ways students can recognize early signs of in/direct burnout; the impact of social-emotional detachment from socio academic spaces; and how to nurture positive perspectives when balancing personal/student life schedules. In addition, the professional will bring hand-outs of guides/cheat-sheets for students to take with them and reference in immediate moments and paused times of their day.

Submitted by Justice Gloria

Center for Professional Pathways

Student Internship Support

Total award: \$2,000

The Center for Professional Pathways intends to provide financial support to students participating in internships and experiential learning. One of the biggest roadblocks for WOU students is gaining access to internships and experiential learning. CPP intends to address this issue by increasing access through funding to supply students with basics to increase participation in internships or experiential learning.

Submitted by Michelle Strowbridge

Office of Student Conduct

4th Annual: Know the Code November

Total award: \$450

The Office of Student Conduct is requesting funding to support "Know the Code November," a campus-wide initiative designed to increase student awareness of the conduct process and promote understanding of their responsibilities within the Western Oregon University community. The month long programming series features a combination of active and passive programming to engage students at different levels, equipping them with the knowledge and tools to make informed, responsible decisions on campus.

Submitted by Maria Nelda Lucile Bonifacio-Sample

Multicultural Student Services and Programs

First-Gen Family Connect

Total award: \$1,000

Requested funds will support a move-in day event that connects first-generation and underrepresented/underserved students and their families with MSSP staff, resources, and community building opportunities through culturally relevant food. The event is welcomes first-generation students and their families during move in day through an inclusive and information gathering hosted by the MSSP office. Families will have the opportunity to meet MSSP staff, learn about available academic and personal support services, and receive guidance on how to support their student's transition to college.

Submitted by Nancy Montecinos

Student Engagement and Office of Student Conduct

Wolves Welcome: Belonging Begins Here.

Total award: \$275

By providing instant Polaroid photos on the first day of school, this project creates a meaningful experience that promotes student belonging and celebrates the beginning of their journey at Western Oregon University. This project helps students feel recognized and included in the campus community from the outset. This initiative also creates a positive first impression of WOU by pairing a milestone moment with a memorable experience. These kinds things can strengthen students' connection to WOU.

Submitted by Maria Nelda Lucile Bonifacio-Sample

27 grants awarded for a total of \$23,634.34

The Competitive Grants program is funded by unrestricted gifts to the WOU Foundation.

The application deadline is in April with notification in June.