



November 7, 2024

Dear Western Oregon Community:

Now that Election Day is over, there will be much anticipation around changing leadership, and people will have mixed feelings about what the future will bring. For me, it is a time to lean into the special community that is Western Oregon University and remember the positive aspects of the work we do here.

I also want to emphasize our commitment to creating and maintaining a caring and inclusive community. We reaffirm our commitment to the principles of diversity, inclusion, and equity, and our new [Strategic Plan](#) articulates how we will work to achieve our goals.

Our Mission: “Western Oregon University provides a personalized learning community where individuals experience a deep sense of belonging and empowerment.”

Our Core Values: Centering Students, Embracing Diversity, Fostering Accessibility, and Valuing Community.

Our campus, state, and nation contribute to a global community, made up of many peoples and nations, including indigenous nations. Contributions by people from all parts of the world has made the United States stronger. In the coming months, there will be continued discussions around immigration, and I am sure there will be anxiety among members of our community.

Please know that Western Oregon University welcomes students regardless of immigration status, including Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students and undocumented students, and we remain fully committed to their academic success, safety and overall well-being. Though we do not know the future status of programs such as DACA, we are steadfast in our support for our enrolled DACA students as we are *for all students*.

Western will remain actively engaged in national conversations, including support of national educational associations, regarding DACA and related programs designed to protect students and their pursuit of educational opportunities.

I am a member of [Presidents for Latino Student Success](#), and WOU is a member of the [Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration](#) and the [Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities](#).

Western Oregon University is a sanctuary *for all of our students*, and we will continue to strive to make sure each student and employee feels they are able to be authentically themselves within our community.



Universities are places of plurality, spaces for respectful discussion and exploration of ideas. And I encourage all members of the community to be mindful of other perspectives as we continue improving our university in positive ways. I also encourage you to visit the [Freedom of Expression](#) website for additional guidance and resources.

Thanks for all you do to make Western the special place it is.

In community, as we continue our good work,

Jesse Peters, President
Western Oregon University