



December 11, 2025

Wolves:

In my address to campus at the beginning of the academic year, I briefly discussed the Budget Note report that HECC compiled at the request of the legislature. This was a historical analysis of university spending over the last decade. In my opinion, the data indicates that we have made difficult choices in a time of scarcity, and we are still being asked to do so because of inadequate state funding, increased costs, and lower enrollment.

Last week, the HECC released their recommendations based on their analysis of the data. Though universities provided feedback on the report narrative, we were not asked to provide any input on the recommendations.

Of particular note, recommendation #1 introduces the notion of “targeted integration” of institutions, with a plan to be developed by HECC over the next year. The second recommendation is for HECC to assume the power to evaluate programs for renewal.

Attached you will find the complete recommendations that the HECC plans to move to the state legislature in January. The HECC commission will discuss the report and recommendations today at the full commission meeting. They will not take action on them this week, but we anticipate a special meeting in the first week of January. Their plan is to formally adopt the report and recommendations and send them to the legislature for presentation during January legislative days 1/13-1/15.

I realize these recommendations are troubling, especially without clear context or explanation, and I share the concern. The university presidents were informed only a couple of days before the recommendations were made public. Please know that I will do everything possible to keep Western a strong and viable university.

Note that this is a very early stage of these recommendations, and we will work to seek clarity moving forward. But I wanted the community to be aware of this development and of the context.

I have also attached Western’s response to the budget note that is also included in the final report. As you will see, our stance is that the report data supports the fact that the institutions, especially WOU, have done a good job of producing results as funding decreased over time.



As always, thanks for your good work and focus on our students.

Here is the link to the full report [Spending and Efficiency in Oregon Public Universities](#).

Jesse Peters, President  
Western Oregon University

*Attachments:* [WOU Budget Note Response](#), [Draft Recommendations - Budget Note Report](#)