



May 20, 2025

Dear Wolves,

As we move towards the end of the term and anticipate graduation day (the best day!), I want to take a moment to thank you all for your dedication to this university, to its students, and to each other. At the beginning of this academic year, I said that I wanted the phrase “We are wolves” to mean something when we say it. Every day that meaning becomes clearer, and the strength of this community is more apparent.

We’ve done a lot of good work over the last few years, and we still have a lot to do as we realize the full potential of Western. But I have no doubt that we will get there. We will be known as a university that provides a vibrant learning community grounded in personalized support, belonging, and empowerment. We are the oldest public, four-year university in the state, and the first and only four-year public Hispanic Serving Institution in Oregon. We are a regional comprehensive institution that is grounded in liberal arts and sciences, focused on serving the cultural and economic needs of our region. As we navigate fiscal realities and federal policies, we will remain true to our identity, mission, and vision.

Our stability will come from our ability to reimagine how we deliver on our strengths.

To that end, I have attached a document that outlines where we were, where we are, and where we need to go. The short version is that next year is the time to implement innovative changes. We have worked to get operations and systems up to levels of best practice (that work will continue). We have a strategic plan that clearly defines institutional philosophy and institutional goals. We have an equity action plan. And we have a good handle on future expenses and enrollment trends. Now we must look to the future and reimagine how we deliver on our mission and vision.

This will take input from us all. It will take a willingness to consider change and shifts in resources. It will take a commitment to enhancing and marketing our strengths, even if that means changes in how we work and function.

I’ll communicate more details about process later in the summer. For now, please join me in all the celebrations that will happen in these last few weeks of the term. And on June 14th, we will be reminded of why we do the work we do as we watch our graduates walk across the stage.

Thank you.

Jesse Peters, President
Western Oregon University

Attachment: [WOU – A Vision for the Future](#)