



January 14, 2026

Wolves,

When we say *We Are Wolves*, it means something.

We are the university that strives to be inclusive, welcoming, supportive, collaborative, and caring. We are working, not just to fulfill our mission, but to live it.

Our Mission:

Western Oregon University provides a personalized learning community where individuals experience a deep sense of belonging and empowerment.

Our Vision:

Our vision is for Western Oregon University to be a model of intentional inclusion and accessibility. We strive to empower students to meaningfully impact our local community and beyond. Grounded in the principles of a public liberal arts education, we will enhance career and social mobility through a focus on critical thinking and communication skills that are essential for successfully navigating the complexities of life.

I just led a cabinet meeting, and during the conversations and reports, I was struck by how much has been accomplished over the last few years and how dedicated you all have been to this institution and its students. We have shifted systems, revised how we do our work, implemented a new strategic plan, implemented an equity action plan, changed recruiting strategies and marketing, achieved reaccreditation, engaged in new ways with communities, and opened a new student success center. And those are just a few of the things we have done.

That is a lot of change, and as often happens when changing, there have been bumps along the way. I know people have felt frustrated at times. Today I reminded the cabinet members to make sure that the employees in their areas know that we are always open to ideas and suggestions. We want to hear what is going well, but we also want to know what challenges people are facing. Please reach out anytime to any of us to provide your perspective.

We have to communicate and lean on each other as we navigate these stressful and unprecedented times. As we continue the difficult work of addressing our budget deficit, we also are faced with federal policies and actions that endanger members of our community. Additionally, state budgets are uncertain. We will get through this, and I will always fight to



put Western in the best position possible. The way you each work for the good of this institution inspires me every day.

I am proud and grateful that you have entrusted me to lead Western.

So, thank you for what you do. Thank you for who you are. Thank you for helping others. Thank you for choosing kindness. Thank you for being present. Thank you for serving students and colleagues.

Thank you for being Western Oregon University.

Remember that the rough roads are still roads, and as long as we travel them together and with purpose, we will get where we want to go.

We. Are. Wolves.

Centering Students
Embracing Diversity
Fostering Accessibility
Valuing Community

Jesse Peters, President
Western Oregon University