



Staff Senate Minutes

March 4, 2025 (2:00pm–3:30pm)

Online Via Zoom:

<https://wou-edu.zoom.us/j/85992926494?pwd=bUBlnWx4iQ9XzDUOj6YKpbYlrVjRh4.1>

Start recording - Staff Senate follows Simplified Robert's Rules

- Meeting recordings are for the Secretary to complete minutes effectively; when minutes are approved, the recordings will be deleted

In-Attendance: Alexis Morrison, Ambre Plahn, Rip Horsey, Wendi Mars, Connor King-Goehring, Sandra Holland, Kristen Perry, Ellie Baker, Gregg Vineyard, Adrian Trujillo, Sam Morgan

Absent:

Guests: Jesse Peters, Adeya Powell, Ashley Schaumburg, Chris Solario, Emily Webb, Heather Brophy, Director of Student Orgs,

Approval of minutes

- February 18th Minutes are approved

Guest Speakers

- WOU President, Dr. Jesse Peters
 - We have seen quite a few changes at the Federal level when it comes to funding. Thankfully, as a smaller institution we are not as heavily affected by these cuts as larger D1 universities are. Second is the “Dear Colleague” Letter coming out of the Department of Education. This letter is the first threat to DEI initiatives at colleges/universities. Many lawyers across the country have weighed in and there is nothing that says not making DEI changes is against the law. At this moment, WOU has not made any changes to our DEI initiatives and will continue with our operations as is until we are made to make changes otherwise.
 - Questions:
 - Knowing that these changes are happening really fast, what is the plan if we do have to change things quickly or if they pull federal funding from WOU/Oregon?
 - The state of Oregon is going to need to step up and backfill any gaps until this gets sorted out at the federal level. Oregon Presidents and other educational leaders have been having these conversations at the state level and ensuring that the Governor knows that we need to have these plans in place just in case.
 - Do you anticipate that any of these changes will adversely affect our ability to get HSI status and the funding opportunities that come with that?
 - Our plan is to continue to do the work we have been doing. However, there is a possibility that HSI initiatives may be going away, we just do not know. There is so much uncertainty that it is hard to tell exactly what may happen. There was never any real guarantee that we would even see any additional funding coming to us from obtaining HSI status. Our overall goal was to get the status



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to better serve that population of students, not so much that there was funding opportunity to come with it.

- Dr. Peters discussed the need to reduce our budget. Enrollment has declined nearly 3% while our expenses have continued to increase. Everyone across campus is taking this very seriously and looking hard at where they can reduce spending. The target date to announce these cuts will likely come out in June. A lot of these changes will likely be coming more heavily on the academic side. The goal is to not just cut expenses, but to make the university more sustainable.

Reports

- Committee Reports
 - Shared Governance
 - Most of what we discussed, Dr. Peters just gave an update on. Lobby Day – May 7th is Student Lobby Day. This is for students to take the lead and steer the conversations on behalf of WOU. Evan will be making some fliers on how staff can support the students in their efforts.
 - Evan is hoping to establish a WOU Lobby Day, but that is still in the works so more to come!
 - President's Cabinet
 - Next meeting: March 12, 2025
 - Other - Administrative Equity, Staff Connections, etc.

Unfinished Business

New Business

- Staff Senate Executive Committee Elections coming up in April
- Staff Senate General Elections will occur in May
- Committee Representation
 - In review of the bylaws we noticed that there are time limits for how long staff senate representatives serve on the various committees. Also, we realized that it does not actually set any expectations of what it means to serve on the committee. We want to update our bylaws to add a bit of language about what we want out of these representatives.

Goals (SMART)

- Fund the Staff for Students Scholarship
 - We met our Giving Day goal....YAY!!! This means we will be able to offer a \$1,000 scholarship next academic year. During our next meeting, we will put out a call to form a scholarship committee.
- Build connections through consistent communication and guest speakers

Announcements and Reminders



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- Agenda item suggestions
- Important Training Reminders
 - [Title IX](#) - On hold
 - Information Security Training (linked in Portal)
 - Business Office Campus-Wide Trainings - watch for emails from Cheri Darby
 - Check out the @WOU Newsletter for more optional events and training
- Kudos/Recognition
- Public Comments - Anything for the good of the order?
 - April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Abby's House will be holding many events during the month to promote awareness such as; Denim Day, Take Back the Night Event, Clothesline Projects in the WUC, Teal Out Games and maybe more!

Adjourn

Upcoming

- Next meeting: March 18, 2025
- Guest: None Scheduled