FORWARD **TOGETHER**
2017-23

WOU'S STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

WOU'S MISSION, VISION, VALUES & PURPOSE

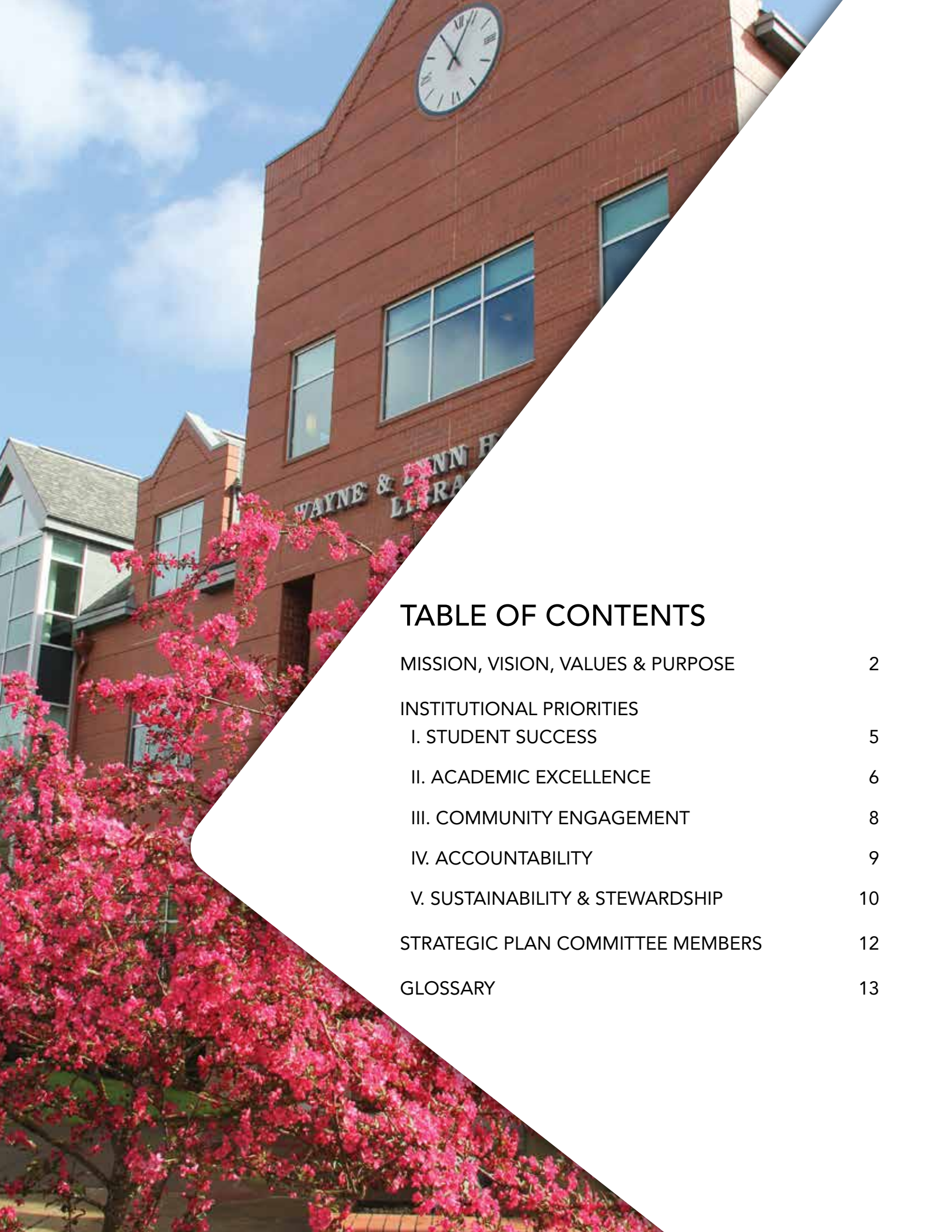Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY

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February 2017

Dear Colleagues and Community Members,

We are pleased to share Forward Together: 2017-2023, Western Oregon University Strategic Plan. The plan was developed over a nine-month period that started in April 2016 and culminated with a unanimous recommendation from the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) to send the plan to the WOU Board of Trustees for final approval. The 25-member SPC was committed to an open and transparent planning process. The spirit of collaboration and optimism about Western's future is captured by our title Forward Together, and by our overarching commitment to student success.

Throughout the nine-month process, the committee shared its thinking and planning ideas with the larger campus community via multiple interactive town halls. Additionally, members of the SPC shared updates with smaller groups throughout the process as the plan took shape. The committee worked collaboratively in smaller teams to tackle various aspects of the planning process from a review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the development of a new mission statement. Our new mission statement supports our reaffirmation of our university's values and our vision to be renowned for student success.

The Western Oregon University Strategic Plan is organized around five institutional priorities: student success, academic excellence, community engagement, accountability and sustainability and stewardship. These priorities are grounded in the values and deep history of Western. Throughout its history, WOU has responded to the expressed needs of the citizens of Oregon and WOU graduates have led productive, meaningful lives in communities throughout our state and beyond.

On January 25, 2017, the Western Oregon University Board of Trustees unanimously adopted this strategic plan with the clear expectation that it would guide the future directions and actions of the university. Our plan, Forward Together, is expected to be dynamic and responsive to changing conditions in the higher education environment. This roadmap will guide the development of action items and initiatives that further the university's mission.

As co-chairs of the committee, we are extremely proud of the work done by members of the Strategic Planning Committee. We know this plan took shape because of the profound commitment of our caring colleagues and community members. Our work was guided by the expert leadership of our facilitator, Ginny Lang, whose insights into higher education policy helped us frame our plan for the future. We are confident that Forward Together will form the basis for a renewed commitment to student success.

With deep appreciation,

Rex Fuller

Rex Fuller, President and Co-chair

Laurie Burton

Laurie Burton, Co-chair

MISSION, VISION, VALUES & PURPOSE

OUR MISSION
Western Oregon University creates lasting opportunities for student success through transformative education and personalized support.

OUR VISION
To become Oregon's campus of choice for students, faculty and staff who seek a student-centered learning community.

Western Oregon University will achieve this vision by:
- Cultivating student success through personalized attention, mentoring and degree attainment.
- Raising awareness of our strengths, successes and contributions to the community through increased public outreach.
- Adapting to the changing world through continuous institutional improvement, evolving pedagogies and expertise, sustained scholarly and creative activities, and delivery of critical and innovative programs.
- Aspiring to standards of excellence in all programs.
- Challenging students, faculty and staff to grow profoundly through inspiring, thought-provoking educational experiences.
- Connecting students with communities through engagement in service, experiential learning, creative problem-solving opportunities and co-curricular collaborations.
- Supporting the inclusion of, respect for, and appreciation of all communities of students, faculty and staff.
- Promoting the well-being of students, employees and the environment.

OUR VALUES
Our practices are guided by our values:
- Accessibility
  Programs, resources, media and structures that support the needs of our community members; affordable cost of attendance; personalized support; welcoming, efficient and user-friendly systems.
- Accountability
  Evidence-based decision making, integrity and ethical transparency.
- Collaboration
  Effective communication; cooperative exploration, problem solving, and teamwork; shared governance; dialogue.

MISSION, VISION, VALUES & PURPOSE

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- **Community**
  Trustworthy, caring, safe environment for the cultivation of peace, civility and social justice; connections extending beyond the classroom, across campus and into our local and global communities.

- **Diversity and respect**
  Equity and inclusion; a fundamental basis in human diversity; appreciation for the complexity of the world; strength drawn from our variety of backgrounds, abilities, cultural experiences, identities, knowledge domains and means of expression.

- **Empowerment**
  Knowledge, skills, pathways, technologies and resources for all community members to effectively identify and utilize opportunities; student success in degree attainment; critical thinking.

- **Excellence**
  High standards for teaching, learning, scholarship and service; co-curricular activities; advancement of knowledge, analytical skills, creativity and innovation.

- **Sustainability and stewardship**
  Leadership in service of the public good; action to improve the health of our planet; responsibility for preserving and enhancing the natural, structural, financial, intellectual and human resources entrusted to us.

OUR PURPOSE

As the first public institution of higher education established in Oregon, we uphold an enduring commitment to the value of teaching and learning. Our academic and co-curricular activities enhance the economic, cultural and intellectual vitality of our region and the larger world. To serve the greater good, we educate individuals in an accessible and supportive environment.

Our undergraduate students enjoy a personalized experience in a comprehensive, mid-sized public university. The knowledge and abilities cultivated in our graduate programs meet compelling needs for work, service and leadership beyond our campus. Western Oregon University empowers its students, employees and alumni to lead meaningful, responsible lives.

INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES

I. STUDENT SUCCESS

II. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

III. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

V. SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

I. STUDENT SUCCESS

Promote student success, learning and graduation through personalized support in a student-centered education community.

1. **Cultivate academic success.**
   1.1 Provide a campus environment that enhances learning and the development of the whole person.
   1.2 Strengthen and centralize programs and practices that support academic achievement for all students.
   1.3 Strengthen programs that support graduates' career, professional, and graduate school preparedness.

2. **Streamline university requirements and academic pathways to graduation.**
   2.1 Provide intentional and effective paths to graduation within 180 credits.
   2.2 Provide intentional and effective transfer paths to graduation.
   2.3 Improve access to coursework for degrees, programs and certificates.

3. **Align, assess and improve the academic effectiveness of learning outcomes.**
   3.1 Align curriculum with learning goals for all programs.
   3.2 Improve curriculum based on effective assessment of student learning outcomes.
   3.3 Support curricular innovation and accountability.

4. **Streamline and improve university processes in support of student achievement.**
   4.1 Improve academic advising for all students.
   4.2 Develop user-friendly catalog, scheduling and registration systems.
   4.3 Provide culturally responsive support for students from diverse communities.
   4.4 Strengthen commitment to diversity and equity by enhancing support and academic services for students.

II. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Promote academic excellence in an engaged student-focused learning environment.

1. Student initiatives.

    1.1 Ensure appropriate class sizes to maximize faculty-student and student-student interactions.

    1.2 Increase support for programs and activities that demonstrate and inspire academic excellence.

    1.3 Provide financial support for student conference presentations and other student activities that showcase the university's educational practices and unique accomplishments.

    1.4 Implement student orientation programs that reflect diverse linguistic and cultural needs as well as differences in preparation and background.

2. Faculty initiatives.

    2.1 Attract and retain faculty who reflect the diversity of our students and are excellent teachers and leaders in scholarly and creative pursuits within their respective fields of expertise.

    2.2 Increase faculty development support for scholarly and creative pursuits as well as innovative curricular design and delivery efforts.

    2.3 Provide competitive salaries and supportive working conditions that improve faculty recruitment and retention.

    2.4 Increase faculty development support to implement culturally responsive pedagogy and curriculum.

3. Staff initiatives.

    3.1 Attract and retain staff members who reflect the diversity of our students, excel in their areas of expertise and support academic excellence.

    3.2 Increase professional development opportunities for staff in support of academic excellence and student achievement.

    3.3 Provide competitive salaries and supportive working conditions that improve staff recruitment and retention.

    3.4 Increase support for professional development for staff to provide culturally and linguistically responsive services.

II. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Promote academic excellence in an engaged student-focused learning environment.

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4. Academic program initiatives.
   4.1 Promote academic array that provides distinctive, high-quality programs.
   4.2 Develop internal processes that regularly review academic programs to ensure academic effectiveness, relevance, quality and currency.
   4.3 Promote high-quality, diverse and innovative models of program delivery that enhance both undergraduate and graduate student access and achievement.
   4.4 Promote interdisciplinary courses and degree programs that support collaborative and multidimensional educational experiences and pathways.
   4.5 Redesign the general education program to be consistent with undergraduate learning outcomes and timely degree completion.

5. Identify and support activities, programs and practices that promote excellence in all academic programs.
   5.1 Create opportunities for all undergraduate programs to include high-impact activities that support achievement of undergraduate learning outcomes.
   5.2 Create opportunities for all graduate programs to include high-impact activities that support attainment of graduate learning outcomes.
   5.3 Continue and enhance support for undergraduate research experience, presentation and publication opportunities.
   5.4 Promote enhanced communication and collaboration between staff and faculty pertaining to student excellence.

III. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Create meaningful opportunities for lasting partnerships with local communities and regional and global organizations.

1. Enhance access to and support for experiential learning and co-curricular activities.
    1.1 Adopt experiential learning guidelines and align high-impact practices with these guidelines.
    1.2 Articulate internship or service learning opportunities for all academic programs.
    1.3 Develop experiential and co-curricular activities that provide appropriate accommodations for faculty, staff and students.

2. Increase institutional engagement with local, regional and global communities.
    2.1 Increase support for student engagement in community service.
    2.2 Provide professional development for faculty and staff to promote engagement in community service.
    2.3 Establish processes to recognize faculty, staff and students for public service.
    2.4 Create and enhance educational partnerships with local communities, particularly for underrepresented student groups.
    2.5 Enhance educational partnerships with international universities that promote global connections for faculty, staff and students.
    2.6 Strengthen partnerships with community organizations and businesses and local, regional and state government agencies.

3. Improve the connections between university programs and activities and surrounding communities.
    3.1 Expand activities and partnership with local and regional organizations.
    3.2 Increase community and alumni participation in, and support for, campus activities.

4. Support knowledge, experiences and activities that promote a better understanding of diversity-related topics.
    4.1 Enhance diversity of university community as a matter of institutional priority and an integral component of academic success.
    4.2 Provide professional development to improve institutional climate and personal commitment to, and understanding of, cultural competencies.
    4.3 Recognize that knowledge of, and experience in, diversity-related topics are professional competencies that are expected of all employees.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Promote teamwork and transparency in budgeting, decision-making and the stewardship of resources.

1. Improve university budgetary systems.
   1.1 Develop and implement a transparent, evidence-based budget model that supports institutional priorities.
   1.2 Create campus budget advisory committee incorporating shared governance principles and budget transparency.
   1.3 Align budget process with the current Strategic Plan, mission and core themes.
   1.4 Maintain budget reserves to meet university Board of Trustees-approved policies.

2. Operate in manner that supports the university's values and continuous improvement.
   2.1 Develop institutional research capacity.
   2.2 Use institutional data to inform decisions, address program outcomes and meet strategic goals and accreditation standards.
   2.3 Promote culture of evidence-based decision-making and accountability.

3. Strengthen the university's visibility within Oregon.
   3.1 Create strategic communications and marketing unit.
   3.2 Support and enhance effective marketing and consistent branding.
   3.3 Utilize web presence, social media and other forms of media to expand the university's visibility.
   3.4 Enhance public awareness of community events and the scholarly and creative works of students, faculty and staff to help showcase the university's unique accomplishments in all program areas.
   3.5 Strengthen and expand community college partnerships to promote educational attainment.

4. Enhance and support campus communication systems.
   4.1 Enhance communications systems to disseminate campus-wide information and share expertise, successes and challenges.
   4.2 Improve teamwork and collaboration among students, faculty, staff and administration.
   4.3 Provide sufficient resources to develop and maintain timely communication avenues, such as websites and social media.

V. SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

Promote effective university stewardship of educational, environmental, financial, human and technological resources.

1. Enhance financial sustainability through enrollment and fiscal strategies.
   1.1 Meet enrollment targets through effective recruitment and retention efforts.
   1.2 Support and enhance recruitment efforts for first-generation and underrepresented students, as well as a broad base of all Oregonians.
   1.3 Support growth of academic programs to include new and innovative degrees and certificates.
   1.4 Increase the role of long-term enrollment management planning in the budgeting processes.

2. Maintain access and affordability with regard to cost of degree attainment.
   2.1 Evaluate net cost of attendance versus median household income relative to peers and comparator institutions to ensure access and affordability.
   2.2 Provide students with meaningful financial support and effective connections as they transfer from other educational institutions.
   2.3 Expand support for undergraduate scholarships in second, third and fourth years of attendance.
   2.4 Evaluate and improve the outcomes of tuition-assistance programs on enrollment, retention, and graduation.
   2.5 Evaluate assumptions underlying our current tuition cost structure and compare our system to other fiscally sustainable institutions.
   2.6 Increase access to, and education about, scholarship opportunities, particularly for students of color, immigrants, rural and socio-economically disadvantaged students.

3. Diversify and expand revenue sources.
   3.1 Cultivate sustainable financial resources to achieve goals of the strategic plan.
   3.2 Advance financial resources through state appropriations, HECC, grants and WOU Foundation, ensuring all sources are considered and developed.
   3.3 Develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising plan to secure external funds that support the mission and goals of the university.

V. SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

Promote effective university stewardship of educational, environmental, financial, human and technological resources.

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4. Embed sustainability as a fundamental value.

   4.1 Develop and promote sustainability-focused programs and opportunities for the university, the community, alumni and university partners.

   4.2 Increase and support sustainable environmental systems for campus grounds, infrastructure and physical facilities.

   4.3 Ensure the availability and effective utilization of accessible and comfortable classrooms, offices and meeting spaces.

   4.4 Create systems and processes for identifying sustainability opportunities, challenges and innovations.

5. Provide effective technology solutions that support campus programs in alignment with the mission and goals of the university.

   5.1 Maintain IT solutions that incorporate best practices in higher education.

   5.2 Provide technical support for faculty, staff and students to meet the goals and mission of the university.

   5.3 Develop and implement short- and long-term IT plans that are responsive to the needs of students, faculty and staff.

6. Enlist the talents of faculty and staff to increase workplace satisfaction and develop a superior workforce.

   6.1 Provide professional development opportunities for faculty and staff that advance the university mission.

   6.2 Maintain appropriate staffing levels to ensure the continuity of programs, units and departments.

   6.3 Implement process improvements to improve satisfaction and productivity of faculty and staff.

   6.4 Provide resources that improve the safety of faculty, staff and students by developing and implementing emergency planning systems.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laurie Burton • Mathematics Department faculty
Adry Clark • Service Learning & Career Development director
Betty Crawford • Alumni Board member
Paul Disney • Business Division faculty
David Foster • Psychology Department faculty
Rex Fuller • WOU president
Camila Gabaldon • Library & Media Services faculty
Corbin Garner • WOU student
Megan Habermann • Student Engagement director
Mark Henkels • Political Science Department faculty
Ivan Hurtado '07 • WOU Board of Trustees
Cecelia Koontz • WOU Board of Trustees
Paul Kyllo '79 • WOU Foundation Board member
Melanie Landon-Hays • Teacher Education Division faculty
Randi Lydum '90, '93 • Athletic Compliance director
Dave McDonald • Enrollment Management associate provost
Alma Pacheco *(in memoriam)* • WOU student
Peggy Pederson • Health & Exercise Science Division faculty
Adele Schepige • Teacher Education Division faculty
Chris Solario '05 • Student Enrichment Program assistant director
Linda Stonecipher • Graduate Programs director
Dan Tankersley • Art Department faculty
Ella Taylor • The Research Institute director
Steve Taylor • Earth & Physical Sciences Department faculty
Shelby Worthing • WOU student
Ginny Lang • Facilitator

GLOSSARY

Action item
A specific activity, with measurable outcomes, that is aligned with an initiative or strategic goal. Example: establish effective 2+2 transfer options for Oregon transfer students in the top 10 Western Oregon University transfer majors

Core themes
Outcomes that manifest essential elements of Western Oregon University's mission in support of Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities accreditation

HECC
Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Institutional priority
A key area of work for the university that forms the basis for action items and strategic initiatives

Metric
Measure of progress toward outcome. Example: number of pathways to graduation in 180 credits created by June 2017

Mission
The university's primary purpose and its reason for existence

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
Student engagement represents two critical features of collegiate quality. The first is the amount of time and effort students put into their studies and other educationally purposeful activities. The second is how the institution deploys its resources and organizes the curriculum and other learning opportunities to get students to participate in activities that decades of research studies show are linked to student learning.
wou.edu/institutionalresearch/additional-info

Outcome
Measurable results for progress toward a goal or strategic initiative. Transfer pathways in all programs created by June 2017

Purpose
What our university does for others how it affects the world around it

Strategic initiative
A project that is designed to help achieve an institutional priority (or goal). Example: streamline university requirements and academic pathways

Values
Principles that guide the university's work and relationships

Vision
The desired future state to which our university aspires in several years' time

Western Oregon
UNIVERSITY