

November 24, 2014

To: The Eastern Oregon University Community

Subj: A Plan for Repositioning EOU

Attached is a draft document regarding the future of our University. It starts with an assessment of the eastern Oregon region, its people, education, economy and related factors and includes a review EOU's history and background. Based on this information, the plan suggests a re-positioning strategy for the university. The purpose of the plan is to make EOU financially sustainable, relevant to our constituents and a catalyst for this region, state and beyond.

Higher education today is an industry that is changing rapidly. Competition among colleges and universities is higher than ever before and takes two basic forms: competition for students and competition for funding. Many institutions, especially community colleges, small private schools and regional universities across the nation must redefine themselves to become successful. EOU must change and adapt to this changing environment, which includes significant shifts in student interests, needs and demographics; workforce requirements; community and regional needs; and soon the preferences of a new governing board directives.

As a community, our first priority must be to come together and work on helping making EOU successful in everything that we do--the future depends on this. It is true that we have been through difficult times and we will always have new challenges ahead of us; it is the nature of our new surroundings. But we can find mutual agreement on key topics and move forward to find encouraging new partnerships, innovative approaches to grow our programs and take a new view on our future.

EOU has great people. I see evidence of this every day. If we treat each other with respect and acknowledge that we all have a job to do and to do it well, our relationships will flourish and we will accomplish great things. Let's move beyond being risk-averse and narrowly interpreting our rules. Let's find ways to say "yes" and challenge ourselves to help make our students successful. We must support a culture where changes can be made and risks can be tolerated so quality services can be rendered.

The attached plan is predicated on us all coming together and creating a new culture of collaboration and community to build a self-confident, inclusive and productive culture. It is up to all of us to encourage one another, our students and our community to achieve more.

EOU serves a vital function in the region and its people are counting on it. The State needs a strong EOU to achieve its goals. Let's get it done. I pledge my time and energy to help and am asking you all to do the same. Working together, side by side, we will accomplish great things for our institution, our region and our state.

Please note that this is a draft document at the moment, thus I welcome your comments on its contents. However, this plan will form the basis of a presentation I have been asked to make to the OUS Board on January 9, 2015 and shortly thereafter to the HECC Board. Thus, please send me your comments, if any, by the end of December 2014, if possible.

Thank you.
Jay Kenton, Interim President

**Eastern Oregon University
A Plan for Repositioning the University
Fall 2014**

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Preface

Nationwide, the higher education sector is undergoing significant change. Oregon funding for higher education, when measured on a per student basis, is currently 47th in the nation. In addition, state funding for student financial aid also ranks near the bottom of the country at 43rd. This has forced universities in Oregon to raise tuition at rates that challenge many Oregonians' abilities to finance their education. Debt levels per Oregon student average nearly \$25,000 at graduation and without the ability to find higher paying employment financial challenges can be exacerbated. Coupled with increasing competition for students, the growth of online programs at many universities and a slowly recovering economy have made it difficult for many of the regional universities and community colleges serving lower income populations.

The Eastern Oregon Region – Some Facts and Background

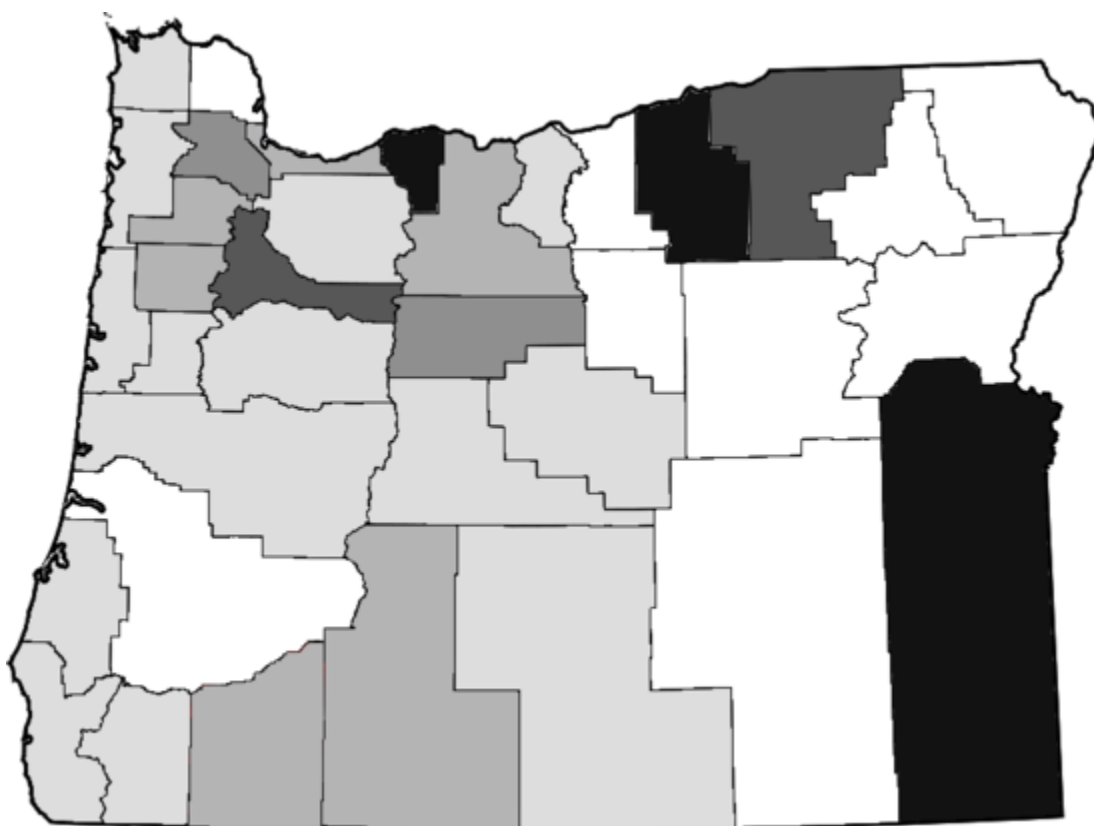
Eastern Oregon Demographics

The eastern Oregon region includes Baker, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, Union, Wheeler and Wallowa Counties, with a total estimated population in 2013 of 184,776. Umatilla County, with 76,720 residents, is the most populous county, while Wheeler County has less than 1,500 residents. Hermiston (population 17,111) has grown significantly of late and recently surpassed Pendleton (population 16,612) as eastern Oregon's largest city.

Several of the region's counties have substantially larger Latino populations than the state as a whole: while 10.6% of the state population is Latino, nearly 25% of Umatilla County's population and approximately 33-34% of Malheur and Morrow Counties' populations are Latino. All but two of the region's counties have more elderly residents than the statewide population. Wallowa County has the oldest population in the region, with 31% of the population aged 60 or older.

Oregon's Latino populations are heavily concentrated in a few areas. Below is a county map of the Latino population as a portion of the total population (according to the 2010 census), with darker shaded counties having heavier densities of Latino people and lighter shaded counties having small Latino populations. Statewide, the largest concentrations of Latino residents are in Hood River, Morrow, and Malheur, which are near or above 30% Latino residents, while the smallest Latino populations, Baker and Wallowa counties, are perhaps 2-4% Latino.

Chart 1- Latino Populations in Oregon 2010



Source: Fri Aug 23, 2013, [Oregon Political Geography: Demographics & Turnout](#), James Allen

While county population demographics provide one view of these growing populations, when one looks at the K-12 student populations we see even heavier concentrations of Latino students in certain counties as illustrated in the following table.

K-12 Latino Populations

- Baker County – 7.9%
- Gilliam Co. – 11.8%
- Grant Co. – 4.8%
- Harney – 5.9%
- Malheur – 51.1%
- Morrow – 52.0%
- Umatilla – 37.6%
- Union – 6.7%
- Wallowa – 4.7%
- Wheeler – 6.2%

Latino K-12 population in the 10-County eastern Oregon region is 30.3% and 9,366 out of 30,755 K-12 students are Latino.

Eastern Oregon Income & Poverty

Median incomes in all eastern Oregon region counties are below the state median of \$60,000: the median family income in the region's counties ranges from \$41,000 in Wallowa County to \$52,000 in Umatilla County. More Eastern Oregon children are living in poverty with 22% of the region's children living in poverty compared to 17% of children statewide. However, there is variability among the region's counties in terms of child poverty. While Gilliam and Grant have child poverty rates just below the state average, child poverty rates in the remaining eastern Oregon counties are higher than the state average.

The region's average 2010 unemployment rate was 10.6%, mirroring the statewide unemployment rate, but this average regional rate masks marked differences between counties. Grant, Harney, and Wallowa Counties had unemployment rates that were substantially higher than the statewide rate, while the remaining eastern Oregon region counties had rates at or below the statewide rate. Indeed, Harney County's unemployment rate was the second highest in the state in 2010. Over the course of 2010, half of the eastern Oregon counties saw an increase in unemployment, while the remaining counties saw no change or slight decreases in unemployment. Most counties lost construction and trade jobs over the course of the year and some saw losses in leisure and hospitality and financial services jobs. Several counties saw increases in professional and business service jobs and health and education jobs.

Eastern Oregon Education Levels: 40-40-20

The Oregon Governor, legislative, education and business sectors have set a goal of having 40% of Oregon residents possessing four-year college degrees or higher, 40% possessing community college degrees or technical certifications, and 20% possessing high school diplomas by the year 2025. Currently, the eastern region's high school graduation rate, at 80%, is above the overall statewide high school graduation rate of 66%. All counties in the region have high school graduation rates above the state average. Despite the higher than average high school graduation rates, eastern Oregon counties have lower percentages of residents with college degrees. While the percent of the regional population with an Associate's Degree (10%) is slightly higher than the state and nation, just 17% of the region's adults have a Bachelor's Degree, compared to 28% of the state and nation as a whole. All eastern Oregon counties have a smaller percentage of residents with college degrees than the state average, and in Morrow and Malheur Counties just 12% and 13%, respectively.

As a means to stimulate increased college-going rates, EOU, Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC), Treasure Valley Community College (TVCC) and the Intermountain (IMESD) and Malheur Educational Service Districts have created a program known as the Eastern Promise. This program is intended to increase access to early college credit for high school students throughout the region and to build a college/post-secondary going culture. It features programs to get fifth graders to visit campuses during the school year and spend one week each summer on a college campus, working with ninth graders to create an educational plan based on career interests and low cost precollege credits for upper division high school students. One of the primary objectives of this program is to give high school students the confidence that they can be successful in college classes.

Eastern Oregon Economy

The eastern Oregon economy has not rebounded from the recession as well as other parts of Oregon (see: Outside Oregon's population centers, rural economies still have much to recover, *The Oregonian*, November 14, 2014). In fact, its natural resource economy has run up against strong and growing environmental concerns. Thus, timber, mining and other activities are far smaller than they were 30 years ago. In 1980, Oregon cut over 6 billion board feet of timber out of its national forests. Today, only 0.5 billion board feet are cut each year and most in the field expect this will be the new normal, though small diameter trees and other slash could be harvested for biofuels, assuming transportation prices make that feasible. The following map shows that while the technology sector in 2010 employs more Oregonians than the timber industry did in 1980, the location of the timber jobs were much more evenly distributed across the state in 1980 than the technology jobs which are largely located in the Willamette valley today (see Chart 3 Oregon Timber Harvest).

However, with a growing world population, agricultural commodities have done well of late with increased prices in wheat, other grains, hay, and beef prices. The Port of Morrow in Boardman has benefited due to the availability of transportation (river, rail and freeway), water and power. Tillamook Cheese is now making most of its product in Boardman with a huge dairy operation nearby in Three Mile Canyon. In addition, Lamb Weston has recently invested \$200 million in an expanded food processing plant and Amazon has located two server farms with plans for eight more. Today, the Port of Morrow boasts 4,000 jobs with an average salary of \$60,000 per person. Additionally in nearby Hermiston, Walmart, Federal Express and others have located large distribution centers at the junction of Interstates 84 and 82. Given these developments, the Hermiston/Boardman area is now one of the fastest growing business locations in the state.

Chart 2 - Employment in Eastern Oregon

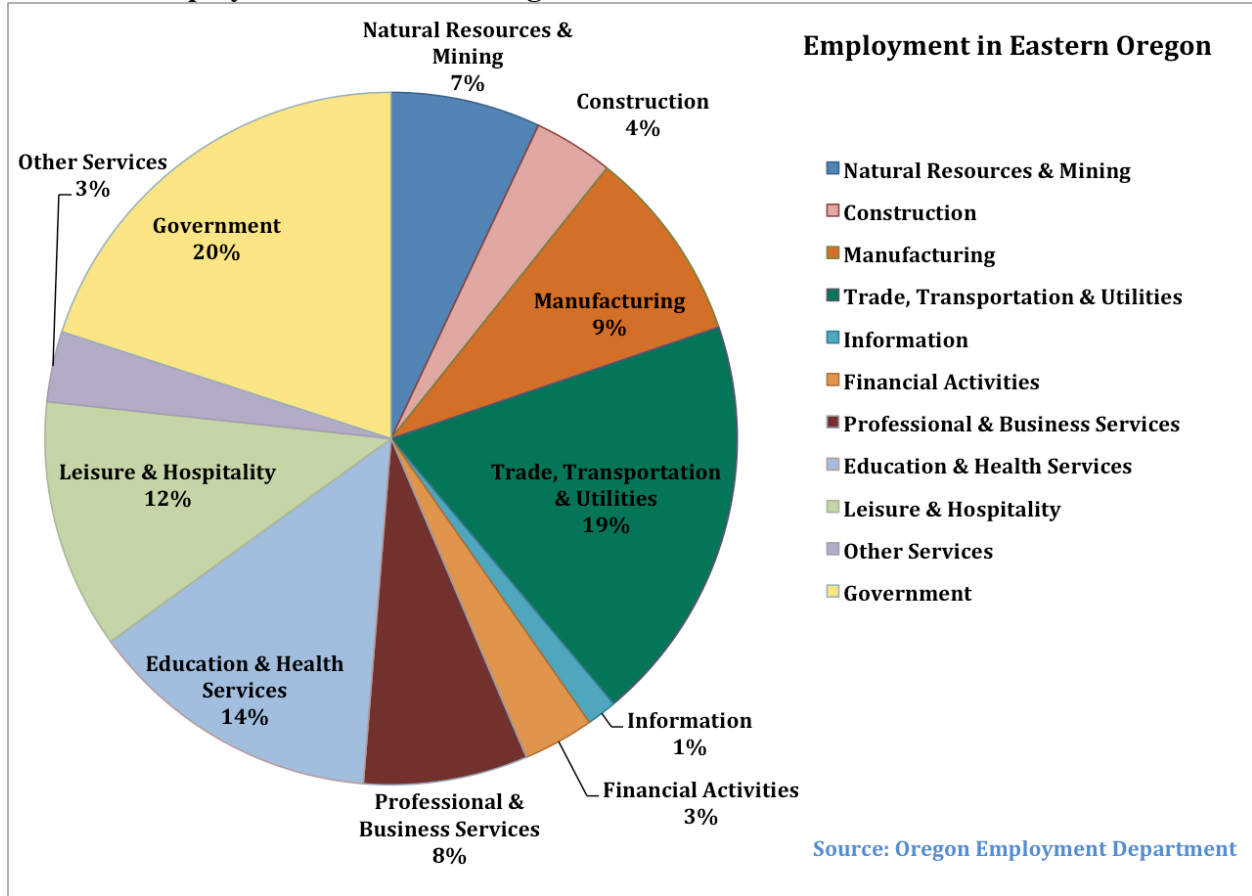


Chart 3 – Oregon Timber Harvest

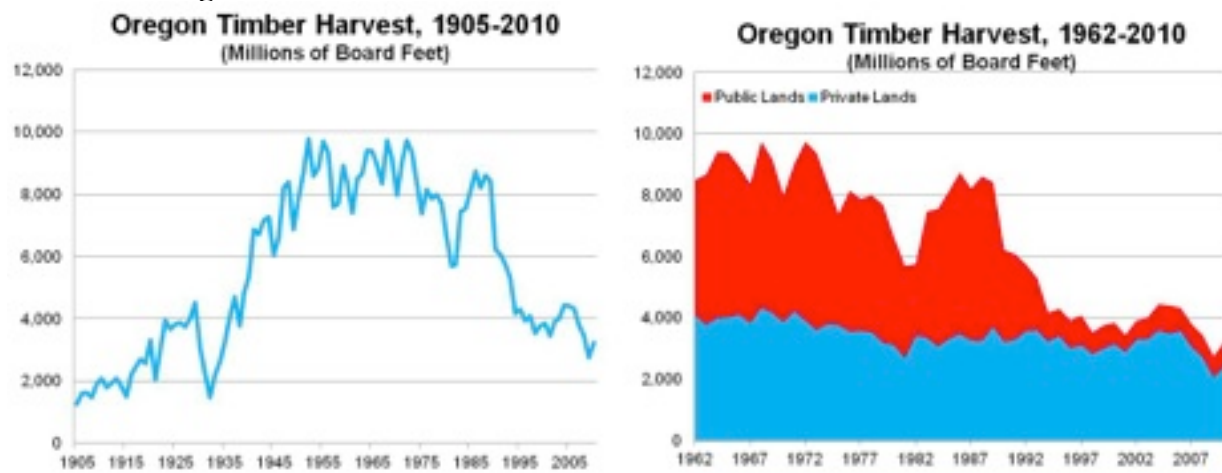
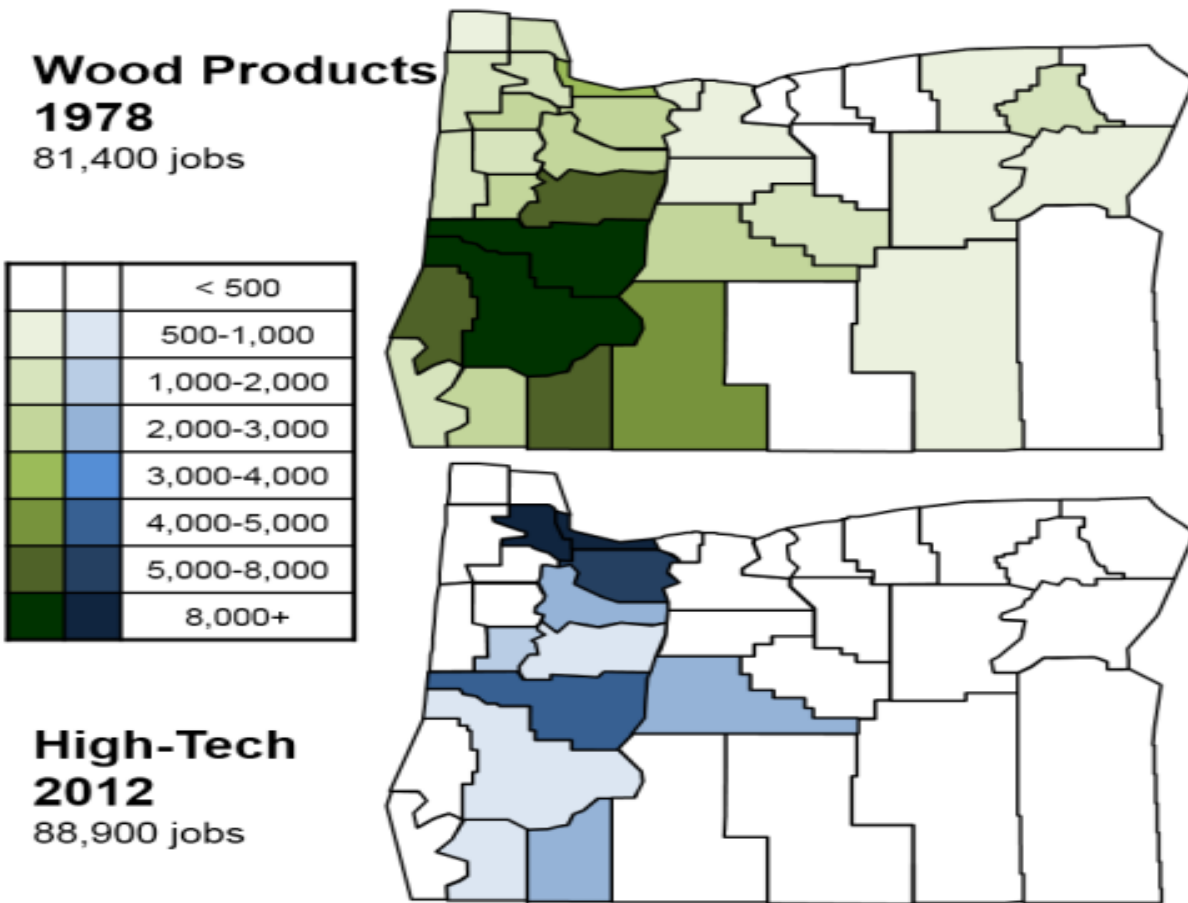


Chart 4 - Wood Products contrasted to High Tech Employment



Healthcare employment continues to be a major employer in the region. Shortages of health professionals, in both physical and mental health areas are noteworthy. Nurses, doctors, physician’s assistants, nurse practitioners and laboratory technicians are in demand. Needs have also been noted in natural resource fields (forestry and water); computer sciences (software and systems); trades such as welders and electricians; and mechatronics skills (combined skills of electrical, computer science, hydraulics and mechanical engineering) are also in demand.

Government is a significant employer in eastern Oregon, comprising 20% of the jobs. This includes local (city and county) as well as state and federal jobs. State employment represents ODOT field offices, natural resource as well as social service providers. Federal employment is also primary in the natural resource fields (BLM, Forest Service and fish and Wildlife).

Eastern Oregon’s Emerging Economy

Pendleton was recently selected as a drone test site, thus this may be an emerging industry for the region. The first drone test flight at the Pendleton Unmanned Aerial Systems Test Range was in

October 2014. Steve Chrisman, the Pendleton economic development director, stated the range would be the first to conduct a test on the contiguous West Coast.

Large technology companies (Amazon, Facebook, Apple, and others) have begun to locate server farms in Boardman, Hood River and Prineville, which may lead to more technology development. Cayuse Technologies in Pendleton is a 100% Tribally owned, onshore delivery center providing software development, technical help desk, and other business process outsourcing solutions. They provide an innovative and domestic alternative solution to addressing the tremendous demand among many organizations striving to keep work within the United States, where businesses are seeking high quality onshore and cost-effective delivery capabilities. Technology can be utilized throughout the region, thus suggesting that computer science and technology initiatives will be part of the future for this region.

The brew pub industry led by Terminal Gravity Brewing in Enterprise, Barley Brown in Baker City, Prodigal Son Brewing in Pendleton, 1188 in John Day and Jolts and Juice in Ontario seems to be growing in the region. In addition, the transformation in Walla Walla led by the vineyard and wine making industry seems to offer some hope for certain parts of the region where the climate and elevation are appropriate for grapes.

Eco-tourism also offers opportunity for the region. The Silvies Valley Ranch is chief among initiatives where owner Scott Campbell is building a destination golf course modeled after St. Andrews in Scotland (with tee boxes and green on each end of every hole to be played one direction one day and the opposite direction the next day) combined with a cattle ranch and stream restoration programs that are revolutionizing stream ecology and beef production. The Alpine Huts, premier mountain biking, hiking, hunting, fishing and the Rails with Trails and Rail-bikes initiatives in Wallowa and Union counties also are examples that could drive the region's economies.

Hindering development is the lack of good transportation infrastructure in the southern part of the region. Building a freeway or rail line from Ontario to Bend would offer a good venue to catalyze development and job creation in this part of eastern Oregon. Having a major highway interchange would also position Malheur County and Ontario with multiple opportunities.

Eastern Oregon University Background and History

Eastern Oregon University began in 1929 as a normal school and has always had a strong Education program. In addition, EOU has 2+2 professional degrees through partnerships with OIT in dental hygiene, OHSU in nursing and OSU in agriculture. The institution also has a strong College of Arts and Sciences with degrees ranging from computer science, chemistry, biology, economics, political science, English/writing, anthropology/sociology, psychology, math, communications, history, music, art and theatre. Degrees in business and physical activity and health are offered through the Colleges of Business and Education and are in high demand.

EOU: A Cultural Amenity for the Region

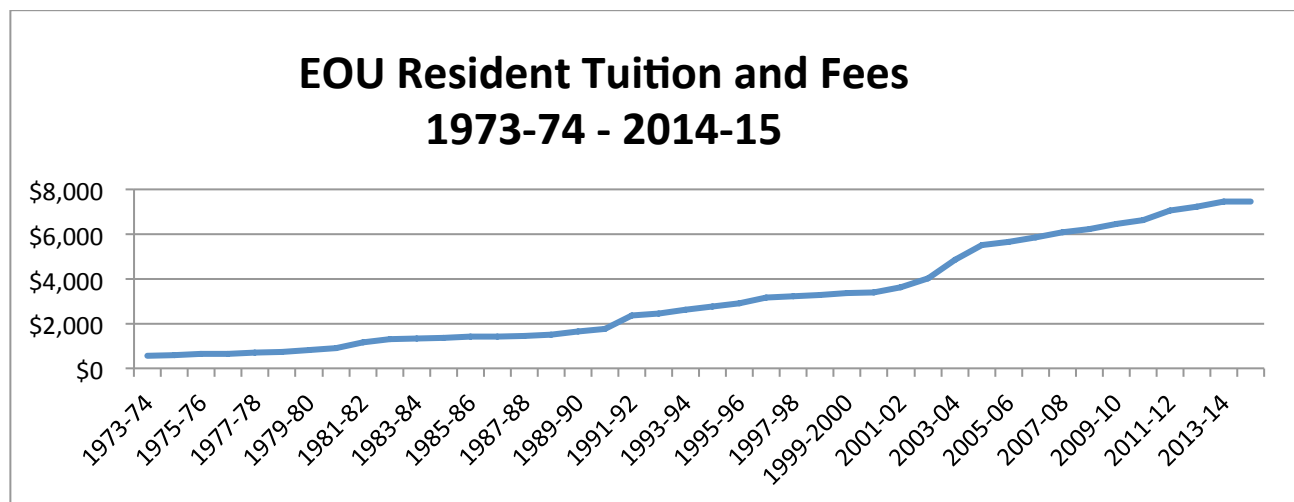
The presence of EOU and its fine and performing arts programs make it a cultural hub and major amenity for the region. The Grande Ronde Symphony is Oregon's oldest, and features community members from throughout the region combined with EOU faculty, staff and students. Arts East is another non-profit organization that collaborates with EOU to provide fine arts programs and services for school districts, EOU and community members. Numerous choirs connected to EOU host performances throughout the year and productions at the Elgin Opera House draws attendance from all over the region. These activities provide cultural assets that allow the community to attract professionals (doctors, dentists, attorneys, etc.) that otherwise may not consider eastern Oregon as a place to live.

EOU athletics offer additional forms of entertainment for regional citizens. EOU's football, volleyball and men's cross country teams are presently nationally ranked by the NAIA. This year, EOU's women's volleyball team went to the national NAIA tournament for the first time. In addition EOU has a strong tradition in its women's and men's basketball programs. EOU shares its football stadium, track and tennis courts with the La Grande High School for competitive and community events. Next year, EOU will add men's soccer. Athletics is a bright spot for the university and is a source of great pride throughout the campus and in the community.

EOU is Affordable

Tuition increased markedly in Oregon, especially after the passage of Ballot Measure 5 in 1990. This ballot measure rolled back property taxes and thereby shifted the burden for funding the K-12 education system to the State from the property tax rolls. In 1990, the State funded 30% of the K-12 education system and property taxes provided 70% of the funding. In 1990, higher education received roughly two-thirds of its funding from the State and the students provided the other one-third. Today these amounts are reversed, with the State providing 70% of the funding for the K-12 system and college students now providing two-thirds of the funding for higher education. Thus, as evidenced by the chart below, tuition at EOU has increased markedly since 1990. Yet, despite these increases, EOU has the lowest tuition of any public university in Oregon.

Chart 5 - EOU Resident Tuition and Fee Rates 1973-2015



As a percentage of the total, more EOU full-time students qualify and receive financial aid than any other institutions in Oregon - see table below.

Chart 6 – Oregon Public University Financial Aid Data

Institution	% Fulltime Students who Receive Federal	Average Debt at Graduation (class of 2012)	% of Graduates with debt
EOU	93.0%	\$25,109	72%
OIT	88.9%	\$28,546	67%
OSU	78.6%	\$22,698	55%
OSU-Cascades	82.2%	n/a	n/a
PSU	77.7%	\$26,066	61%
SOU	84.5%	\$25,113	80%
UO	69.5%	\$24,528	48%
WOU	86.9%	\$28,774	55%
OUS Total	77.2%	\$26,673	55%

Source: OUS 2013 Fact Book

Because EOU students have high financial need, EOU has the lowest tuition and fees in Oregon and is among the lowest cost universities in the region.

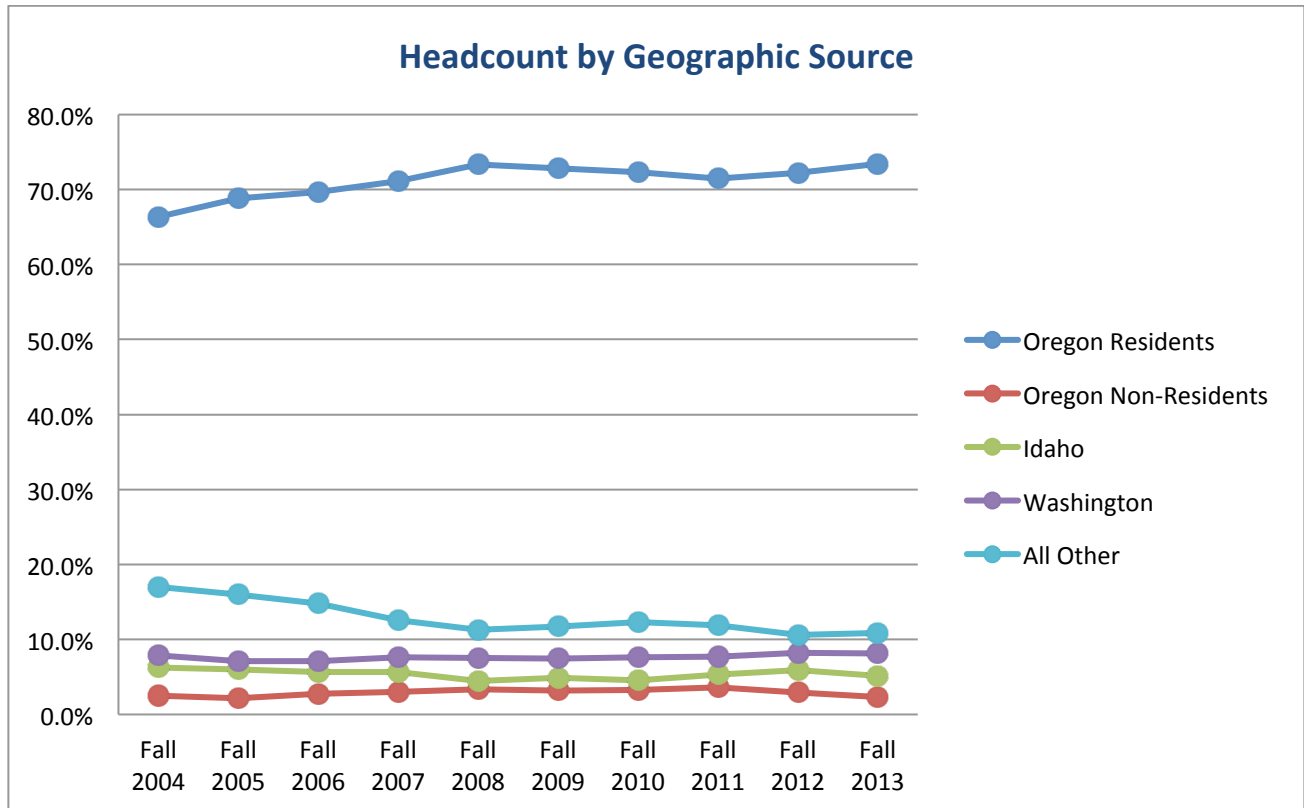
Chart 7 - Annual Tuition and Fee Rates at Oregon Universities

	Under Graduate Resident 15 cr.	Under Graduate Non- Resident 15 cr.	Graduate Resident 12 hrs.	Graduate Non- Resident 12 hrs.
EOU	\$7,449	\$17,517	\$12,255	\$15,315
OIT	\$8,460	\$23,685	\$15,333	\$23,724
SOU	\$7,719	\$21,297	\$15,048	\$18,456
WOU	\$8,277	\$22,257	\$14,022	\$22,482
OSU	\$9,123	\$26,295	\$13,380	\$21,426
PSU	\$7,794	\$23,319	\$13,689	\$20,673
UO	\$8,280	\$25,056	\$15,552	\$24,759
Lewis and Clark College	\$43,022		\$13,248	
Pacific University	\$36,184		\$28,151	
Linfield College	\$39,094			
Warner Pacific	\$20,300			
Concordia University	\$26,900			
Willamette University	\$45,954			
George Fox	\$31,866			
Marylhurst University`	\$20,295		\$21,420	
Reed College	\$47,760			
Phoenix University	\$11,370		\$15,800	
Others in Region				
Boise State University	\$6,640	\$19,492	\$7,824	\$20,648
University of Idaho	\$6,784	\$20,314	\$7,882	\$21,412
College of Idaho	\$24,955			
Northwest Nazarene	\$28,763		\$10,000	
Washington State Univ.	\$12,498	\$25,580	\$12,870	\$26,302
Eastern Washington U.	\$7,371	\$20,466	\$10,920	\$25,386
Whitman College	\$44,760			
Walla Walla University	\$25,296			
Gonzaga University	\$36,535			

Eastern Oregon University did not charge higher tuition to non-resident students until 2012-13. Due to its small size and lack of economies of scale, the Oregon State Board of Higher Education historically gave EOU an exception to the tuition policies used by the other public universities in Oregon. In 2012-13, largely due to financial pressures, the institution began to charge non-resident tuition (at a rate roughly 2.2 times resident tuition), to out-of-state and international students, with the exception of students from Idaho and Washington due to competitive pressure.

Other institutions in Oregon currently charge three to three and one half times the resident rate to non-resident students.

Chart 8 – Source of EOU Students



Counts

	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
Oregon Residents	2,252	2,478	2,394	2,453	2,700	2,913	3,054	3,112	3,193	3,136
Oregon Non-Residents	84	77	95	104	124	126	139	157	131	100
Idaho	213	216	195	195	163	196	191	231	263	220
Washington	268	255	244	262	277	297	321	337	363	349
All Other	577	576	508	434	417	468	520	518	468	464
Total	3,394	3,602	3,436	3,448	3,681	4,000	4,225	4,355	4,418	4,269

Percent

	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013
Oregon Residents	66.4%	68.8%	69.7%	71.1%	73.3%	72.8%	72.3%	71.5%	72.3%	73.5%
Oregon Non-Residents	2.5%	2.1%	2.8%	3.0%	3.4%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.0%	2.3%
Idaho	6.3%	6.0%	5.7%	5.7%	4.4%	4.9%	4.5%	5.3%	6.0%	5.2%
Washington	7.9%	7.1%	7.1%	7.6%	7.5%	7.4%	7.6%	7.7%	8.2%	8.2%
All Other	17.0%	16.0%	14.8%	12.6%	11.3%	11.7%	12.3%	11.9%	10.6%	10.9%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

What Makes EOU Distinctive?

EOU is located in a rural, small town, but located in an area of vast natural wonders and resources. Our campus is safe and our students have strong character and are good citizens. Our location is also conducive to outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, skiing, mountain biking, rock-climbing, white-water boating and many other activities.

Approximately one-half of EOU students come from the 10 eastern most counties of Oregon. EOU educates the majority of teachers in the region and graduates stay in eastern Oregon because they like living here. When people from western Oregon are hired in eastern Oregon, many leave within two years as they miss the people, shopping, weather and other amenities available in more metropolitan areas. This pattern has led many eastern Oregon managers to focus on hiring graduates from eastern Oregon as they tend to stay longer and be more satisfied in their jobs.

The campus size and location also makes EOU distinctive. EOU's small size allows for close faculty-student interactions and individualized attention. These relationships build strong ties between the students and the faculty at EOU and result in a very high satisfaction level among current students. In fact, the 2013 NSSE Institutional Report shows that 87% of EOU seniors rate their EOU experience as good or excellent compared to 85% of Far West public universities. Sixty-nine percent of EOU seniors report that their professors challenged them to do their best work, compared to 56% at Far West public universities. For quality of interactions with faculty, staff, and academic offices, EOU ranks 27 percentage points above our comparators in the Far West and 22 percentage points above comparators in interactions with advisors.

Our faculty members take great pride in the fact that they turn average students into exceptionally talented graduates. What our students lack in high school academic records, they more than make up for through their work ethic and pragmatic approaches to problem solving.

EOU is Accessible

EOU and WOU have the lowest admissions standards with a required 2.75 high school grade point average (GPA). All other public universities in Oregon require at least a 3.0 high school GPA. EOU also offers alternatives for students who do not meet these minimum standards.

EOU has multiple on-site regional centers around the state. We have partnerships with 10 Oregon Community Colleges. We also have partnerships and 2+2 programs with OIT/MODA (dental hygiene), OSU (animal science and rangeland management) and OHSU (nursing) in La Grande. EOU's programs are convenient to students where they live. But students need not come to campus go obtain a degree from EOU as there are twelve undergraduate and four graduate programs, plus multiple minors and certificate programs available online.

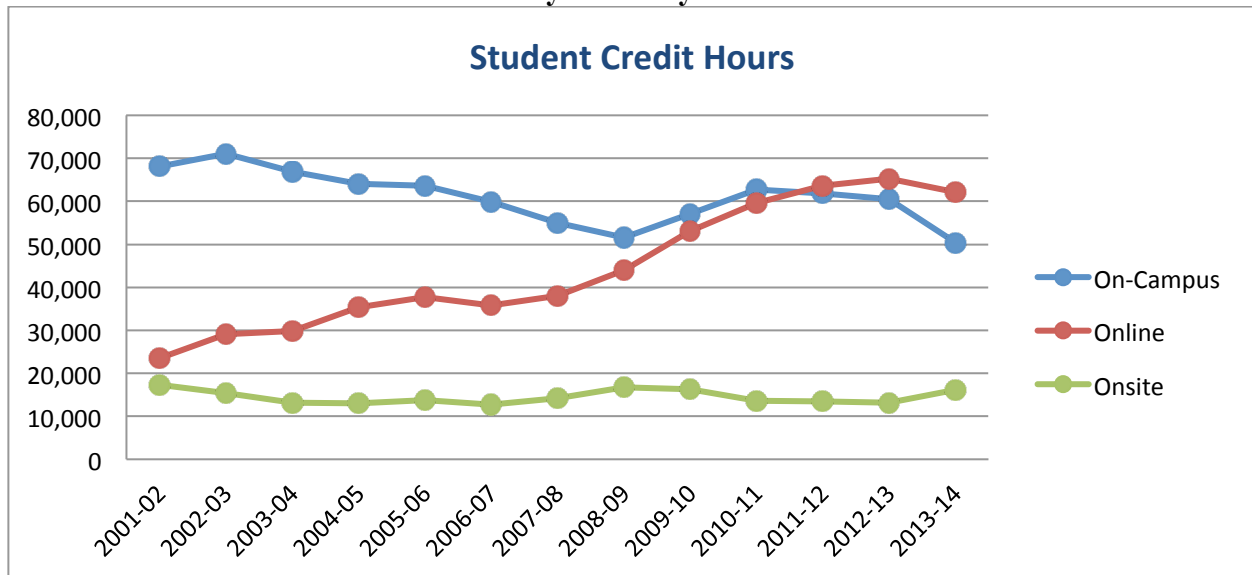
EOU Community College Partners:

1. Southwest Oregon Community College in Coos Bay
2. Umpqua Community College in Roseburg
3. Chemeketa Community College in Salem
4. Clatsop Community College in Astoria

5. Clackamas Community College in Clackamas
6. Portland Community College in Portland
7. Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham
8. Central Oregon Community College in Bend
9. Blue Mountain Community College in Hermiston and Pendleton
10. Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario

EOU offers classes on campus, online and on-site at many centers around the state. See the breakdown in student credit hours and headcount served by each modality in Chart 9. Throughout its recent history EOU has been a leader in distance education largely due to its need to serve such a large region with a sparse population. Its online offerings experienced significant growth during the late 1990's and continuing until 2012-13 when they declined for the first time. Ten years ago 63% of student credit hours at EOU were generated on campus, 16% were at on-site locations and 21% were generated online. Today, only 39% credits are taken on campus, 13% are on-site and the online student credit hours now comprise 48% of the total, thus representing a significant and important part of its enrollment.

Chart 9 – EOU Student Credit Hours by Modality 2001-2014



Student Credit Hours

Modality	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
On campus	68,154	71,008	66,873	64,071	63,643	59,977	55,006	51,514	57,004	62,696	61,826	60,447	50,446
Online	23,500	29,032	29,820	35,381	37,691	35,726	37,979	43,904	53,129	59,658	63,622	65,287	62,184
Onsite	17,301	15,397	13,192	13,027	13,728	12,645	14,210	16,726	16,355	13,618	13,472	13,153	16,132
Total	108,955	115,437	109,885	112,479	115,062	108,348	107,195	112,144	126,488	135,972	138,920	138,887	128,762

Percent of Total

Modality	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
On campus	62.6%	61.5%	60.9%	57.0%	55.3%	55.4%	51.3%	45.9%	45.1%	46.1%	44.5%	43.5%	39.2%
Online	21.6%	25.1%	27.1%	31.5%	32.8%	33.0%	35.4%	39.1%	42.0%	43.9%	45.8%	47.0%	48.3%
Onsite	15.9%	13.3%	12.0%	11.6%	11.9%	11.7%	13.3%	14.9%	12.9%	10.0%	9.7%	9.5%	12.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

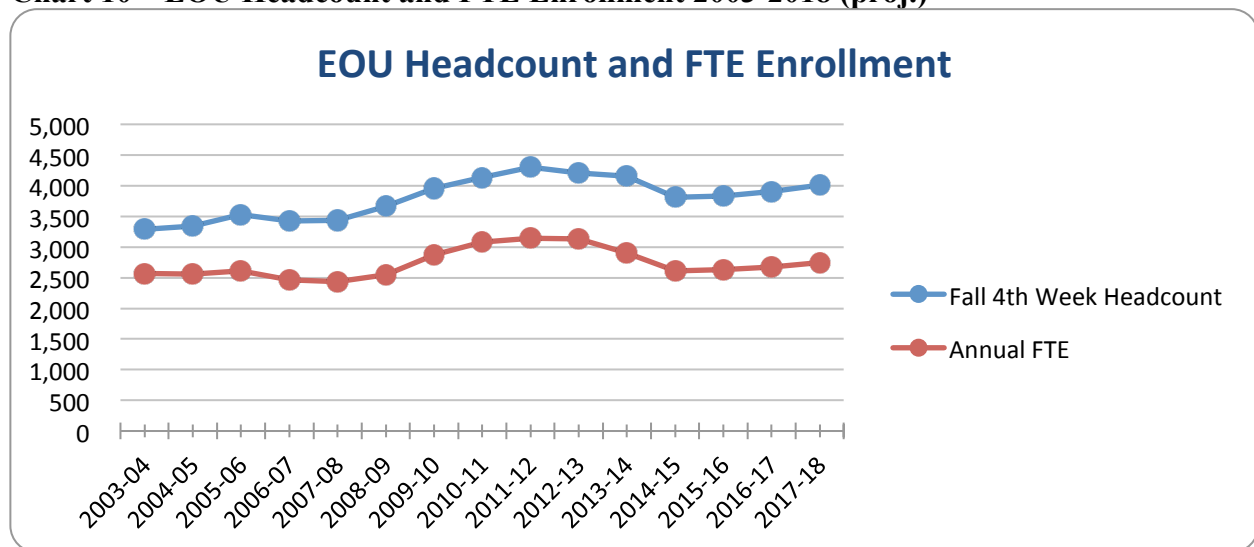
On campus SCH dropped below 50%

Onsite SCH increase due to Eastern promise

This shift to online programs indicates a growing need for convenient education in rural Oregon. However, this student modality split offers challenges, as online student retention rates are lower than on campus rates and on campus populations have fallen to levels where it makes it difficult to maintain robust student activities on the La Grande campus. In addition, fewer students in La Grande mean fewer customers for local businesses, exacerbating the impact of the recession on an already hard-hit community and region.

EOU’s enrollment was clearly impacted by the effects of the recession (see the following chart). Enrollment rose in 2008-09 through 2011-12. EOU hired seven new faculty between 2007-08 (total 99 full-time faculty) and 2012-13 (total 106 full-time faculty). However, enrollment began to drop in 2012-13 and is still dropping today. This has predicated the second iteration of the sustainability plan with a \$4.0M budget reduction, including the reduction of many programs and the layoff of fixed term and tenured faculty. Nevertheless, enrollment is projected to stabilize in 2015-16 and then increase slightly each year thereafter.

Chart 10 – EOU Headcount and FTE Enrollment 2003-2018 (proj.)



EOU Institutional Leadership

EOU has endured multiple leadership changes over the last fifteen years leading to inconsistency in institutional direction. President Gilbert, who retired in 1999, was initially hired as a faculty member in the physics department and became president in 1983. In his sixteen-year tenure as president, he was blessed with a stable cadre of vice presidents who helped him guide the institution. President Gilbert was followed by a succession of three presidents hired by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, with two interim president appointments of a long-time faculty member and Dean of Distance Education at EOU. In addition, EOU has experienced significant turnover in cabinet-level positions (deans and vice presidents) during the last 15 years leading to a loss of institutional memory and administrative instability.

A Plan for a Sustainable EOU**Enrollment****Rebuilding On Campus Enrollment, Reclaiming Our Backyard, Out-of-State and International Recruitment**

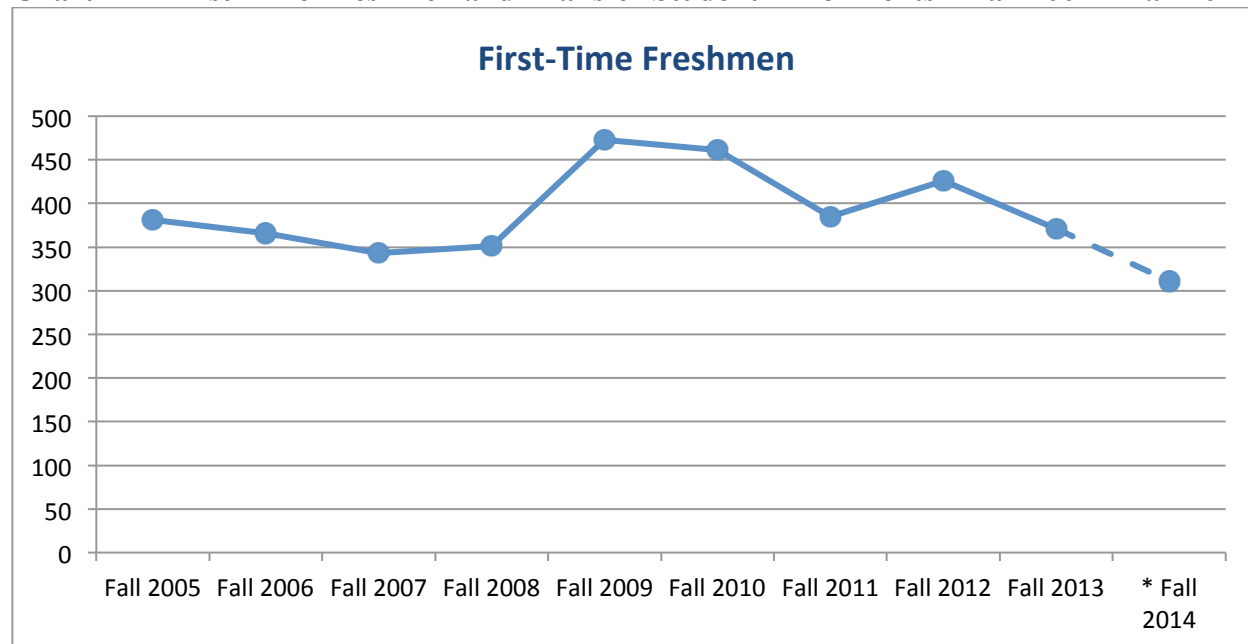
The first order of business for EOU is to reclaim its backyard, meaning the need to rebuild relationships with high school counselors and recruit students from the ten eastern most counties in Oregon. This has historically been EOU's primary service region that has comprised roughly 50% of its student enrollment base. But, as noted above, the population demographics in this region are changing to include older populations and many more Latino students. Thus, part of this effort will be to reach out to these populations in new and more effective ways. This will require Spanish speaking recruiters and adding other support staff in financial aid and other key offices who speak Spanish. It will also require that website and other marketing information, as well as admissions and financial aid applications, be translated into Spanish for both the prospective students and their families.

Over the next five to ten years, EOU needs to rebuild its on campus enrollment to between 2,000 and 2,500 students. Having a larger on campus student body creates more energy for events and activities and provides local business with more customers. On campus students report greater satisfaction with their academic experience and seem to have higher retention rates than do online students. Additionally, many degree programs may not be well suited to an online format. The arts in particular have struggled with enrollment of late, perhaps in part, due to significant numbers of students moving to an online format.

Other markets and population centers also need to be served by EOU admissions staff. These include the Portland, Willamette Valley and Seattle areas on the west side and the Tri-Cities, Spokane and Boise/Treasure Valley markets on the east side of the Cascade Mountains. EOU has also traditionally done well in some coastal communities and in southern and Central Oregon communities. Thus, admissions recruiters need to cover these vast areas. The Admission's Office budget has been increased to provide for greater travel and to provide recruiters with EOU logo materials for distribution.

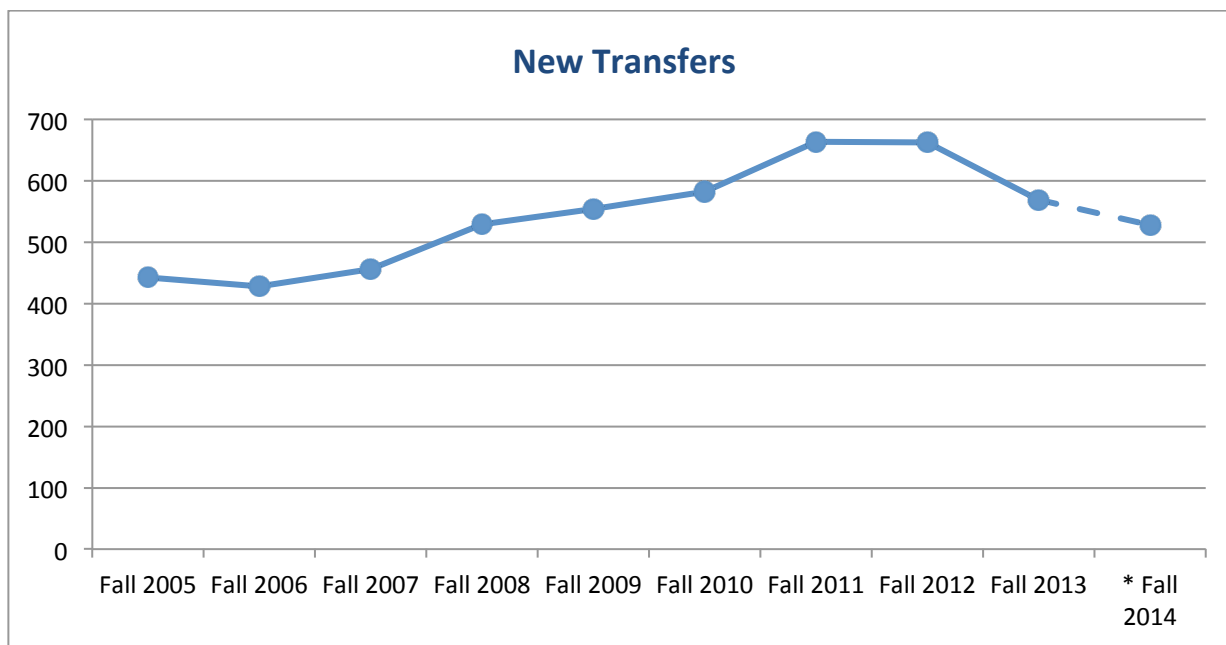
A few years ago, due largely to the rising costs of tuition in Oregon, community college transfer students replaced first time freshmen as the largest source of new students to Oregon public universities. This loss of lower division students has also meant more costs associated with instructional programs and recruiting, since most transfer students only spend 2-3 years at institutions. However, with the end of the lengthy recession, EOU has seen both its first-time freshmen and transfer student populations decrease. Most attribute the decline in transfer students to the improving job market, while the decline in first-time freshman may be the result of increased competition, program reductions, and uncertain state funding for regionally situated universities.

Chart 11 – First Time Freshmen and Transfer Student Enrollments – Fall 2004 – Fall 2014



	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	* Fall 2014
First-Time Freshmen	381	366	343	351	473	461	385	426	371	311
% Change from Prior Year		-3.9%	-6.3%	2.3%	34.8%	-2.5%	-16.5%	10.6%	-12.9%	-16.2%

* Fall 2014 Data is projected



	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	* Fall 2014
New Transfers	442	428	456	529	554	582	664	662	569	528
% Change from Prior Year		-3.2%	6.5%	16.0%	4.7%	5.1%	14.1%	-0.3%	-14.0%	-7.2%

* Fall 2014 Data is projected

Due to the lack of adequate State support, EOU will also need to send its admissions teams further afield in search of full-pay non-resident students. EOU has a strong history and relationship with Micronesia and Alaska; therefore, these markets should continue to be recruited. In addition, Montana, Colorado and other mountain states should be explored. Finally, many faculty believe that students from the Midwest may be intrigued by EOU’s small class sizes and its outdoor opportunities and beautiful setting in the mountains.

In a recent recruiting trip to Seattle, one of the admissions counselors happened upon a group of Saudi Arabian students who displayed significant interest in EOU. However, the Saudi Government funded them and the terms of this funding required that they only attend institutions that were authorized by the Saudi Educational Ministry. This compelled EOU to seek such authorization, which is currently pending approval. The prior administration attempted unsuccessfully to recruit students in China and given the current economic challenges in China continuing this effort at this time may be unproductive.

Over the course of the summer the Office of Admissions undertook a restructuring effort, which was brought about by staff departures. This provided the strategic opportunity to add one new bilingual (Spanish-English) recruiter made possible by the reallocation of resources. Two additional positions were filled via strong candidate pools, which allowed for the hire of a second bilingual staff member and a third individual that is a graduate of Pendleton High School. The bilingual admissions counselors are both alumni of EOU (graduates of Hermiston and La Grande

High School respectively), while the third (from Pendleton High School) is a graduate of the University of Montana. One of the two bilingual counselors from Hermiston joins EOU after three years of experience in multicultural recruitment at Oregon State University.

The University has undertaken a national search to fill the Director of Admissions position, which reports directly to the Vice President for Student Services. The Director of Admission search has been strategically crafted to recruit an experienced admissions professional who is sensitive to EOU's location and mission relative to Oregon and Pacific Northwest public higher education and the environment of successful recruitment within the region.

In addition, EOU has recently implemented the Customer Relations Management (CRM) system as a means to automate the admissions process and more systematically track recruits. This system has brought great change to the Admissions processing systems and flows and needs to be carefully monitored to ensure responsiveness with prospects. Today, the system is approximately 70-80% implemented, thus there remains significant work needed to ensure its success.

Eastern Promise and Other Precollege High School Initiatives

EOU will help prepare students for full admission to university academic programs through early college credit experiences, and pre-university developmental academic experiences. This program will permit greater access to regional high school students to achieve a college degree through increased access to proficiency-based college courses taught in the high school as well as online classes offered by EOU faculty. The program will also be part of the EOU mission to connect to our rural regions and will increase new student numbers, retention and graduation rates.

Starting winter term 2015, EOU will on a pilot program offer online classes to students in Malheur County. This pilot will be manually administered by having high school counselors identify qualified students, assist them in completing the paperwork to get enrolled and by collecting the tuition. Assuming this will be successful, EOU will begin to offer high school student access to online classes throughout the region and in partnership with David Douglas high school in Portland. Our goal will be to offer online registration services for lower-division online classes to high school students throughout the State.

Improved Pricing for a Sustainable Future

As noted above, EOU has the lowest tuition of the seven public universities in Oregon. In addition, EOU has not taken advantage of differential tuition and other pricing programs used by other universities. Some believe it is time to raise tuition, as low prices many times are associated with lower quality products. While some pricing adjustments may be needed, EOU needs to bear in mind that it has the lowest income student body of any of the public universities in Oregon. Thus, while price increases are not out of the question, they need to be accompanied by increased student aid so students in the region can continue to afford to obtain a college degree.

The first shift in pricing is occurring in the winter term 2015 when online tuition will be increased. In evaluating online tuition rates in the region, EOU learned that 9 out of 10 competitor institution charge higher rates for online programs and that EOU currently has the lowest rate per online credit hour. Thus, online tuition is being increased from \$185 per credit to \$200 per credit effective winter term 2015.

Another area that should be explored is differential tuition. This has been an area that the Dean of the Colleges of Business and Education has been interested in for some time. Most public institutions in Oregon charge business majors a higher tuition rate. And, it is likely that there may be other areas, such as in the sciences or performing arts where a differential tuition may be justified on the basis of the program costs or the post-graduation earnings potential available to graduates. Thus, we will begin a discussion with students to consider a differential tuition program effective fall 2015. Any such pricing program will include the requirement that some portion of this increase—say a minimum of 10%—be set aside to be used as fee remissions for price sensitive students, such that the price does not become an impediment to the choice of majors students wish to pursue.

Another area that EOU should investigate is out-of-state and out-of-region recruitment. In 2013, EOU's average cost of instruction per student was ~\$10,400. Resident tuition currently generates about \$6,000 to cover this cost and the State provides another \$3,500 per student on average leaving the institution short of covering the full cost of instruction. While this phenomena exists at all other public universities in Oregon, other institutions have begun to recruit many more non-resident students who pay, in most cases, 3+ times the tuition that resident students pay. Thus, every non-resident student provides a financial advantage that can be used to close this funding gap associated with resident students.

Non-resident students can be recruited from other states as well as internationally. Bringing in students from other places has the added advantage of diversifying the student body and providing opportunities for resident students to learn about others cultures and beliefs that exist in other parts of America or internationally. As part of this effort, EOU recently applied with the Saudi Arabia Commission on Higher Education to become an institution approved to host Saudi students and we have also just sent one of our admissions counselors to Micronesia to re-establish long-standing connections between that country and EOU. This will result in four transfer articulation agreements with community colleges in Micronesia and Guam.

Today, very few students pay the full non-resident tuition rates (see Chart 12 below). Many non-residents are still grandfathered from the transition while others are going into WUE programs. EOU needs to monitor its average tuition revenue per credit hour to ensure that, at a minimum, it keeps pace with the growth in the average instructional costs.

Chart 12 – EOU Fall 2014 Tuition Rates

Undergraduate	Counts		
	Tuition	Students	On campus SCH
Armed Forces Personnel	19	73	99
Eastern Basic Tuition Rate	2,114	9,709	13,027
High School Student	54	153	114
ID/WA(In Region/in-st tuition)	433	2,896	2,385
International - Grandfathered	6	63	9
International Student Exchange	7	86	0
International(After 5/1/2011)	8	97	15
National Student Exchange	6	65	19
OR Consortium for Nursing Ed	63	10	143
Oregon Dental Services-OIT	7	0	24
Out-of-St(excl WA,ID,incl Micr	97	142	728
Out-of-State - Grandfathered	186	818	972
Res Tuition Equity Veterans	12	31	77
Staff	5	14	29
Staff-Family Member	36	382	86
Study Abroad	5	60	0
Western Undergrad Exchange	119	733	666
Total	3,177	15,332	18,393

Percent		
Students	On campus SCH	Off-Campus SCH
0.6%	0.5%	0.5%
66.5%	63.3%	70.8%
1.7%	1.0%	0.6%
13.6%	18.9%	13.0%
0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
0.2%	0.6%	0.0%
0.3%	0.6%	0.1%
0.2%	0.4%	0.1%
2.0%	0.1%	0.8%
0.2%	0.0%	0.1%
3.1%	0.9%	4.0%
5.9%	5.3%	5.3%
0.4%	0.2%	0.4%
0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
1.1%	2.5%	0.5%
0.2%	0.4%	0.0%
3.7%	4.8%	3.6%
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Graduate	Counts		
	Tuition	Students	On campus SCH
Eastern Basic Tuition Rate	235	203	1,302
ID/WA(In Region/in-st tuition)	25	23	183
International(After 5/1/2011)	1	0	5
OR Consortium for Nursing Ed	5	0	3
Out-of-St(excl WA,ID,incl Micr	14	8	69
Out-of-State - Grandfathered	7	20	39
Res Tuition Equity Veterans	1	0	12
Staff	6	28	3
Staff-Family Member	1	10	0
Western Undergrad Exchange	1	0	0
Total	296	292	1,616

Percent		
Students	On campus SCH	Off-Campus SCH
79.4%	69.5%	80.6%
8.4%	7.9%	11.3%
0.3%	0.0%	0.3%
1.7%	0.0%	0.2%
4.7%	2.7%	4.3%
2.4%	6.8%	2.4%
0.3%	0.0%	0.7%
2.0%	9.6%	0.2%
0.3%	3.4%	0.0%
0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

	Counts		
	Tuition	Students	On campus SCH
Grand Total	3,473	15,624	20,009

Percent		
Students	On campus SCH	Off-Campus SCH
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Another area where EOU can leverage its advantage and relationships with local schools is through professional development and credit overlay programs. Being the only masters' degree granting institution in eastern Oregon gives EOU an advantage to work with school districts on teacher training and certification. Credit overlay on instructional programs provided by independent parties to teachers is an attractive means of incenting teacher to partake of the training as it may qualify them for new certifications or promotional opportunities. These programs and the presenters' credentials must be reviewed and approved by campus faculty to ensure accreditation standards are being met. These programs are also very profitable as the only cost to the institution is the validation of credentials, course content and the transcription of credit.

Eastern Advantage Program

In reviewing historical enrollment data it becomes apparent that retention and cost are tied together for students at EOU. The EOU retention rate (freshman to sophomore year) is currently 58% and this rate has been steadily declining since it hit a high of 72% in 2009. This means that we are losing nearly one of every two students recruited. In tracking those students, one of the primary reasons students give for leaving college is finances. Recognizing that cost of attendance and completion rates are critical components in building student numbers, addressing the ability of students to attend—and stay—at EOU is critical.

Rising costs of attendance and the ability to retain students so they may make progress and graduate is not necessarily a new concept, and there are different ways to approach the problem. Western Oregon University has the “Western Promise,” a program that sets tuition at a certain rate for a freshman that does not change (as long as the student remains satisfactorily enrolled) for four years. Portland State University has a “four year guarantee” that commits to a student that they will be able to graduate in four years. These programs both entice students and families with a shared commitment to their education and with the prospect of saving money on tuition or additional years of attendance to reach graduation. Both plans address parts of EOU's challenges in recruitment and retention.

To “create a buzz” about EOU in the enrollment marketplace, and address these retention and cost concerns, the “Eastern Oregon Advantage” is being offered for students enrolling for fall 2015. This plan offers students a four-year tuition plus graduation guarantee. To put it simply, a student enrolling in this program will be offered a fixed tuition rate, the opportunity to finish in four years, financial aid assistance and career services support for internships, graduate school or jobs. In return, EOU requires the student enroll for a required number of credits each term and complete the credits with a satisfactory GPA. The program then asks the student to give back by donating to scholarships through the EOU Foundation or assisting admissions and alumni programs in student recruitment activities.

The program was announced on Nov. 14, 2014 during one of EOU's fall Student Preview Days when families are invited to learn more about all aspects of attending college in La Grande. Plans include public relations and promotion activities as well as training for staff and faculty working with the program.

Financial aid – Leveraging Our Limited Resources**Institutional Fee Remissions**

Each year, EOU grants a number of institutional fee remissions based on predetermined criteria. The remissions structure and strategy is one that attempts to address our mix of students, and offers opportunities for merit-based remissions, need-based remission, as well as a combination of merit and need-based awards. Fee remissions are also used for athletic scholarships and have allowed our sports teams to be successful. EOU’s total remission budget is typically at approximately \$2,000,000 (approximately 9-10% of tuition revenues), and is comprised of nearly forty different funding categories, or types of remissions.

Chart 13 – Fee Remission as % of Gross Tuition 2008 - 2015

EOU Gross Tuition and Fee Remissions (in thousands)	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15 Projected
Gross Tuition	\$15,302	\$17,890	\$19,369	\$20,263	\$21,717	\$20,247	\$19,013
Fee Remissions	(\$1,547)	(\$1,908)	(\$1,928)	(\$2,020)	(\$2,736)	(\$1,812)	(\$1,809)
%	-10.1%	-10.7%	-10.0%	-10.0%	-12.6%	-8.9%	-9.5%

Notice the correlation between tuition revenues and fee remissions. Going forward it is recommended that fee remissions be budgeted at a minimum of 10% of gross tuition. With EOU’s student demographics, 12-15% may be more appropriate though it may take a few years to build to this level. In addition, given the intense competition for high achieving students, and the fact that high achieving students are likely to come from more affluent families, it is recommended that EOU consider adding fee remissions for students with lower GPA requirements. Targeting the funding to qualified students with higher need is likely to produce more favorable results for the institution and the student alike.

It is recommended that EOU closely monitor the utilization of fee remission funds each year to ensure they are accomplishing the maximum and desired effect. Strategic use of these funds can help the institution sculpt the student enrollment to institutional specifications, such as by providing financial incentives to attract high achieving, talented, diverse, or to incent certain majors to fulfill workforce demands or to serve regional needs.

State and Federal Financial Aid

In addition to institutional fee remissions, the EOU financial aid office works with all EOU students to secure state and federal aid opportunities. The funding opportunities range from grants, work/study awards and loans. In the 2013-14 academic year the EOU Financial Aid Office administered over \$29,000,000 in state and federal aid to EOU students.

The EOU Financial Aid Office also provides a number of workshops and presentations to help students navigate the very complex web of paperwork and expectations involving state and federal aid. The office hosts a minimum of twelve financial aid workshops annually at high

schools and on campus, and also presents at numerous Preview Days and Mountaineer Days, and EOU first-year-experience courses.

Foundation Support/Scholarships

The EOU Foundation also assists EOU students and offers over eighty different scholarships to a wide range of individuals. During the 2013-2014 academic year, the EOU Foundation contributed \$240,000 to funds scholarships for 220 EOU students. Due to the increase in fundraising support, available scholarship funds are expected to increase to approximately \$400,000 for 2014-2015 and continue to grow. .

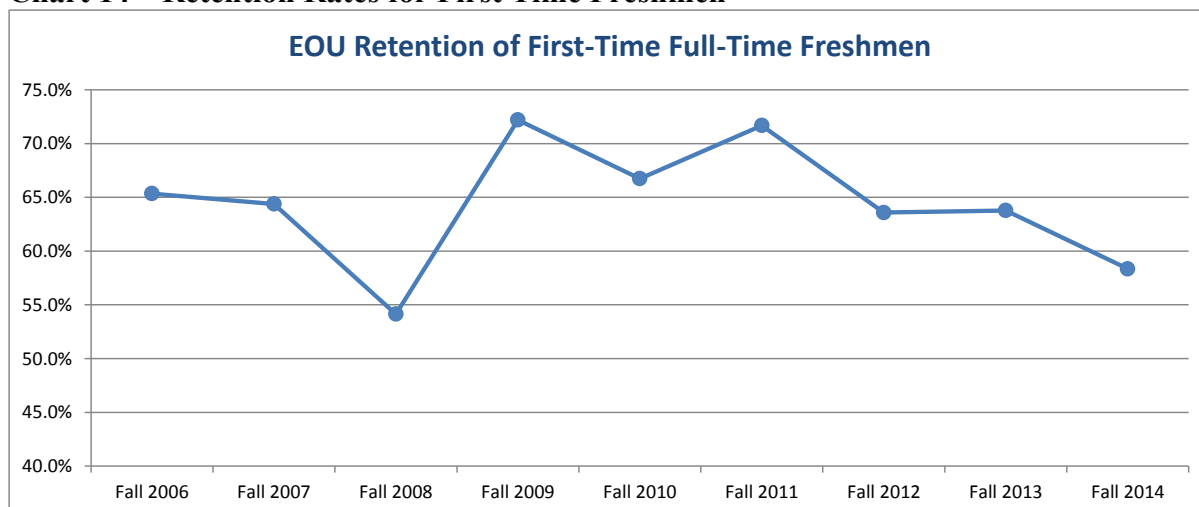
Many students at EOU apply late (after March) for financial aid each year. This is a problem in that those who miss the priority deadlines in January each year are not eligible to receive Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (SEOG), Federal Work Study awards, Perkins Loans and Oregon Opportunity Grants. In addition, the institution awards institutional fee remissions and scholarship based on a February 1 application date each year. These late applicants are only eligible Pell grants and Federal loans. To counter this, EOU is emphasizing to new and continuing students the importance of getting applications in earlier so they can avail themselves of maximum support. In addition, EOU is monitoring award to acceptance ratios and re-awarding institutional scholarships and fee remissions that may be under-awarded. This will allow the institution to stretch these limited budgets and help the most students possible each year.

Improving Retention Efforts

Student retention efforts must be engaged and enhanced. Under the purview of the Vice President for Student Services a summer organizational restructuring has taken place that better aligns student support services and student life with best practices in student engagement. The Division of Student Services can best be defined a synergistic “bookends’ with beginning with Admissions/Pre-collegiate outreach at one end and a newly established Career Center at the other. In between are found the range of services, activities and support such as but not limited to The Learning Center, Center for Student Involvement, Office of Residence Life, and the Multicultural Center which exist to meet the needs of a highly diverse traditional and non-traditional student population.

Retention rates at EOU have been trending downward of late indicative of a need to improve programs aimed at improved retention.

Chart 14 – Retention Rates for First Time Freshmen



	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
On Campus	65.5%	64.6%	54.6%	72.5%	67.0%	72.1%	64.7%	64.6%	60.0%
Online/Onsite	50.0%	50.0%	40.0%	63.6%	61.1%	58.3%	41.2%	47.1%	33.3%
Institutional Total	65.4%	64.4%	54.1%	72.2%	66.7%	71.7%	63.6%	63.8%	58.4%

As a part of this restructuring is the intentional paradigm shift that focuses heavily on holistic student support services that “mimic” those often found in independent or the private college sector. This is intentional given the unique learning needs of our student population that comes from range of learning traditions, styles and skill sets often which require “high touch” and “time intensive” strategies but when well deployed will positively impact student retention numbers.

An example of this can be found in the Multicultural Center located on the second floor of the Hoke Student Union. In an intentional move away from historical organizational “silos,” the 4-Diversity Initiative was implemented this fall in order to create a synergistic, collective and collaborative Multicultural Center that has been “energized.” This initiative brought into one location (Multicultural Center) the International Student Advisor, Rural & Native American Student Advisor, and Multicultural Center Director - the immediate response from students has been exciting. The 4-Diversity Initiative is not only focusing on collaborative student programming but will begin to address the academic needs of our multicultural student population.

Improved Advising

The purpose of the Advising Center is to establish clear, consistent advising operational procedures and policies to ensure student success, to coordinate advising efforts and advisor professional development, to improve ties with faculty, to identify and eliminate obstacles to registration and graduation, working closely with the Registrar. EOU has a multifaceted advising system that includes faculty advisors, professional advisors assigned to colleges, professional advising as a central task of EOU Center Directors; there is informal advising in

CORE, FYI, and in WR 115 as well, where so many of the university's at-risk students begin their college careers. Simultaneously, off-campus advisors work mainly with non-traditional transfer and returning students. While the multi-faceted system ensures all students advising needs are attended to, it tends to create inconsistencies. Improved, consistent advising will support EOU's retention effort.

The Advising Group Council, meeting twice a month, brings together the on campus and off-campus advisors for the identification of obstacles to student success in registration, course scheduling, transcript evaluation, graduation checks, Degree Works; the group engages in problem-solving and clarification of procedural operations and policies. However, until recently this effort tended to be a more or less informal coordination of on campus and off-campus advisors and exchange of concerns, with limited agency to effect change. Advising procedural operations vary between on campus and off-campus advisors; over the years there developed an advising culture resistant to change and supervisory oversight, a culture of complaint and somewhat dysfunctional independence that caught the attention of the faculty. While the dedication of all advisors to student success remained exceptionally high, albeit sometimes privileging efficiency over educational purpose, lack of leadership created an untenable inconsistency in processes, which had the potential of becoming a noticeable institutional weakness in an accreditation audit.

The elimination of two full-time positions (Director of Liberal Studies and Director of Regional Operations) created an opportunity to create consistent advising procedures, processes, and policies; to unify sometimes contradictory or divisive practices among advisors; and to establish effective program oversight. Establishing a professional atmosphere focused on two essential goals is unifying the advising culture: recruiting and retaining students. As such, it is an essential component of EOU's sustainability.

Improved Information Flow between Advisors and Faculty

Information flow between advisors and faculty on campus has traditionally been clear, with regular reports by advisors at division meetings, when CAS employed the division structure. In addition, Advising Council uniformly invites faculty to present revised and new programming so they remain current with curricula. An advantage on campus advisors enjoy is proximity to the faculty in the disciplines, units, and colleges they serve. In those cases, coordination has been consistent and communication strong. In fact, there was some resistance at the outset of the establishment of the Advising Center model, under the direction of the vice provost, because on campus advisors thought they would lose that close connection as their reporting lines shifted out of the colleges to the vice provost. In addition, there was concern that the establishment of clear operational procedures and policies would limit informal exchanges between on campus advisors and faculty. However, the connections between on campus advisors and the disciplines they serve remains strong and direct, while processes are becoming more effective and consistent.

The creation of a single Advising Center under the provost ensured greater consistency of operational procedures and policies. Those clarifications not only help advisors maintain consistent processes with students, but also help faculty better understand advising processes—clarity and consistency always helps, albeit changing past practices twenty years in the making

are often met with resistance at Eastern, especially in a climate of cutbacks. However, because of the greater understanding of advising and registrar issues, the provost is able to speak with greater authority about the exigencies of advising in his interaction with faculty. This has proven valuable in discussions with the faculty council focused on redesigning the Liberal Studies major, Eastern's second largest, in the discussion of curricular issues at EPCC, and in the Integrated Studies initiative inaugurated Fall 2014. In addition, EOU Hermiston Director serves on EPCC, while EOU Portland Director serves on the Presidential Search Committee. Advising issues, along with recruitment and retention, are receiving the necessary visibility.

There remains important work to be done in terms of faculty advising. Faculty advising can be inconsistent itself, with some faculty opting out or simply unable to negotiate the intricacies of the nuts and bolts of advising in Degree Works. Clearly additional training and articulation of processes with faculty is needed. Nonetheless, faculty remain essential advisors for coaching and mentoring of majors, essential for the success of EOU's students. Because of these factors, a Dual Advising model is employed inconsistently across the colleges, where disciplinary majors have faculty serve as primary advisors in the role of mentors and professional advisors serve in a secondary role for efficient and correct processing of forms and review of requirements for student progress and graduation. Making that system uniformly effective remains a central goal of The Advising Center.

Improved Scheduling for Student Planning and Four-year Graduation Guarantee

Course offerings in the schedule have been reduced in response to budgetary constraints, with the result that fewer electives remain in the schedule, and multiple sections of service courses have been streamlined based on past enrollment data. As a result, course scheduling has become a very careful and complex task, requiring consultation with advisors, attentiveness to possible time conflicts for students working in multiple disciplines, as well as requests for adjustments in faculty schedules. For on campus offerings the result is a schedule that challenges students to stretch their coursework into earlier morning and later afternoon or evening times. All disciplines are revisiting their curricula and four-year plans to see that they align and allow students who plan carefully, register for an average of fifteen credits per term, and persist to satisfactory course completion to complete their degree requirements in four years. Some bottlenecks may still exist, and these are being identified and addressed as part of curricular review, course scheduling, and load assignment.

Given the changing curriculum, rising costs and the various modalities offered by EOU, and the four-year graduation guarantee it is increasingly important that students be better able to plan their academic coursework. This will require that multiple years of course offerings be available to students so they can formulate and execute on these plans.

Refined Plans with Regional Centers and Community College Partners

EOU Centers across the state are undergoing a significant transition in focus. Historically, the focus of the Centers has been serving the needs of place-bound online students who require face-to-face advising, maintaining a visible presence of EOU in the communities served by those centers, and advising exclusively online students, both from Oregon and out-of-state. There were two major, related problems with this historical focus—the student yield has not been

particularly high (or high enough) and the focus on community relations did not directly result in increased EOU headcount. While community relations remain important, more emphasis needs to be placed on improving the headcount yield from community colleges for those EOU Centers placed on or near community college campuses through the development of 2+2 programs. In addition, Center directors will play a key role in developing agency sponsored learning, staff development programming for business, internships for EOU students, coordinating with the Center for Rural Studies, and establishing dual credit opportunities in the regional high schools.

At first glance, it appears that the University is still trying to cover the entire state—EOU has centers in Hermiston, Gresham, Portland, Salem, Roseburg, Bend, Burns, Ontario, and many points in-between—Pendleton, Gresham, Clackamas, Astoria, with informal center presence in Clatsop, Yamhill, Tillamook, Coos Bay, and Baker counties. On the face of it, it looks like an impossible task. However, problems with coverage are more critical in urban areas than the expansive rural counties of the EOU Centers. Service to counties outside EOU's ten-county service region accounted for 50.3% of all EOU applicants in September 2014. (Onsite programs are an important part of that yield.)

Students in the rural areas identify with EOU's orientation, its flexibility in transferring credit, and its online offerings to address the needs of place- and work-bound students. That profile can be appealed to more directly by establishing seamless transitions from community colleges in EOU's service regions to acceptance at EOU. For example, in 2013-14 there were over 6,000 students who graduated from Oregon's community colleges with AAOT (Associate of Arts-Oregon Transfer) degrees. If EOU matriculates just 10% of those students, there will be a significant contribution to the institution's sustainability. The redesigned Liberal Studies program, already the second largest major and a preference for online transfers, is ideally suited for such students who are often older, working adults. With automatic admission to EOU upon completion of the AAOT, the university would be well positioned for increased revenue. The goal is achievable because Oregon's large universities are for the most part uninterested in working with community college students. That is why EOU recruiting outside the ten-county region is so important a foundation to build upon. Thus, at this point the mission of regional operations and the purpose of each EOU center should be refined rather than completely re-envisioned.

The fact is EOU is a comprehensive university whose flexible, high-quality, affordable programs provide access for urban, suburban, and rural students alike. What all those different kinds of students have in common includes deep commitments to home and community, real world concerns that insist learning be readily applicable to their career paths, and an interest in questions that cross-disciplinary boundaries. They have limited interest in matriculating at Oregon's largest universities, which by and large have little interest in serving their needs. They are in fact 21st century students—all of them. This profile accounts for the fact that they comprise over half of our student applications in fall 2104, which includes both urban and rural residents. The profile informs EOU Center expansion plans, which constitute a refined focus based on numbers of potential students rather than large geographical distances. Our vision must now match our students'. In many ways, it already does implicitly: We are positioning ourselves as a 21st century, comprehensive university. Coupled with the goal of 2,000 to 2,500 students on

campus, better serving students across the state through the EOU Centers by meeting those new needs will ensure EOU's sustainability.

Aligning the Curriculum with the Needs of the Region and State

Center for Rural Studies

Eastern Oregon University is requesting \$300,000 from Meyer Memorial Trust to organize a Center for Rural Studies to refocus the University's efforts on helping communities in the 10 easternmost rural counties of Oregon meet the challenges of change they face in the twenty-first century. The requested funds will be used to renew and strengthen the institution's commitment to our faculty's and students' engagement in civic affairs and service learning. Funds will be used to develop an office, the Center for Rural Studies, to support faculty members' efforts across the campus to more closely link their teaching, scholarship, research, and outreach with the plans and aspirations of communities in the region for mutual benefit. The work of adopting institutional changes to strengthen EOU's community engagement efforts will follow the best practices recommended by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching Elective Community Engagement Classification guidelines and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities publication, *Becoming a Steward of Place, Lessons from AASCU Carnegie Community Engagement Applications*.

While EOU has demonstrated its ability to respond to community needs in the past, relationships have languished over the past decade and must be renewed. EOU is entering a new era with dissolution of the Oregon University System, the appointment of new senior leadership, and the creation of a new board to guide the EOU's growth and place in the region, state, and global community. The immediate challenges to institutional change are dealing with the impact of significant budget reductions and rebuilding student enrollment in the context of significant social and economic trends in communities in the region. It is believed enhanced engagement with communities will serve as a vehicle to strengthen EOU's excellence in teaching, research, and outreach and make it more relevant to eastern Oregonians and to the State. The end benefit will be an increase in student enrollment, improved retention, and more vital and sustainable communities.

Research

- Develop community partnerships/collaborations, assess community needs and opportunities
- Faculty development and assistance with process of building scholarly track record from project
- Activities to project report to research articles;
- Development of resources and shared conversations re community based research understandings related to collaborative ownership –of project development, data, etc.
- Project development
- Support for faculty collaborations on joint projects
- Address possibilities for developing searchable data archives (storage and retrieval)

Public Service

- Ensure accurate, informative and inviting web presence for Center
- Organize formal and informal events to engage EOU and broader community (First Friday events, focus groups, special summits/conferences—quarterly, annually, etc.)
- Promote visible physical presence—office on campus/space downtown la Grande
- Engage with other universities in conversation re collaboration as appropriate

Internships

- Maintain a listing of internships and develop a way to move an “opening” for an intern to a “project underway” listing
- Faculty development for supervision of internships; professional development for regional directors who may be willing to engage in promoting collaborations in areas served by EOU
- Develop collaboration with Career Center to increase efficiencies and encourage broad concept of career center’s networking role (that will then relate to jobs identifying possibilities)
- Engage registrar/EPCC as appropriate for transcribing these experiences. Promote practicum/internship designated courses within all academic programs.
- Ensure that faculty mentors, students, community partners are aware of EOU protocols
- Quality control (ensuring the students are prepared for expectations in the field and with process for dealing with issues that arise.)

Curricular Changes

With a local board comprised of people from the region, it will become more and more important for the curriculum to be aligned with the needs of the region. In addition, as the costs for higher education and borrowing to finance their education have risen, more and more students will want an education that will provide them an opportunity to secure a better paying job. Given these factors it is recommended that the institution consider making investments in the following new or existing programs. These investments will largely need to be self-supporting based on securing adequate enrollments needed to generate sufficient revenues to fund these investments. These investments are listed in priority groupings as follows:

Bachelors of Applied Science in Business Management

The Bachelor of Applied Science Degree in Business management is a program designed for students who have completed an Associate of Applied Science degree at a regionally accredited two-year institution such as a community college. Since the credits accumulated in these types of programs may not readily transfer to traditional baccalaureate programs, the B.A.S. degree in Business Management is designed to provide these students an opportunity to advance their professional skills and acquire the knowledge to enhance current employment and assume management and leadership roles. Many cases exist where people with associate degrees working in industry, first in production, later become management candidates and need this credential to advance with their employer.

EOU will work closely with our main feeder institutions: Blue Mountain Community College, Treasure Valley Community College, Mt. Hood Community College, Columbia

Gorge Community College and other regional community colleges such as Central Oregon Community College in Bend, and Columbia Basin Community College in Pasco, Washington. Completion of the Bachelor of Applied Science in Business Management degree consists of 60 quarter hours of EOU General Education requirements, 60 quarter hours Business Management course work, and 60 quarter hours of Technical/Professional classes from the A.A.S. degree. Maximum utilization is made of course credits earned in the A.A.S. degree; up to 90 quarter hour credits may be transferred from the community college.

Bachelors of Applied Science in Laboratory Technology

Work is underway identifying the certificate options available in the field of lab technology. Several conversations on campus with the chemistry faculty have begun the process of curricular action, with next steps to identify concrete needs, cost and resources required, and to work collaboratively with regional partners to build the curricular structure necessary for an undergraduate degree program. Faculty in Chemistry will be meeting with community college partners to explore possibilities in developing a B.A.S in Laboratory Technology. At present they must determine which of the array of lab tech certificates aligns most closely with the curriculum offered at EOU, and what gaps will need to be filled to articulate or embed a lab tech certificate or B.A.S degree option in the current chemistry/biochemistry degree programs.

BS/BA Emergency Medical Services Administration Program

The State of Oregon requires paramedics to have an associate's degree or higher in order to be eligible for licensure. With few exceptions, every paramedic in Oregon holds an associate's degree, usually with a title similar to "Emergency Medical Services," or "Emergency Medical Technology." The required associate's degree does not necessarily have to be in Emergency Medical Services but most are if the paramedic graduated from an Oregon program.

Many paramedics work for fire departments and it is understandable that most do not wish to obtain a bachelor's degree in structural fire. However, that's the degree most closely associated with the typical paramedic associate's degree. A national model EMS bachelor's degree curriculum exists that was last revised October 2013 and adoption of this curriculum for an entirely online program is what is proposed herein. The proposed EMS Administration program has some similarities to the existing Fire Services Administration program with obvious differences in some details.

Creating an EMS Administration bachelor's degree was raised during the 2014 Oregon Fire Task Force meetings in Salem at the Oregon Department of Public Safety Standards and Training (DPSST) as well as during the Oregon Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education Association (ORFESHE) spring 2014 meeting at Portland Community College-Cascade.

For the past few years, the EOU Fire Services Administration chair has been approached by multiple community college programs requesting a 2+2 bachelor's degree program

focused on EMS Administration. The attached supplemental information contains the Oregon standard curriculum for an Associate of Applied Science in EMT/Paramedic Technology. However, many paramedics have AA degrees rather than an AAS. Most recently, contact was initiated by the director of Central Oregon Community College program director and with Blue Mountain Community College's director regarding a possible implementation date for a program of this type.

There are currently nine (9) paramedic schools in Oregon, which are mostly located at regional community colleges. It is believed that approximately 4,000 paramedics are licensed in Oregon with thousands more in neighboring states. Almost all of these potential students are working and therefore are not well suited for an on-site program.

Career and Technical Education

The Dean of the Colleges of Business and Education was approached by the Oregon Department of Education and asked if EOU would be interested in developing a CTE program. There is currently no other public four-year institution providing a CTE Teacher Preparation program. There are currently 54 CTE I licensed teachers who need coursework to maintain their licenses. We expect a high percentage of retiring CTE teachers over the next decade and have no current pipeline to fill those jobs. In the Umatilla/Morrow region alone there are 4 teachers who must take these courses to maintain licensure, but 10 additional new teachers who are likely to take at least some of them. This program would meet a need in eastern Oregon and statewide. Offering the program as credit overlay will make it attractive. For CTE teachers who already have a bachelor's degree, the option to take the coursework at the graduate level is an incentive. Existing teachers who are endorsed in other content areas will be able to add the CTE endorsement through this online credit overlay opportunity. We anticipate initial enrollment of 10-14 students in the program. However, as the program grows, with more courses available each term, and is marketed statewide through the CTE coordinators, it is reasonable to expect an increase in student numbers. We do not know at this time how much growth to expect. A needs assessment will be completed prior to winter term.

This program will support the state emphasis on college and career readiness (40-40-20) by providing a pathway for teachers to gain full CTE licensure (CTE II). Career and technical training is a growing need for high schools.

The Eastern Promise is working toward adding accelerated college credit to high school students for CTE classes, and this program will support those efforts by providing a way for teachers to add or maintain their CTE teacher endorsement.

Computer Science

Though relatively small in terms of both faculty FTE and numbers of students, the Computer Science program nonetheless plays an outsized role in our regional communities and our mission-related activities in terms of serving as EOU's Engineering and Technology Industry Council (ETIC) primary focal point, as well as other recent STEM-oriented efforts (EOU was awarded a STEM Hub grant in Winter 2014, and Chemistry-Biology faculty submitted an NSF S-STEM grant in August 2014). The small

scale at which the program operates is EOU's central challenge. ETIC-specific funding currently sustains 2 FTE for the program. In order to meet the needs of the region and provide T-Shaped professionals in myriad fields of study, program faculty will need to shift focus towards developing a pipeline of students from CTE programs in high schools and Associates' programs in community colleges towards a more streamlined and articulated 2+2+2 and/or 4 + 1 program at the bachelor's level. Curricular streamlining and redevelopment needs to be in the direction of industry needs in the region.

The computer science program has suffered as it was preliminarily identified for elimination in the last two sustainability plans. However, computer science offers one of the key solutions for the economic development of this region. Technology is a facilitator of many opportunities that can be available in the virtual space with delivery or service to distant markets. This will allow people to live in this region taking full advantage of the amenities it offers, while working to serve growing urban markets.

EOU Computer science faculty have met with community college partners at BMCC to articulate the needs for a 2+2+2 ramp that brings students forward from a start in high school into continued work in coursework at the community college, with a final completion of an undergraduate degree at EOU in the CS major. As an initial start in this area, four possible high school courses have been identified for a pilot at the Baker Technology Institute: Introduction to Programming in Visual Language, Introduction to Game Programming, Web Development, and Informatics, with the last two ramping high school students into the community college courses, from which they can easily move beyond the introductory sequences in the EOU major. Future directions are likely to include partnering with TVCC as well, in order to build a network of synergies around certificates or applied science degree programs in Information Systems, Business and Technology, and alignments around workforce needs.

Though current resources have been stretched through the use of collaborations with local IT technicians, partnerships with Cayuse Technologies and working with the University's IT shop, investment should be made in one additional faculty member for this department as funds become available.

Education – Dual Language Education and Bilingual Education

A 1.0 FTE education faculty position is being drafted and is scheduled to be hired fall 2015. The successful candidate hired for this position will be located in Ontario and will develop relationships in the eastern Oregon region and develop the curriculum during 2015-16. One of the state's most critical needs is for quality dual language teachers. Working in partnership with the Malheur county superintendents and school districts with high concentrations of Latino students, EOU proposes to create an education program intended to address this need. Dual language students will be taught how to use these skills to provide more effective education and interaction with students and parents who possess these attributes. As this has been an unmet need in Oregon for years, this program has the potential to address this significant need and bring widespread recognition to EOU.

English/Writing

EOU's English/Writing program serves multiple roles across multiple levels, from the lower-division writing courses and general education courses all the way to the recently developed and innovative low-residency Master of Fine Arts program in Creative Writing. Ongoing attention to efficiencies, enrollments, program quality, and recruitment and retention has resulted in a more purposeful repackaging of existing offerings, capitalizing on expertise in the writing area. The loss of 4 FTE due to resignation, retirement, and reduction in force has required program faculty to engage in revision of their program due to loss of expertise, concerns about student access, streamlining of the core curriculum, and elimination of concentrations. The reduction of release time has ameliorated somewhat the loss of FTE. An exacerbating factor contributing to ongoing need for additional FTE to maintain current service courses as well as program curriculum despite reduction of release time involves the 1 additional load credit granted to all WR courses through the collective bargaining agreement (as distinct from the UWR load credit), in addition to the course caps set for WR courses as a standard best pedagogical practice. It is warranted that 1.5 FTE be restored to English/Writing in order to continue service courses and programming that supports the student newspaper and international students.

Masters in Counseling

Refocusing the BS in Psychology towards its applied roots affords EOU an opportunity to build towards a Masters in Counseling degree to better serve the mental health care needs of eastern Oregon. An impending retirement creates opportunity both for redirecting the undergraduate degree towards an applied degree and developing a Masters ramp for a Master's degree in Counseling, where nearly 100 jobs exist, according to the Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI). Career pathways in the counseling field range from clinical psychology in addiction, family and marriage, forensic, industrial and organizational, and other fields needed in eastern Oregon. Refocusing the Psychology program towards a field of practice reconnects the program to communities of need in the rural eastern Oregon health care landscape. It is anticipated that 2-3 additional FTE will be required to mount and launch a Masters in Counseling within the next two years.

Natural Resources

EOU faculty in the natural sciences have great strength in natural resource related research, where they collaborate on a regular basis with their students to further work that serves the needs of our region, with particular emphasis on local and regional projects. While EOU's undergraduate degree programs in these areas are comprehensive with our small size limiting our ability to build highly specialized initiatives, our faculty and students are well positioned to be responsive to the region's needs through internships and practica on natural resource related issues. The Center for Rural Studies is expected to offer a portal through which regional partners, both in the private sector as well as in public agencies, will find resources in data and human capital to link up to build problem solving teams. Finally, professional development opportunities with agencies and private

sector employers could be further developed to provide credit overlay options across our region.

Nursing—Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

During sustainability planning, a review of the overall structure of the Biology curricula made it clear that the Biology faculty takes pride in the high quality and diverse audiences served by their curriculum. Serving generalist biology, botany, and pre-professionals in allied health fields, the program engages faculty and students in research projects that promote undergraduate student participation in experiential learning and investigative science opportunities. Low-enrolled offerings are under review towards a more streamlined and focused curriculum utilizing one less FTE in line with peer programs. Refocusing the program more explicitly towards allied health will better support explicit new programming to develop a CNA I and II, and move towards development of other health-care programs in the continuum including and beyond the BSN.

The population base in Union and Wallowa counties have no access to CNA programs normally offered through community colleges. OHSU and BMCC are supportive of EOU's initiative to address this deficit so as to meet community needs available to populations in other counties in EOU's service region.

The CNA offers a pathway that supports employment options at the same time as it strengthens students' admissions into the Nursing program; this minimal curriculum appears to be very much in the realm of projects that can be launched with minimal effort. There are still concrete factors that need to be clearly understood, resource and cost implications to identify, likely staffing to be considered, but even a brief timeline to realization seems within reach. A next stage program to follow up on CNA can be developed to prepare students for other options, with the CNA II and Medical Assistant certificates the next logical step. All of these programs build a clearly articulated ramp from the high schools into the undergraduate degree programs in health-related studies and pre-professional and professional degree options.

The Nursing Assistant program leads to certification by the Oregon State Board of Nursing, and will enable individuals to enter into a nursing or home health aide position and gain entry into a nursing continuum that includes CNA I, II, Medical Assistant, LPN, and BSN. As defined by law, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA) assist licensed nursing personnel in the provision of nursing care. The authorized duties for the CNAs include tasks associated with

- Personal care
- Maintaining mobility
- Nutrition
- Elimination
- Use of assertive devices,
- Maintenance of environment and client safety
- Data recording and reporting

Outdoor Adventure Leadership

This region is known for its outdoor amenities and this resource begs service and interaction. This program would train leaders of adventure companies and outfitters in areas such as risk management, trip planning, group decision-making, environmental impact, and outdoor technical skills. It is recommended that this academic program start as a programmatic minor by creating synergies with the existing Outdoor Program in Student Affairs. The academic program would also engage non-degree students in outdoor recreation activities for credit. The program also interacts well with community and economic development initiatives. This program, offered in conjunction with the Outdoor Program, Mountaineer Base Camp concept, and an outdoor resource data base and center presents some very interesting possibilities to pull the university and the community closer together and co-brand EOU and La Grande as a gateway to outdoor activities.

Psychology – Added FTE to Serve Enrollment Demand

Psychology is one of the College of Arts and Sciences anchor programs in terms of serving our online students. The program is particularly noted by students for its healthy rigor regardless of the modality through which it is offered. With large numbers of students in both major and minor programs, Psychology offers a large variety of courses enrolling large numbers of students. In fact, online course offerings are full, leading to the question of whether (or more appropriately, perhaps, when) the Psychology program should consider a more selective admissions process for their students. The program's large overload burden is a direct reflection of their success in enrolling and serving students. Such overload is not sustainable over the long term, however, and a recent phased retirement agreement will necessitate the hiring of an additional FTE to offset overload and to help realize program redirection towards a B.S. in Applied Psychology.

Public Administration

Philosophy, Politics, & Economics has a long history at EOU of serving students regardless of their location and doing so in productive and useful ways. Given recent program area curricular revisions, the center of gravity in PPE is clearly moving away from Philosophy (an FTE retirement in June 2016) and toward Public Administration, while still retaining solid Economics and Political Science dimensions. These shifts seem consistent with EOU's larger strategic goals, which drive our institution's role and mission throughout the region. The recent addition of Economics as a major that continues to serve the PPE program from its new orientation within the College of Business will result in more opportunities to create career pathways for students interested in public administration, public service and policy development in the areas of forestry, ranch management, and land use.

However, the transformation of these degree programs will take a couple of years to find the right synergies, faculty, and pipeline of students to reconnect with regional needs in the public employment sector. The recommendation for this program area is to monitor the curricular revisions in Philosophy, Political Science and Economics, and Public

Administration closely over the next 2-3 years and to determine whether the program area should continue moving toward Public Administration, while moving away from the long-standing PPE core. With two retirements expected in 2016, it is anticipated that these positions will be redeployed towards Economics (1 FTE) and Public Administration (1 FTE).

EOU's major in Public Administration has undergone several iterations in the last decade. Staffing limitations have prompted suspension of this major pending redesign of the curriculum to be available online to regional community leaders. However, public agencies and schools comprise a major employment sector, thus this program will be essential to serving the needs of these employers. This program begs reinstatement and a faculty member with expertise in land use planning should be hired to address this need.

Spanish

Subsequent to the recommendations articulated in the 2011 Sustainability Plan, the Modern Language Global Culture major action plan resulted in the discontinuation of the major and the implementation of a teach-out plan for those few students affected by the elimination of the degree. A minimal minor focused on Spanish language and culture has remained in place during the teach-out, but the minor was recommended for elimination, suspension, or revision pending ongoing conversations with the dean around maintaining a proficiency-based curriculum. Elimination of the major has resulted in the reduction of a regular faculty FTE due to retirement and reduction in force. Given the growing Latino populations in the region, it is recommended that FTE be added with programming redirected to regional needs in business, health care, and education.

Enhanced Student Activities and Services

Adding Men's Soccer

The addition of men's soccer as a sponsored collegiate sport at Eastern Oregon University has numerous benefits to the university. With a roster management number of 26, that means there will be additional new student-athletes on the EOU campus. Those student-athletes bring an estimated \$221,000 in tuition and state funding to the university. In addition, these students are likely to bring other friends with them to EOU, thereby magnifying the impact of adding this sport next fall. With adding men's soccer in the fall of 2015, it will allow EOU to recruit from regional areas and will provide outreach to the growing Latino population. These regional areas are vital to EOU's sustainability. There has been a modest investment made by the university in terms of updating facilities, coach's salary, and the addition of a third athletic trainer.

When looking at the addition of co-curricular activities as a way to increase enrollment, all aspects such as revenue vs. expenditures, Title IX, and the infrastructure of the athletic department need to be examined. Enhancing co-curricular offerings can increase the overall student experience. EOU has set a standard that we will be competitive in all sports—both academically and athletically—and our student-athletes have a proven higher track record when it comes to retention and graduation rates.

While expanding athletic offerings is a viable way to increase on campus enrollment, this cannot be done without addressing some potential ramifications. The proposed sport should advance at least one of the three prongs of Title IX. Interest and abilities surveys will also be conducted to see where interest levels lie. Also, the Athletic Department would require some assistance with the addition of adding sports. An administrative assistant as well as additional help with eligibility and compliance would be necessary. Finally, our athletics facilities are now fully utilized, thus adding any new sports will require concomitant investments in new facilities.

Career Center

The EOU Career Center was eliminated three years ago during a previous budget reduction. This is one of the fundamental and required student services at most universities. In addition to providing placement services for students who are nearing graduation this office can offer resume writing services and interviewing skills. A Career Center can also assist students in applying for graduate school and can assist in administering testing services needed for graduate school or other professional certifications. This office can also coordinate internships and other opportunities to assist students who wish to obtain work experience while attending EOU. Many times these programs can be paid internships which can also assist students in obtaining resources needed to finance their education.

The Center will also work with students in regards to what can best be defined as “cyber-presence” ensuring that EOU students engage in the new mediums necessary in a growing online world. While embryonic, it is clear that cyber-presence is an imperative search tool for our students moving forward.

Currently, we are conducting a national search for a Career Center Director. We have identified space for the Career Center office on the first floor of Inlow Hall, which is intentionally located near academic advisors, Director of Student Relations, Office of Admissions & Vice President for Student Services. This location allows for ongoing synergistic engagement and takes another step forward as we work collectively to remove organizational “silos.” The Director of Career Services search is nearing fruition with an anticipated start date of January 2015. Once the Director is hired, we will have yet another resource to offer prospective and current students which should help in recruitment and retention of students.

Childcare

EOU has undertaken numerous studies in the past to determine the feasibility of offering childcare services to its faculty, staff and students. Studies have evaluated self-operation and well as contract childcare services. This is a service that continues to be in demand and given that level of interest, it is time to issue a Request for Information (RFI) to determine the feasibility of creating a childcare center on campus. Given the financial and liability risks inherent in this type of operation, it is recommended that EOU only consider a contract operation with a licensed provider to shield the institution from these risks.

This will require that a permanent facility be constructed or a modular facility be procured and set up on campus. This building will need to be built to the specifications required by the State and for the clientele (infant/toddlers, pre-school and school age children). It is hoped that faculty

and early childhood education students could be involved in operations in order to offer best practices and high quality educational and developmental services.

Providers would need to be licensed by the State of Oregon and be able to offer quality childcare programs and services based on best practices. Providers must offer a nurturing and educational program that ensures the optimal physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of each enrolled child. Providers must demonstrate clear and measurable evidence that it has a philosophy that reflects the best practices in early care and education. EOU will require that the program:

- Provide a safe, healthy and nurturing environment;
- Ensure the optimal physical, social, emotional and intellectual development of each child;
- Assist each child in the development of positive self-worth through personal successes and positive reinforcement;
- Develop partnerships with families and the community; and
- Provide representation of children and adults of different ethnicity, ages, cultures, languages, socioeconomic groups, and abilities through enrollment, hiring procedures and programming.

Providers will be responsible for all business aspects of running the center. Providers would hire and manage the staff resources and purchase all supplies and equipment needed to equip the facility. The providers will be responsible for providing comprehensive general liability insurance suitable to protect the university (to be named as an additional insured) from any claims or losses that result from acts of the provider, its officers, agents or employees.

Food Services

Food services need to improve at EOU. The food selection is over-priced and lacks many healthy selections. Food services should attempt to source products locally and offer a more diverse set of choices for its clientele. The Aramark contract expires in August 2015, thus this presents an opportunity to test the market and upgrade the service. A Food Service RFP will be released in January.

The Food Service RFP is being designed specifically to cultivate "community" via food service operations for on and off campus students in addition to University faculty and staff. Collegiate food service operations can play a key role in the development and enhancement of university community and play an important role in student satisfaction. This in turn can positively impact student retention.

In addition, the Food Service RFP is being designed in such a way that the partner/vendor understands that the Eastern Oregon University student community is price-point sensitive and largely commuter. In turn the opportunities in regards to food service operations in both the second floor cafeteria and Mac's Grill (lower floor) are significant in addition to the future development of catering/special event revenue opportunities which are possible via facilities such as the Gilbert Center.

The Food Service RFP Committee will be comprised of both on and off-campus students, faculty and staff members.

Bookstore

Largely related to declining enrollments and increasing competition, the EOU Bookstore has been losing money. Textbook prices have become so expensive that they are now challenging the financial ability of students. We must evaluate options to outsource the bookstore and find lower cost options for our students. However, in the process we need to ensure that the dedicated employees involved in the operations of the bookstore are not negatively impacted by such a change. A RFP for an outsourced bookstore management was released last month. Responses will be evaluated after the first of the year with the hope of transitioning the bookstore to contracted management by July 2015.

This process has now engaged a robust conversation among faculty, staff and some students in regards to "what is a collegiate bookstore" as we move into a new technological era and text books are being made more readily available via vendors, and at times digital services, e.g., Amazon text book purchasing and books on platforms such as Kindle and in other digital formats.

More Efficient and Effective Administrative and Support Systems**Improved Technology Support for More Efficient Operations**

EOU Information Technology is working on a variety of fronts to improve technology support that will bolster campus efficiency. EOU has not invested in information technology at the same rate other universities have. This shows in many of the administrative and academic services provided. In some cases, the rudiments needed to support the campus are lagging or completely missing and need to be built or restored. Investment is needed in information technology and given our small computer science academic program, we need to create synergies in creative ways. Despite these constraints, effective use has been made of students and staff. Investment in more staffing in both the information technology department and the computer science faculty should be made, as this will be a critical need for the near future and something key to economic development activities around the region. Some projects currently underway include:

- **Wait-list functionality** – The implementation of wait-list functionality allows for improved communication with students regarding course and section and availability, and therefore encourages registration and retention efforts. This functionality will also facilitate better academic planning and faculty utilization.
- **Online registration for Eastern Promise and high school programs** – the implementation of online registration for our Eastern Promise and high school students aids in registration and retention efforts, and allows a seamless and simple way for these students to enroll in courses at EOU. This system will replace a process that is currently very cumbersome with multiple forms and manual registration process. Thus, it should facilitate enrollment growth through the removal of barriers to registration while streamlining administrative rigor in registering and collecting payment from these students today.

- **Improved data warehouse** – the Information Technology office and current campus users are actively researching the best data warehouse tool for EOU’s future. This product is critical to EOU’s ability to utilize data fully, as well make decisions driven by data. Strategic planning will be greatly enhanced via improved and accessible data.
- **Improved wireless network access & other related network infrastructure on campus** – This implementation will greatly improve the Wi-Fi network both in academic and administrative buildings, as well as in EOU residence halls. This upgrade will offer greater flexibility with mobile device usage, a primary need of our students, faculty and staff. The improved network infrastructure allows access to information under more secured conditions, which is paramount to responsible data stewardship. Students and faculty today expect these services, yet in many areas on campus wireless connectivity is limited or weak. To remain competitive we must redress this shortcoming.
- **Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software implementation** – The implementation of the CRM greatly improves the online admissions application experience for students, and creates a more reliable and intuitive process for new applicants. In addition, the CRM streamlines and automates a complex communication plan so that all potential students are communicated with in a timely and professional manner – one that improves the rates at which applicants matriculate. This system is currently about 70-80% implemented and will expedite application processing, while providing systematic letter generation leading to greater responsiveness to customers.
- **Learning Management Software (LMS) migration** – The Information Technology office is leading a migration away from the Blackboard LMS to a new LMS known as Canvas. The improved LMS is critical to recruitment and retention of students, as it is paramount in creating a positive academic experience for students in the online environment.
- **Active Directory implementation** – The full transition of the entire EOU network and equipment infrastructure to Active Directory will increase information security, as well as improve Information Technology’s efficiency in managing EOU assets.
- **Proximity Controls for campus** – IT is working toward completing a campus standard for proximity card access to buildings. These standards will assist the facilities department when renovating current buildings or when constructing new buildings, and will allow for a holistic and efficient approach to building and asset security, as well as create access ease for students, faculty and staff.

Improved Budget Process and Accountability

EOU needs a better, more transparent budget process and need to enhance the accountability for budgets and other strategic actions critical to the success of the institution. The next two years will be critical for the institution. It needs to be aggressive in its actions, yet conservative with its budget. This will require a careful balance, attention to detail and enhanced budget projections and monitoring.

The following process allows for budget planning, communication and foresight to occur in a strategic, transparent and timely manner.

Each spring the finance and budget officers will meet with the vice president, dean or director of each major unit to go through the roster of permanent positions (faculty (tenure and tenure track, and fixed term), administrative faculty and classified) to verify the roster and indicate the projected cost of such for the year. This conversation will also include a discussion of the proposed inflationary adjustments (if any) to unclassified/classified pay, student wage, OPE, service and supply and capital outlay budget lines.

If the financial condition of the university exists such that a portion of the reserves can be reinvested into the university, those calls on reserves, or new budget, will be reviewed by the Budget & Planning Committee and Executive Committee (EXCOM). The Budget & Planning Committee will be charged with making recommendations to the President and VP Finance and Administration regarding the prioritization of those investments. The agreed upon investments will then be built into the budget that goes forward for Board approval.

Once the budget is approved by the Governing Board in the (summer of fall), it will be loaded into Banner. Also each fall, the budget will be presented to the Budget & Planning Committee, most typically at their inaugural meeting. Once the budget is loaded, divisions and departments will be expected to adhere to the total budget.

Divisions and departments are free to request budget moves from one category to another (including OPE), so long as the total division/department budget is not changed. However, permanent (faculty, administrative faculty and classified) positions shall only be created with the approval of the Vice President for Finance and the appropriate vice president.

Should mid-year budget changes be required, departments will be notified at the earliest possible date. Mid-year changes shall be limited to salary adjustments resulting from collective bargaining agreements that are agreed to after the initial budget has been loaded, mid-year additions or reductions due to unexpected enrollment or other revenue fluctuations, etc. As mid-year changes become known, the Budget & Planning Committee will also be informed of the changes.

Savings from mid-year position vacancies will be retained by the division and/or department, however, the department will be expected to cover any vacation payoffs for departing employees, search expenditures for new employees and moving costs if applicable. Savings from sabbatical or other approved leaves shall be retained in the department to be used for adjunct coverage or other purposes as determined by the appropriate Dean.

Vacancies in permanent faculty (tenured, tenure-track and fixed-term) positions shall accrue to the Provost who will determine the appropriate disposition of the position; be it to be refilled in the same department, transferred to another department or re-allocated for other purposes.

At year-end all budget carry-forwards (both positive and negative) shall be rolled up at the division level. If carry-forwards are positive, divisions may request reinstatement of all or part of the carry-forward in the next fiscal year. Final decisions on these matters will reside with the

President and Vice President for Finance and Administration, and will be based on the fiscal condition and needs of the university.

Budget overdrafts will not be tolerated. If a division or department is trending toward an overdraft situation it should immediately notify the VP Finance and Administration to agree upon corrective action.

Assuming resources are projected to be adequate, a reserve will be budgeted at the beginning of the year. Calls against the reserve will be tracked by the budget office and will be decided upon by EXCOM. Decisions could include: to fund the request immediately, defer the request, deny the request or carry the request forward until resource levels are more certain. Once the request is approved by EXCOM, funds will be removed from the reserve and transferred to the requesting organization.

EXCOM will receive a budget report each month from the Budget Officer. These reports shall summarize the budget to actual and encumbered amounts by major department/division, however, detail by major organization will be available if needed to address questions or concerns. Quarterly, the budget office will provide to EXCOM and to the Budget & Planning Committee a summary of revenues and expenditures to date, complete with projections to year-end. These reports are intended to keep everyone on EXCOM and the Budget & Planning Committee in the know about the institution's resources, budget and status.

EOU Budget Monitoring and Reporting

The following reports are utilized both internally and externally to monitor financial performance on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis.

Monthly budget-to-actual reports are monitored by the central budget office, and are also sent to each budget manager on campus. These reports show total budget, total spend, total encumbrances, total remaining balance and easily allow budget managers and central administration to monitor burn rate.

Monthly reporting/updating of year-end projected E&G fund balance is reported to EXCOM, as well as to EOU's Budget & Planning Committee. Within this forecast, current revenue and expense is adjusted based on actuals recognized to date, and all possible new expenses and revenues are tracked and monitored. This forecast allows EXCOM and the Budget & Planning Committee to continually monitor ending fund balance, while also preparing, in a timely manner, for additional expense and/or revenue that the institution may recognize.

Ongoing and periodic cash flow analysis occurs in the budget office and is shared with EXCOM on a monthly or quarterly basis, depending on need. The budget office prepares a cash flow forecast at the beginning of each fiscal year, and then updates the forecast as necessary and reports that to EXCOM. Monthly revenue, expense and cash monitoring of all funds outside of E&G occurs in the budget office and is reported to EXCOM on a quarterly basis. When requested, this information is also reported to the Budget & Planning Committee.

Quarterly management reports are completed, analyzed, and submitted to OUS and the State Board. Additionally, EXCOM and the Budget & Planning Committee review the reports. Ongoing review and reporting of the following metrics and ratios occurs in the budget office, and is also reported to OUS, the State Board, EXCOM, and the Budget & Planning Committee. Annually, these metrics are revisited and goals are decided upon by EXCOM. (See Appendix 1)

Finally, key financial statement ratios will be regularly calculated and monitored. This includes the following ratios:

- Current ratio – current assets divided by current liabilities – with a target of 2:1;
- Primary reserve ratio – expendable fund balances divided by operating revenues - with a target to 10%
- Debt burden ratio – and debt service (principal plus interest) divided by operating revenues with a target less than 7%; and
- Revenue contribution ratios – measuring revenue diversity and dependence with a goal to have no one source more that 40% of total revenues.

Faculty Workload for Quality Programs and Efficient Operations

Overload Limits

In an effort to improve quality, much of the overload instruction associated in the past with degree programs offered both on campus and online has been reduced to meet the limitations imposed by the institutional overload policy (one course per term per faculty member willing to teach overload). There remain some very isolated instances of overload in the schedule in excess of the policy and these are currently being engaged in consultation with faculty. Solutions are to reassign individual courses to other faculty without overload assignment, or to adjunct faculty, and careful monitoring and limitation of multiple sections of on campus and online service courses.

Accounting for Release Time and Service

Faculty have reported their non-instructional load hours for service, commitment to subject discipline, and outreach with a retroactive report in spring 2014 followed by a forecast of planned activity for the 2014-15 year in September 2014. With very few exceptions, faculty teach their full contractual load, with release from instruction documented in the case of the Nightingale Gallery Curator, the Writing Center Director, *The Voice* student newspaper Advisor, Chemical Hygiene Officer, and in one instance to secure continued Eastern Promise collaboration to respond to regional needs.

Improved Compensation Plans

Compensation plans are built into the bargaining negotiation process and undergo regular review. Non-bargained units have recently undergone an improvement in compensation. Plans are to contemplate moving towards more differential compensation packages across colleges/department using national standards. Administrative faculty also need to be treated with more equity and have regular salary adjustments to the extent this is financially feasible and in alignment with increases other employee groups are receiving.

Enhanced University Relations

Improved Website and Information

As a university located well outside of heavily populated areas, EOU must rely on outreach to attract students. Also, as a university with a very small marketing budget, EOU needs to be strategic in the deployment of resources and approaches to promoting the school to multiple audiences. A key element of these efforts is EOU's website—often the first connection a prospective student has with the university and certainly a point of reference for the matriculation process and later as part of the retention process.

A university website also plays host to multiple demands. It is a recruitment tool, a marketing resource, an information store and even a place of records for everything from meeting agendas and minutes to institutional policies. For EOU, University Advancement is seeking to create the main homepage in response to our foremost priority: student recruitment. It is important that the site differentiates EOU from its competitors and creates a distinctive experience for users.

With the added resources of a new multimedia manager position (vacant for the past three years), the website and associated activities can be given renewed attention and strategies can be deployed to provide an engaging prospective student experience while continuing to address the needs of having other information items on the homepage such as links to things like a presidential search. Communications staff who had to assist with website maintenance have also been able to increase their work on news stories and press releases about EOU events, successes and features for media outlets in the region and across the state.

The main homepage (eou.edu) has already seen significant change in just over the past few months, including a modified overall design, new banners at the top of the page that change and are updated regularly to promote EOU. A news and features section in the middle of the page has been created to drive attention to specific university information and activities and even the “footer” on the bottom of the page is updated and reorganized to include better links to users. Translation services have been added for basic conversion from English to Spanish and other languages on the website and specific translation is planned for key recruitment pages. With this initial update in place, a full redesign is planned for 2015.

On the homepage as well as through redesigned and more aggressive promotion on:

- Academic quality (faculty and staff achievements)
- Cost and value information (Eastern Oregon Advantage, cost of attendance)
- Outcomes (student and alumni success)
- The local and regional outdoor environments (mountains, rivers, skiing, hiking, etc.)

However, the website homepage is not the only focal point: social media, video, search engine optimization and content creation are all components for EOU in this era of inner-connectivity. Traditional print materials are being merged with online capabilities and integrated with our prospective student communications in student emails, postcards, brochures and other materials being produced. Updates to the website are synchronized with posts to FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram and other social sites. Keyword campaigns using tools such as Google Adwords are

being integrated into advertising efforts for EOU. Additionally, pages linked directly from the homepage such as Future Students, Admissions, Centers, Cost of Attending and others are being reorganized with a focus on user needs and a more robust presentation of information.

These updates are being made while we also build out our “systems” and ensure that our servers are capable of hosting a variety of websites and that our content management systems are updated. There is still a good deal of work to bring many of EOU’s websites up-to-date so that system-wide change may be made without “knocking out” those pages.

Marketing and Public Relations

The question is often asked, “why are we not doing more marketing (advertising)?” Many are critical that we do not do more marketing, advertising and promotion, yet these activities are significant funding investments and currently the institution has few resources to support such a plan that can easily reach \$100,000 and much more. Over the past several years, multiple plans have been developed and implemented, but with greatly reduced funding as EOU sought to support other areas of the university.

EOU is in a transition year and at a turning point. It will soon have a new governing board and a new president. Its curriculum is changing, as are its students. Positive press is being released to the media, online and social media. New materials are being printed and student recruitment communications have been updated and redesigned with student and counselor input. Letters and packages are being sent via print and email and through counselors and others to high schools, colleagues and partners to inform them of our new directions and opportunities for the university as well as a strong message that it is here to stay. The EOU website has been updated is actively engaging users. There is a constant stream of good news coming from EOU and regional press, the public and legislators are noticing innovative programs such as the Eastern Oregon Advantage, the Eastern Promise, Oregon Teacher Pathways and the Center for Rural Studies. These efforts must continue and be expanded with positive internal and external communications by our own faculty and staff. Every small action that helps recruit or retain a student or to actively promote EOU means additional support and stability for the university.

EOU has a good brand. Our alumni live and work everywhere in the state and region and are supportive. There is an overwhelming desire for the university to be successful. How will EOU achieve stability and sustainability? Those efforts must be effective and in concert with a business plan that coordinates and focuses institutional efforts on building the university through an enhanced enrollment strategy, academic program development, co-curricular enrichment and regional and online student education. Evaluating and re-asserting EOU’s mission should be a primary starting point. With these focal points in hand, support actions such as marketing and promotion will be effective.

Once a new Board and president are in place and the institutional changes noted in this plan are more fully implemented it will be a time to more heavily invest in a marketing plan. In the interim, we must focus our limited resources on priorities at hand and, perhaps most importantly, emerge from our circle of negativity and come together as a cohesive and supportive university community; otherwise spending our precious recourses on marketing may be futile.

Creating Synergies with Local Organizations

Many local organizations benefit from long-standing partnerships with EOU. The Grande Ronde Symphony (GRSO), for example, has a long-standing connection that includes a shared faculty position, participation in the symphony by students, faculty and staff, and practice and performance space in Loso Hall and McKenzie Theatre. Other instances include ArtsEast—the Northeast Oregon Area Arts Council—hosted on campus, which works with several local community arts organizations, and NEOAHEC (Northeast Oregon Area Health Education Center), which focuses efforts on “growing our own” rural health professionals and is also hosted on campus. The Governor’s Regional Solutions Center is housed on the EOU campus, as well, and brings together several state offices at the local level to identify regional priorities and work from the bottom up to solve problems and complete projects—including internship placements for students. These are just a few of the many different community organizations that can gain from new synergies between themselves and the university.

With the significant changes taking place at EOU, there is also direct impact on many of the local organizations with whom the university interacts and which it supports. While funding reductions may impact operations in some ways (staff, faculty and/or activities), there are new opportunities for collaboration and integrating efforts. For example, working with existing organizations such as the GRSO, there are potential connections for combined efforts between EOU music faculty, ArtsEast and the GRSO. Fundraising and development work may be enhanced to the benefit of all three organizations for scholarships, organizational support and outreach. ArtEast is taking on the organization and management of the Community Choir and other music department and is a good example of new collaborations to keep programs working. The Regional Solutions Center has been connecting students, faculty and organizations with internship opportunities throughout the region over the past nearly two years. Partnerships include the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department, Oregon Department of Transportation and projects for each of the cities of Athena, Burns, Irrigon, Heppner and Vale. The “Rails with Trails” project to add a trail alongside the Union Wallowa Railroad is another example of finding new connections with local organizations. Expanding these efforts and more fully integrating the RSC with EOU’s new Center for Rural Studies, the Career Center, the Eastern Oregon Advantage and local organizations will help attract and retain students as they connect with the region and enhance their professional experiences and marketability.

In September 2014, after learning of multiple projects where some efforts unintentionally overlapped on activities to benefit EOU, University Advancement formed the “Community Connectors” group to share information at a different level: with the executive directors of the Union County Economic Development Corporation, ArtsEast, the La Grande-Union County Chamber, La Grande Main Street, the City of La Grande and staff at EOU. The primary objective for the group is to facilitate communication across organizations on events, activities, projects, initiatives, programs and ideas. At the first meeting, each organization shared top priorities and in each case there was a direct connection to EOU, ranging from workforce training to public art, downtown streetscapes, community experts databases and the Student Saver program.

Upcoming discussions will expand on these key projects and review new ideas, including a Train Depot shopping concept, La Grande Market Place, Moda Health major event in La Grande, street projects connecting campus to downtown (6th and 8th Streets) and the Grand Staircase restoration.

Capital Campaign and Other Grant Funding Opportunities

The advent of a local governing board made up of individuals who are focused on EOU's success provides several benefits, alongside budget, planning and management oversight.

Trustees are advocates for the university in many ways: as community connectors for EOU, as legislative lobbyists in Salem, as public relations champions in the regional and statewide media, and as development supporters who may provide helpful contacts for new funding activities. In private higher education, many major building projects have been funded around the boardroom table as trustees look to one another for personal gifts, pledges, grants and solutions to update a facility or launch a new program. This is clearly part of the governing board expectations at other Oregon public universities and can be expected to be a part of EOU's trustee activities.

For the past 50 years, the EOU Foundation has raised funds in support of the institution's mission and goals. With the significant downturn in funding from the state, the role of private giving is more important than ever before. There has been previous discussion of the "two levers" of funding: tuition and state support. It is arguable that there is a third lever—that of other revenues available from private gifts, grants and contracts.

The Board of Trustees and the Foundation Board will need to have a solid working relationship that carefully traverses the roles and responsibilities of a state-appointed governing board and a volunteer fundraising board. We are truly fortunate that the EOU Alumni and Foundation Boards have proven to be a successful training platform for several of our EOU's new trustees already. We can continue to look to these volunteer associations as good places to engage new prospective governing trustees.

In 2009, the Foundation, working with University Advancement, launched a long-term private giving campaign to raise \$11.5 million for scholarships and programs. Despite staffing reductions over the past four years, the UA staff and Foundation trustees have managed to raise over \$6 million and is over halfway to their goal and has dramatically increased the full assets of the Foundation to over \$12 million. With the recent hire of a new development director and a return of a full-time major gifts officer, the next phase for the campaign is to review fundraising goals and efforts to date and update the project lists and priorities. Connecting with trustees, deans, colleges, faculty, coaches and students and staff will be critical in determining who to work with and how to proceed. A major gifts officer on loan part-time to admissions will return fulltime in January, and a faculty member is also working on much-needed fundraising projects specific to their college. With these assets in place consistently, EOU has new opportunities for direct staff support in line with university and foundation funding priorities and new resources may be added to the University Advancement funding portfolio.

With minor additional resourcing, there are also multiple granting opportunities available to EOU. Athletics has a host of much-needed improvements including new turf for the football field, updated field lighting, and repairs to the track and tennis courts. It's important to note that

these updates and the grants to be written should garner the support of the La Grande School District as high school utilizes the football field, track and tennis courts for high school athletics. With enhanced facilities, the community, city and county will reap the benefits of more sports competitions played at EOU. There are bids to be made for regional and state high school playoff games that could be hosted on campus. And as it brings in additional visitors to the area who spend money here in fuel, lodging, food and supplies, we can look to improved relations with the region and having hundreds of potential students visiting campus each year.

Pursuing grants for programmatic needs should include the Center of Rural Studies, Eastern Promise, Latino initiatives, scholarships, updates for facilities in theatre and the arts and equipment updates and maintenance. New relationships with granting organizations have begun and must be developed and enhanced to identify funding mechanisms for current and future needs.

Recently we submitted a \$300,000 grant request for the Center for Rural Studies to the Meyer Memorial Trust. In addition, we have entered into personal service contracts for contractors to write a TRIO federal U.S. Department of Education grant (\$1.3M over five years). This TRIO grant will focus on student services for at risk students. We have also recently contracted with another grant writer to draft funding requests for field turf for the football field, funding for a new track, funding to replace our tennis courts and to upgrade the lighting in the stadium. Other areas where grant proposals need to be developed include, CAMP grants to serve migrant families, other Latino student initiatives and scholarships and other forms of student support. Additionally we have been invited by an Oregon Community Foundation Trustee to submit a rural economic development grant and the city to apply for urban renewal funding associated with a proposed development in downtown La Grande.

In talking with Trustees from Meyer Trust, Oregon Community Foundation and others, rural economic development and outreach to under-served communities is a major emphasis right now. Numerous articles in the Oregonian newspaper have stressed how the economies in rural Oregon have not rebounded from the recession at the same rate as in other parts of the State. Thus, the time is right to submit grants for the Center for Rural Studies and other City-University partnerships that can stimulate the economy and put rural Oregonians back to work.

Economic Development

One of La Grande's economic development directors recently commented, "As EOU goes, so goes the community." Over the past twenty years as the region has suffered declines in the natural resource-based economy and state funding for higher education, EOU's relevance to local businesses, health care and education has grown.

The university is a stabilizing force within the local economy, bringing good-paying jobs to the area, attracting new visitors to town, creating economic multipliers with capital construction, employee spending and student spending as well. The school serves as an engine for development and growth throughout Eastern Oregon University is La Grande's most visible and interactive asset—we bring visibility to the community and a regular flow of students, families and friends into town to visit campus, watch athletic events, attend theatre performances, view

art shows and more. These visitors purchase goods and services in La Grande at gas stations, restaurants, hotels, grocery and retail stores.

Downtown La Grande is looking to not just work with EOU, but to partner with us to improve the attractiveness of Main Street to students. With just 1,500 students estimating they budget at least \$1,500 a year in personal spending, there is \$2.25 million at stake. Any community with the opportunity to attract over a thousand customers to their town would—and is—very interested in making that happen. EOU faculty and students have conducted thorough surveys to pinpoint the student interests in downtown: more restaurants, longer hours and a wider variety of shopping options are a few of the takeaways from the surveys.

Businesses are engaging with campus more by hosting new student events downtown, painting windows for Homecoming, sponsoring events on campus and keeping longer hours. A short list of additional activities include:

- Mountaineer Base Camp – creation of a community/regional resource center comprising EOU Outdoor program working in partnership with related local businesses, a coffee shop, brew pub and a local hangout for folks interested in exploring and sharing stories about the outdoor amenities in and around La Grande. A means to brand La Grande as the gateway to outdoor recreation opportunities, a reason for people traveling through the area to stop and check out downtown La Grande and a way to draw EOU faculty staff and students and their families downtown. A trendy hangout, where people exchange stories of their outdoor adventures, meet up and get directions or gear for their next adventures and a place to learn techniques to improve their safety or the quality of their experiences. Also a venue for students and local folks to get a cup of coffee with friends, have dinner or drinks, listen to music or meet new people with similar interests.
- A renewed Student Saver program, where merchants offer discounts for EOU students (and employees) is being implemented with ASEOU and La Grande Main Street.
- The La Grande-Union County Chamber is working with the Ambassadors program so that both groups can learn more about and advocate for each other. Students are helping host community events and the Chamber is helping EOU to recruit students and families.
- The La Grande Market Place is an innovative and unique community development project to restore the building spaces on the corner of Fourth Street and Washington Avenue. At street level, there will be stores, a coffee shop and access to Nature’s Pantry, while at the basement level, the entire area has been opened up to provide space for dozens of businesses, restaurants and an art gallery.
- The Liberty Theatre Foundation is working to restore their historic building located on Adams Avenue, next to City Hall. The executive director is an EOU alum, and theatre faculty and retired administrators are involved with the project.
- The City of La Grande is working on streetscape projects to improve areas around downtown.
- The Chamber has a team—including EOU representatives—working on an application as one of “America’s Best Communities” that provides funding for each progressive step towards being named the top community.
- Restore Oregon has named EOU’s Grand Staircase as one of their top projects.

Aside from the local community development efforts, workforce development is at a premium in the region as industry and manufacturing responds to a rebounding economy. Technical skills are at the top of most “wish lists” for employers and was identified as missing key element by a national site location expert who visited the area and reviewed La Grande and Union County’s planning and assets needed to attract new businesses. EOU has led the development of a proposal with the City of La Grande, Union County Economic Development Corporation and partner programs such as Applied Career Touchstones to submit a proposal for a Career Technical Center through the Governor’s Regional Solutions program. That concept paper has been ranked as the leading project for northeast Oregon and is expected to be included in the Governor’s budget at \$1.3 million.

EOU also plays a key role in the regional economy. Leaders throughout the 10 eastern-most counties of the state look to EOU as a resource for educational partnerships and training. In Grant County, forest supervisors need staff training and professional development in communications; in Malheur County there are opportunities to train Spanish-speaking teachers for southeast Oregon and the rest of the state; throughout eastern Oregon there is a shortage of social workers and health care workers; Union and Wallowa counties need natural resource professionals; and livestock producers need professionally-trained staff to manage multi-million production facilities. Agriculture is booming and EOU can be at the forefront of these efforts to build the economy, grow our communities and in turn, grow EOU’s enrollments.

“Connecting the dots” between local and regional economic development and EOU’s assets in students, faculty expertise and leadership (and even just as a central location with historical ties to the region) is worthy of pursuit and engagement. The Center for Rural Studies and other programs can be leveraged as can direct interaction with the university President, vice presidents and others to help attract businesses to the area. There are many more opportunities for EOU to engage.

Legislative Plan

For the 2015 legislative session and beyond, EOU’s presence in the state capital building and work with the legislature takes on a new level of importance. Increased institutional independence and the dissolution of the Oregon University System places a premium on political advocacy to keep higher education and regional issues actively in front of Oregon policy-makers.

Until last year, the Oregon University System and the State Board of Higher Education led and coordinated state legislative efforts on behalf of the seven public institutions. The campuses provided advice and input on priority setting and, for the most part, worked cooperatively, advancing overall OUS goals while advocating for individual projects and programs. Each year these groups managed hundreds of different legislative issues ranging from capital construction to budget and tuition to intercollegiate athletics and statewide public services.

While this formal coordination no longer exists, all seven universities have continued to work together and coordinate the overall public higher education agenda for Oregon. The Legislative Advisory Council (LAC) has worked with the Provost’s Council and the President’s Council to facilitate communication on issues such as budget, shared services and policy packages being

presented to the legislature. Bill tracking and centralized efforts are being managed through an outside contractor. EOU's VP Advancement serves as the university's lobbyist and liaison with this group that meets weekly and interfaces with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Oregon Education Investment Board, the Governor's Office and multiple other state agencies and groups such as the Community Colleges Association and Oregon Student Association.

A smaller working group, the Technical and Regional Universities (TRU) LAC, made up of EOU, Southern Oregon University and Oregon Tech has contracted with a lobbying firm and is currently working on legislative agendas, governing board nominations and process, budget reallocations, policy on topics such as sexual assault and pay it forward and possible legislation specific to these three schools' needs in coordination with the TRU Presidents. This firm will also serve as our "eyes and ears" in Salem, tracking bills and attending committee hearings when staff from the TRUs cannot. When policy moves forward, we will work together on a coordinated response and determine what tactics to utilize and which campus may serve as "lead" on the issue. Coming from different parts of the state with key legislators from both parties in leadership roles, the TRUs can share access and established working relationships to advocate for each of our institutions. Meetings with the EOU President and legislators are already taking place during the interim between sessions and many more trips to the capital building are planned to educate advance EOU's agenda, educate new legislators and share information about eastern Oregon and the university itself.

The President and the new governing board are expected to participate actively in legislative actions, especially given the conditions placed on EOU. Trustees will receive training on their role in the legislative process and how a public university interfaces with the state as well as receive background on the history and previous actions in Oregon politics affecting EOU and higher education. The President and Board can expect to review EOU's legislative agenda and strategy and will be receiving regular updates and reports and even providing testimony on specific issues and meeting with legislators to advocate for EOU. This planning also anticipates advocacy efforts whereby alumni and foundation members, community and regional leaders and students, faculty and staff will all participate in the legislative process, including email and phone campaigns, travel to Salem and meetings with legislators while they are in district. Efforts are already underway for a "TRU Day" and an "EOU Day" at the capital to further increase awareness.

EOU's 2015-17 Legislative agenda should include the following initiatives:

- Working to receive funding increases to offset the additional costs of shared services (the dissolution of the Chancellor's Office) and the costs absorbed to support an institutional governing board;
- Advocating for a capital funding projects to support the Eastern Learning Commons, demolition of Hunt Hall and/or repurposing a \$2 million Article XI-Q bonds for IT infrastructure, a child care center or Grand Staircase repair;
- Funding for an increase in overall higher education funding of all public universities;
- Laying groundwork for a new major state investment in eastern Oregon to leverage economic development and sustain rural communities;

- Revising statutes relating to the old Regional Services Institute to better reflect the current concept for the Center for Rural Studies; and
- Carefully monitoring the planned implementation of new outcomes-based budgeting policies and processes being developed by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission; and
- Increasing EOU's awareness and visibility in terms of stability and progress through regular and active engagement and events such as a "TRU Day" or "EOU Day" at the capital.

Preparing for a Local Board

The Eastern Oregon University Governing Board, known as the Board of Trustees (Board), was established in accordance with Senate Bill 270 passed by the Oregon legislature and signed into law by Governor John Kitzhaber in 2013. Effective July 1, 2015, the EOU Board will take responsibility of and manage the affairs of the university by exercising and carrying out all of the powers, rights and duties that are expressly conferred upon the board by law, or that are implied by law or are incident to such powers, rights and duties.

The board is made up of 15 members: 11 members of the public, the University president, and the remaining three members representing the faculty, students and staff. EOU leadership sought Trustees who are connected to the University, the region and students we serve. Names were gathered by recommendation and reviewed and evaluated. Once a "short list" was developed, the EOU President and Vice President for Advancement met with potential candidates and reviewed board duties and EOU mission and background and requested permission to submit their name for consideration by the Governor. In doing so, we strive to have a Board comprised of individuals who characterize key constituent groups in the region, come from various locations and represent our varied cultures and gender balance. The current board is comprised of alumni, community and political leaders, business executives, educators, ranchers, cultural directors and employees, who are committed to the values and promise of higher education in eastern Oregon. The Oregon Senate confirmed the first group of Trustees in September 2014 and the second and final group will be confirmed in early December 2014.

Following EOU executive staff trainings with the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) in the fall of 2014 and the confirmation of the full Board of Trustees, we are planning for full Board training with AGB representatives and EOU staff in February 2015. A comprehensive agenda includes connecting the board together and to the institution, preparation for the role of a governing board, a review of bylaws, policies and procedures, the election of chairs, an overview of the university and its affairs in each major division: executive, academic, finance, student services and advancement. A second Board meeting is planned to coincide with the final meeting of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education (OSBHE) at EOU in June 2015.

At the same time, EOU expects to be joined by a new president who will be working closely with this Board and also learning about EOU at the same time. The connection between a new chief executive and a new governing board will start with the search process, as there are four Trustees on the presidential selection committee. Engagement and connectivity will be important

for this new leadership model, both on and off-campus. Meetings with the local community and also at EOU's regional Centers, at Alumni and Foundation events, at athletic games and statewide activities and functions will play an integral role in the vocal, visible and active support of the university.

The Board will meet four times per year and will have formal Board committees for finance and academic and student services. The position of Board Secretary/Legal Counsel is expected to be hired and to join EOU in January 2015 to support the Board and provide legal guidance for the university and the Board.

With the introduction of a new governing body focused solely on EOU, we can expect a dramatic increase in attention and focus placed on the various segments of the university. Board members are expected to ask for new and different information than previously provided to the OSBHE and with a set of conditions already in place, the efforts of the board are anticipated to have a strong focus on financial sustainability, enhanced information analysis from institutional research, management reports from Finance and Administration and an internal audit process including a fraud hotline and additional time and resources from the business manager, and budget officer. Enrollment—both recruitment and retention plays a critical role in the success and growth of EOU will also be a primary topic for the Board, along with engagement at the state level in the legislative process.

Within the institution, there will be the need for streamlined shared governance. In a larger and more complex organization, multiple groups made up of faculty, staff and students may be necessary to connect the various internal constituencies of the university and ensure there are multiple points of access to the statewide board with oversight and the central system office. In a model with a local governing board, this need is mitigated by the fact that the intricacies of the larger OUS and OSBHE operations has been removed completely and decentralized to Oregon's public universities.

The role of external constituencies, such as the Alumni Association, the EOU Foundation and regional advisory boards become clarified and more synergistic when there is a clear delineation between the roles and responsibilities of each group. Many university alumni and foundation boards have become de facto advisory boards, working to fill a gap in continuity between a more removed governing board and the activities taking place on the campus. The Foundation Board may now focus on fundraising and developing new resources for the university to further its success and the Alumni Association at building connections with former students. At the same time, the Alumni Association and EOU Foundation Boards are valuable assets that have already provided the current governing board with several members who are fully vested and engaged with EOU. Future individuals seeking to serve on the governing board may gain valuable experience and insights by volunteering to work with the Alumni Association and the EOU Foundation Board or serve on an advisory board at one of EOU's regional Centers. Working together, these boards, associations and organizations help to inform the Governing Board and its role in managing the affairs of the university.

Overall, a considerable shift in structure and management is taking place at EOU with the advent of a governing board. This Board may view past practices in a different light and may see and interpret a different future for the university. At the same time, the consistency of a Governing Board with multi-year terms enables the institution to have a set of guidance parameters that may not significantly change with each new CEO, thereby establishing a baseline of oversight for long-term planning. Regardless, the new Board of Trustees will usher in a new era for Eastern Oregon University.