

**DRAFT Summary Points**  
**Western Oregon University Institutional Evaluation**  
**December, 2017**

*ORS 352.061 requires the HECC to conduct annual evaluations of public universities in Oregon according to specific statutory criteria. Overall, the HECC's approach is to assess the university's contributions to statewide goals for higher education. We do not purport to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the university against its own mission. A summary of key findings follows:*

1. **Accreditation:** WOU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), and is fully on track with the 7-year NWCCU cycle for accreditation. During its last review in 2016 for its Year Seven evaluation, NWCCU recommended that WOU focus on defining its mission fulfillment and accomplishment; and establish objectives and outcomes of each core theme and learning outcomes for all courses, programs and degrees. WOU has addressed these issues and has submitted the Year One report for the next accreditation cycle.
2. **Economic impact:** In addition to being the second largest preparer of teachers in Oregon, the economic impact of construction projects at WOU over the past decade has been more than \$100 million.
3. **Student access and student success:** Fall 2017 saw a decrease of 1.8% in total enrollment, an increase of 3.4% in non-resident students, and a decrease of 3.6% in resident students. Over a ten-year period, total enrollment has decreased by 1.2%, and is down 15% since its 2011 post-recession peak. However, the number of underrepresented minority students enrolled at WOU continues to grow and now represents 22.7% of the university's total population— the largest percentage at any Oregon public university. WOU awarded 1.9% more degrees in 2016-17 than the prior year. The six-year graduation rate is 47.5% for Pell Grant recipients, 45.0% for underrepresented minority students, and 46.8% for all students. The number of degrees awarded to underrepresented minority students has been steadily increasing year-over-year since 2013.
4. **Affordability:** For 2017-18, WOU's entering Promise cohort saw its tuition increase by 6.6% over the prior year's entering cohort while resident students electing not to participate in the promise program saw their tuition increase by 6.4%. On a weighted basis, which accounts for the fact that continuing WOU promise cohorts do not see a tuition increase, WOU estimates the weighted average tuition increase for resident undergraduates was 4.9%. WOU's estimated total cost of attendance increased by 0.7% to \$23,730.<sup>1</sup> For WOU students who leave the university with federal government-backed debt, their average federal government-backed debt load is \$24,502.
5. **Academic Quality and Research:** In addition to maintaining in good standing with its regional accreditor, WOU is commended for its commitment for the access and success of first generation and low income students. For 2016-17, WOU reports total research expenditures of \$10.5 million.
6. **Collaboration:** WOU contributes to a host of collaborative activities with other post-secondary institutions, including a decade long dual enrollment partnership with Chemeketa Community College and is the first public university in Oregon initiating and leading the WICHE Passport Initiative. In fall 2017 about 46.2% of WOU's newly admitted undergraduates were transfer students, many of them from an Oregon community college.
7. **Shared administrative services:** WOU participates in all of the services offered by the University Shared Services Enterprise (USSE).

---

<sup>1</sup> WOU uses a weighted tuition calculation for the tuition portion of the total cost of attendance calculation.

8. **Financial metrics:**

<b>WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY RATIOS WITH GASB 68</b>				
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
Viability Ratio	50.00%	48.00%	42.00%	>125%
Primary Reserve Ratio	35.00%	25.00%	21.00%	>40%
Net Operating Revenues Ratio	3.21%	-7.52%	-6.40%	>4%
Return on Net Assets Ratio	31.83%	86.54%	-2.49%	>6%
Debt Burden Ratio	4.86%	4.71%	3.87%	<5%

<b>WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY RATIOS WITHOUT GASB 68</b>				
<b>Ratio</b>	<b>FY 15</b>	<b>FY 16</b>	<b>FY 17</b>	<b>Benchmark</b>
Viability Ratio	58.00%	69.00%	75.00%	>125%
Primary Reserve Ratio	38.00%	40.00%	40.00%	>40%
Net Operating Revenues Ratio	-3.02%	2.17%	-1.00%	>4%
Return on Net Assets Ratio	12.47%	103.31%	3.21%	>6%
Debt Burden Ratio	4.56%	5.18%	4.08%	<5%

Displayed benchmarks for public universities from NACUBO publications.

9. **Board of Trustees:** In 2017, the WOU Board of Trustees appears to have met its legal responsibilities for providing public notice, accessibility, and records. In 2017, the Board exercised many of the powers reserved for it under law, including presidential oversight, budget adoption, tuition adoption, debt issuance, and program approval (for HECC consideration).