

Financial Sustainability Plan

For

Eastern Oregon University

“From Retrenchment to Reinvestment”

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With input from  
The  
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Since last fall, when the beginning of the “budgetary discussions” began and current and future enrollment projections were announced, a significant portion of these discussions, of course, were financial in nature. But these were not the only discussions—nor should they have been. An important part of these discussions were rooted in not only “where we are now” but “where do we want to be” in the future. And those discussions not only included Eastern Oregon University’s role in these endeavors, but that of our region; the students we serve, the future models of higher education within our state as well as the role of student inquiry through the balance of the liberal and professional education. These are difficult discussions as higher education, in Oregon and nationally, are very much at a watershed moment as we exit, albeit slower than other areas of the state and country, the shadow of the “Great Recession” and enter the economic recovery and what that holds for “small and medium sized regional universities” is very much unknown and not predictable. In short, much of our discussion is about rediscovering EOU in the context of the current political, social and economic environments in order to discover what EOU must be, or become, to remain not only financially viable, but educationally sound.

The current mission of EOU reads:

EOU guides student inquiry through integrated, high-quality liberal arts and professional programs that lead to responsible and reflective action in a diverse and interconnected world. As an educational, cultural and scholarly center, EOU connects the rural regions of Oregon to a wider world. Our beautiful setting and small size enhance the personal attention our students receive, while partnerships with colleges, universities, agencies and communities add to the educational possibilities of our region and state.

This mission, which was revised through a process that began in 2004 by adding and creating a liberal arts dimension to EOU’s long standing role as a public regional University focused on professional programs and was officially adopted in 2007 by the State Board of Higher Education, has guided many of the decisions and actions we as a University have taken over the past decade.

During this time, with great ambition and honorable goals we have added academic programs and faculty to fortify this mission; we have worked diligently on adding student support services to serve our student population and continue to meet our regional mission of service. During this time, we saw our student enrollment numbers, at first decline (as did the other technical and regionals) and then expand rapidly at the onset of the Great Recession. Our declines, it must be noted, were mitigated by the growth of our online programs and our growth too was fueled by this same growth.

After a decade of serving this mission, and dealing with fiscal strains even with enrollment growth, we must ask ourselves how best do we serve our students and our region. We must ask ourselves what are the unique qualities that add value to our University that we impart to our students and to the region. And, moreover, how do we serve this mission of balancing liberal and professional programs, commitment to our students, service to our region and state, within the bounds and envelope of resources—financial, expertise and human capital. We must acknowledge that we have built an infrastructure, academically and organizationally, for a University supporting nearly 4,200 students. However, with recent and projected future enrollment reductions, we will likely be a University closer to 3,500 students and we must now restructure our curriculum and our organizational structures to reflect this reduced size.

These are the questions that we have continually asked ourselves since the first sustainability plan released in 2011. And, these are indeed the questions that the authors of the Draft

Recommendations asked and sought the input and advice from many in developing and crafting the recommendations.

Since the release of the Draft Plan, we have received numerous ideas and feedback. We have been told where we were right and, of course, where we were wrong. Many of the responses presented new ideas and thoughts. Many of the responses were from individual faculty, staff, students, alumni and area community members. We also received insightful responses from academic departments, from the Faculty Senate, Budget & Planning and the Associated Academic Professional (AAP) and we have included these in an appendix. We are very appreciative of all of the responses and suggestions we have received. We have considered each of these suggestions as we prepared the final recommendations contained in this report

While each of these suggestions discusses the current fiscal situation, each in their own way also discusses the need and desire to examine and reestablish the guiding mission of Eastern and how the University community sees itself in achieving that mission.

Also, as specifically mentioned by the AAP letter and the Budget & Planning response, the University must develop a set of reinvestment strategies and projects. This too came through many of the forums, discussions and input that we have received. As a result, we have provided our collective thoughts for areas the University should be thinking about in terms of reinvestment in the very near future. These areas of investment are intended to be a set of recommendations that should be considered—we firmly believe that as funds are made available, the University should develop a process, utilizing Budget & Planning and other organizations, to make a recommendation for new investments to the president and cabinet for consideration and action.

While many objective data elements were used to craft the draft plan, as well as the final plan, a great deal of care too was taken in relationship to our current mission and the important niche that Eastern Oregon University fulfills in our region. The very difficult part of this is in dealing with the constraints of our current fiscal resources. Each reduction decision was a difficult decision as each area clearly has strengths and opportunities to serve. However, it is impossible to continue to provide scarce resources to such a wide array of programs and activities even though it is clear that each area has a cadre of students and supporters. Unfortunately, if we were to continue with this approach, the overall quality of the University would decline.

In the end, we must focus on what we can and do best in an attempt to meet the highest priority needs of our students and our region.

Over the course of the next year, as the plan is implemented and we prepare to transition to a local governing board, we do believe the time is right to have the necessary debate of what is the on-going mission of Eastern Oregon University in light of the significant changes that have occurred since the University has last taken up this discussion in 2004. Thus, we will continue this mission discussion during fall convocation as we prepare for the new year.

And, just as occurred over the past five years, now is the time to determine the appropriate organizational structures for many of the functional administrative areas.

The following “Sustainability Plan” is not the beginning of the end for EOU; rather it is a new beginning and call to action for EOU. Like every going concern, it is a plan to better align the ongoing expenditures of the institution with its recurring revenues. This plan is predicated on a comprehensive view of education that requires that all faculty and staff do their part to recruit, retain and ensure that all students are successful. This plan also contemplates some new

investments intended to strengthen the institution and its impact on EOU's students, constituents and partners.

Through this process, EOU will emerge with a better, more strategic focus that will be aligned with the needs of its various stakeholders, be they current students, alumni, community or business leaders. Its budget will be balanced. Its brand will be strengthened. The primary beneficiaries of this effort will be its students but there will also be ancillary benefits to the citizens, businesses and local communities in the region. Please do our part to assist Eastern Oregon University as we re-tool and re-build for a better, more sustainable future for all of Eastern Oregon.

## ***I. Introduction***

This is the third update to the Sustainability Plan for Eastern Oregon University. Over the last five years, our University Community has gone through considerable change and reflection as we, as a community, have dealt with what was initially referred to in the 2010 State of the University Address as the “Confluence of the Three Rivers of Change.” These changes include: significantly declining state and federal revenues; increased calls of accountability at all levels; and, changes in the competition of universities through advances in technology and other means. This year, we can add a fourth river that represents the shifting demographics served by regional universities and especially by Eastern as well the role of governance structures within our state. All of these factors have, and will continue, to exert immense pressures—fiscally and operationally—on our University.

This past year, while we charted a viable and valid fiscal plan for our University, we experienced—and continue to experience—an unprecedented decline in student enrollment. This year, as previously reported in memorandums to the University, we are seeing a decline of nearly 11 percent in student credit hours. [To view these communications, go to: November 14, 2013 at [http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/12/Sustainability-Plan-memo\\_11-14-131.pdf](http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/12/Sustainability-Plan-memo_11-14-131.pdf); February 21 at [http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2014/03/Enrollment-update\\_2-21-14.pdf](http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2014/03/Enrollment-update_2-21-14.pdf); and March 21 at [http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2014/04/Enrollment-update\\_3-21-14.pdf](http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2014/04/Enrollment-update_3-21-14.pdf)] And while we would hope to say that this is a one-year phenomenon, we do believe that it is prudent to expect that this trend will continue for at least one more year. This projection is based on 1) the number of applications to EOU for next fall; 2) the number of deposits made by potential new students; 3) the projected freshman retention rates; 4) the size of our 2014 graduating class; 5) the trends of returning students over the past two years; and 6) the ending spring term enrollment counts. All of these factors lead to an initial projection of at least an additional 10 percent decrease in student credit hours for the forthcoming academic year. This means that we will be retreating to our historical enrollment from 2007-08 prior to the student enrollment boom that coincided with the recession in 2009. With that said, we are projecting a leveling off of enrollment after next academic year (not a significant increase in students, but not declining either.) This projection is based on the fact that our large freshmen and transfer classes that we had from 2009-2012 will have worked their way through to graduation. As a result, while we won't have historic high numbers of graduates—as we have had the last three years—and our freshmen and transfer classes have been more in similar sizes, we will not be dealing with the significant swings in our student populations. As such, we must reset our University staffing and faculty to match these lower levels of enrollment.

In short and to the point, we are projecting to lose up to 600 students. We will no longer be a University of over 4,100; rather one more likely closer to 3,500.

As we are a tuition-dependent University, these sharp decreases—especially over a two year time period—have a dramatic impact on our fiscal conditions. As has been stated in previous updates to the University in the fall and winter terms regarding enrollment, we will need to make significant reductions in our costs structures to account for these declines in revenues. Additionally, a significant proportion of our costs, as a percentage of revenues, are personnel expenditures. Therefore, in order to address our fiscal issues and constraints, we must focus many of our reductions in our staffing levels as well as developing strategies on how we utilize the time of our faculty and staff.

We anticipate that we will end the current fiscal year with a negative Education and General (E&G) fund balance of 1.6% of operating revenues. This does not mean we are insolvent as we do have a positive cash balance; however, it does mean we have a long way to go to reach a level of fiscal stability currently defined by the OUS Board as +5% to +15% E&G fund balance. As we have discussed as well, it is more prudent to look at multiple measures of fiscal condition with a primary one being the difference between total revenues and total expenditures—or net revenues. As we have modeled this plan, it is of primary importance to have positive net revenues at a level that will: A) return EOU to a positive fund balance approaching 5 percent within 3 years; B) provide a financial cushion that will absorb changes in revenues streams or unexpected costs increases; and C) provide funds that can be used for strategic reinvestments in programs that will add value to EOU.

Given our current and projected student enrollments, including investments from the state and our current expenditure rates, we have concluded that over the next two years, we must develop a recurring cost reduction plan of nearly \$4 million or roughly 13% of our E&G expenditures. At this level of reductions, we will have a financial foundation that will achieve these three objectives.

There are several assumptions in this plan that are based on conservative revenue projections. For example, this plan uses conservative estimates for state funding and, as mentioned above, a reduced student enrollment. Both of these assumptions limit the revenues of our University. While we are hopeful, and somewhat confident, that increased state funding will occur—both on a per student basis as well as in total—it would not be responsible to build these increases into the plan as this is an unknown variable over which we have little to no control. Similarly, we have utilized a very conservative approach to forecasting our enrollments and associated tuition revenues in the plan.

This plan addresses the next three years, with reductions occurring in the first and second year, (2014-15 and 2015-16), so as to position the University to plan for investment in mission critical areas by the third year, for implementation in the fourth, or 2017-18. The following chart indicates assumptions, forecasts and ending fund balance for each of those years.

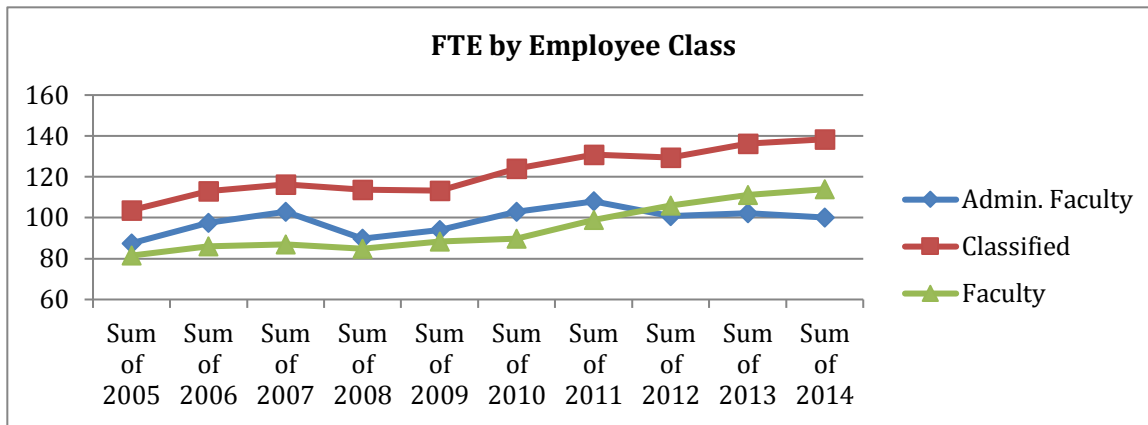
|  | 2013-2014     | 2014-2015    | 2015-2016    | 2016-2017    |
|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Projected Enrollment Increase/Decrease | -10.40%       | -11.10%      | 0.50%        | 0.50%        |
| Projected Revenues                     | \$33,756,000  | \$33,361,000 | \$33,389,000 | \$35,174,000 |
| Projected Expenditures                 | \$34,817,000  | \$34,104,000 | \$32,450,000 | \$33,216,000 |
| Change in Fund Balance                 | \$(1,061,000) | \$(743,000)  | \$939,000    | \$1,958,000  |
| Ending Fund Balance                    | -1.60%        | -3.80%       | -1.00%       | 4.60%        |

As we developed these recommendations, we focused our efforts to have the greatest fiscal impact while minimizing, as much as possible, the negative effects of reductions. Building on the progress made with EOU's 2011 Sustainability Plan and the 2013 Plan Update (NOTE: these plans and associated/subsequent documents may be found at the bottom of the President's Budget and Planning webpage, <http://www.eou.edu/president/budget/>), the five primary strategies aimed in EOU's 2014 sustainability update, focus on the following:

1. Reset of instructional workload release;
2. Elimination of most concentrations within degree programs;
3. Reductions and eliminations of academic programs;
4. Further reduction of administrative positions;
5. Restructuring of college administrative operations;

Each of these strategies and the corresponding recommendations are discussed in this, the update to our Sustainability Plan.

Over the past decade, we have grown as a University community in all employment classes—classified, administrative faculty and faculty. Particularly, over the past five years, the largest growth has been in faculty. See below for a chart and table showing the changes in FTE by employee classification.



## FTE by Employee Class

Source: EOU Payroll, May 29, 2014

| Year           | 2005  | 2006   | 2007   | 2008   | 2009  | 2010   | 2011   | 2012   | 2013   | 2014   |
|----------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Classified     | 103.7 | 113.12 | 116.37 | 113.77 | 113.2 | 123.95 | 130.88 | 129.46 | 136.15 | 138.36 |
| Faculty        | 81.48 | 86.06  | 86.86  | 84.81  | 88.34 | 89.77  | 98.82  | 105.92 | 111.13 | 113.96 |
| Admin. Faculty | 87.51 | 97.61  | 103.01 | 89.69  | 93.91 | 103.02 | 107.97 | 100.7  | 102.15 | 100.13 |

Report prepared using March payroll of each year

Admin Faculty includes Executive Staff

Faculty FTE does not include adjunct FTE or Overload

Report does not include Head Start employees.

The initial Sustainability Plan was drafted in 2011 and occurred during a time of immense growth in student enrollments—on and off campus. As occurred in the past, i.e., BART and BART II, when we have had to reduce costs in the past, we have first looked at non-instructional activities and staffing levels and reduced there first. Therefore, in the initial Sustainability Plan and its update we attempted to protect our academic core as best as possible and many of the reductions were seen in administrative areas. As a result, because many duties still must be accomplished, we have combined many functions and placed responsibilities and duties in a few offices. For your review, it maybe helpful to review EOU’s current organizational chart located on the web at <http://www.eou.edu/hr/files/2014/02/Org-Chart-2014.pdf>. Since 2011, we have increased the faculty full time equivalent (FTE) by 13 percent (up 15.42 FTE from 98.82 in 2011 to 113.96), increased the FTE of classified staff to serve students and campus needs by 5 percent (up 7.48 FTE from 130.88 FTE to 138.36 FTE) while decreasing the FTE of administrative faculty by 8 percent (declining 7.84 FTE from 107.97 FTE to 100.13 FTE).

As a result of this effort, and the significant decline in students, we are at a tipping point. While we are recommending reductions in non-instructional areas, there are, in fact, not a lot of administrative reductions to be made. We already have many individuals performing multiple duties and have a very thin bench—to the point that continuation of operations and adequate internal controls are becoming a concern to our internal auditors and other external agencies.

As a consequence of past efforts to protect our academic core, we have reduced our administrative capacity to minimal levels and further reductions will critically inhibit the University’s ability to fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities let alone serve students outside of the classroom. Therefore, many of the recommended reductions deal with our academic capacity and adjusting our academic resources appropriate for the size of our University. This includes not only the numbers and types of faculty members, but also the program offerings.

In addition to these reductions, with the impending departure of several administrative faculty members, we are analyzing how best to reorganize these positions to more effectively reach our desired results. An example of this is the resignation of the Director of Information Technology and consolidating this unit with Information Services and using the salary savings to expand and hire much-needed programmers and others who provide direct service to end users—our faculty, staff and students. Other directors are also ingrained in their own restructuring to provide additional savings and creating efficiencies. We will continue to assess our administrative organizational structures and are initiating and conducting the appropriate dialogs to further refine and focus these efforts, which may lead to additional savings and efficiencies throughout the year.

In determining the reductions or eliminations of program offerings, great energy was expended to analyze past, current and future enrollments, graduation rates, support for other programs and connection and service to the community as well as a direct tie to our three core themes and mission.

None of the recommendations made within this document were easy and the implementation of these recommendations will likewise not be easy. However, as stated by the Budget & Planning Committee, and in multiple forums across campus, we have built into this plan reductions that go beyond what may be necessary to simply balance the budget. This will ensure that our plan is conservative in the event that projected savings are not actualized or revenues fall below the levels now being conservatively estimated.

Our goal, in the development of this plan, is to provide a clear pathway forward for the University to focus on a distinct set of core programs and activities and to direct our limited resources to what is most desired by our students and the regions we serve. We have grown and expanded into many ventures, and in this time of consolidation, we must focus our energies on those efforts that will provide the greatest value and return to our students and other stakeholders.

As such, this plan should not be merely viewed as a reduction of expenditures; rather as a way to focus on our core values; to allow for a reshaping of our mission to meet the changing environment; and to prepare the foundation for future investments to achieve new goals and objectives.

## ***II. Goals and Guidelines for the 2014 Sustainability Plan Update***

As noted in President Davies' Fall 2013 progress report on our Sustainability Plan Update of last June <http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/06/Sustainability-Plan-Update-2013-Final.pdf>, the three key goals of our instructional and program management were articulated as follows:

1. Programs structured to support student entrance, retention and completion, regardless of location.
2. Programs structured to reflect sustainable faculty staffing levels, both regular and fixed term, relative to benchmarked faculty FTE data from comparable programs.
3. Programs structured to reflect sustainable faculty workload assignment, avoiding reliance on regular and fixed term overload.



As we discussed in that plan update, the key broad strategy areas for our instructional programs focused on 1) Management of low-enrolled courses; 2) Management of instructional load and overload, and 3) Management of instructional release time and service load. We have come to understand that while all three of these broad areas possess distinct dimensions, these dimensions interact constantly in very profound ways; ways which mark the underlying financial health and long-term sustainability of our academic enterprise, and thus of our institution.

To date, our efforts to focus on better managing the first two of these three areas—management of low-enrolled courses and management of instructional load and overload—have kept us solidly on track with the planning accomplished last spring in our Sustainability Plan Update of 2013. Over the course of this year, we have implemented a common practice of cancelling low enrolled (defined as under 11 students) that are in-loaded classes unless they are required for graduation or these courses could be run as over-load or taught by an adjunct. Given the combination of all of our efforts to manage load, the revised pay scales for adjuncts, overload and course management of balancing over-load and inload, we have seen very positive early results that demonstrate we are tracking on the projections set forth in the 2011 Sustainability Plan and the 2013 Update.

Relative to the program-specific recommendations, with respect to both the specific recommendations and to the broader curricular recommendations, we have seen an enormous amount of committed effort devoted to facilitating the necessary discussions by program faculty across all three colleges. However, these collective efforts have been accomplished in the face of continuing fiscal challenges connected to our declining enrollments, both on- and off-campus. In light of our current enrollment trends which are outlined above, perhaps the greatest gains we can yet realize relative to the goals we developed for our Sustainability Plan Update center on our handling of faculty workload release and on the three follow-on operational areas noted at the end of the Broad Instructional Review and Recommendations in our 2013 Update.

As has been previously articulated, over time these practices would further streamline and bring greater efficiencies to our academic enterprise. These operational areas and accompanying practices are bounded by the general principles discussed in the Spring 2013 Update, updated and added to, as follows:

**1. Program completion streamlining & access for students at-a-distance.**

- a. Eliminate hidden prerequisites for all program areas; clearly list prerequisites for program requirements on program checksheets.
- b. Avoid bi-annual/annual/term scheduling conflicts for program requirements both within programs and across closely connected programs.
- c. Maintain close control of the total number of required major and minor credits. Generally speaking, for students graduating with 180 credits, a major should require generally 65-70 credits. (The ability to partake of general electives, particularly at the mid- and upper-divisions lies at the very core of liberal arts institutions.)
- d. Take care that alternate year courses—especially program requirements and even more especially program requirements that are sequenced—maintain student access reflected by the prevailing need in those course areas.
- e. Drop DFL (Deficient Foreign Language) Requirement for transfer students.

**2. Resource-based approach to curricular management and scheduling.**

- a. “Add one/drop one” approach to curricular development.

- b. Minors should be subsets of majors, wholly contained, not separate curricula with differing requirements.
- c. Eliminate all concentrations within most program areas. Concentrations include emphases, groupings, tracks, or any other disciplinary specialization that segments and diffuses student enrollment in lower- and upper-division coursework.
- d. The responsibility for managing curricular offerings resides with the dean and all courses offered in a degree area in a given term should be part of that degree's major/minor.
- e. Adhere to schedule blocks & utilize ENTIRE instructional day, not just "prime-time" in the middle of the day. Early morning, late afternoon, and weekend hours are all currently underutilized in terms of course scheduling and courses available to students.
- f. Scheduled class meeting times align with the number of credits carried by the course.

### **3. Program marketing and communications planning.**

- a. Develop both University-level and program-level communications strategies focused on University and program strengths, aka undergraduate and graduate success.
- b. Highlight the successes of our students and tie those successes to their program-specific experiences.
- c. Develop more specific resources at the college and University levels for faculty support with program area web development and maintenance.
- d. Further extend efforts and dialogue aimed at more robustly and more frequently connecting prospective students with program area faculty.
- e. Develop a stronger EOU presence in regional communities.
- f. Develop a stronger strategy-marketing plan for connecting with potential students.
- g. Work with colleges and programs to develop stronger marketing materials, including multiple channels for communicating information about programs.

In concert with continuing and further efforts in these areas, however, our current and projected enrollments suggest the wisdom of not only pressing as far with these efforts as possible – we also need to prepare for further reducing and streamlining our program-level curricula as we seek to better match our program mix with our enrollment levels and student needs.

### **4. Institutional Financial Planning.**

Particular attention will be focused on EOU's ability to maintain financial stability within the outlined mission and program framework, and absent extra-ordinary and discretionary revenue (e.g., state appropriations) and expense items. While not serving as a single decision point, a trend analysis of the following metrics will substantially inform the HECC reporting of conditions:

- a. Primary Reserve Ratio, target: 5%-7% minimum;
- b. Debt Burden Ratio: target <7%;
- c. Contribution Ratio Analysis;
- d. Current Ratio: target at least 2:1; and
- e. Enrollment Analysis.

### **5. Determination of Sustainable Scheduling of Disciplinary Curricula**

Disciplines will maintain the number of credits required for graduation, but will no longer offer elective courses beyond the required total for degree completion.

- a. Each program will identify the set list of courses from their check-sheet to be scheduled during the following year and any interim period required by sustainability efforts.
- b. Service course offerings, defined as courses needed for institutional requirement at EOU (Gen. Ed., DPD, UWR), will be balanced by program needs, and meet both on-campus and online needs.
- c. All courses offered will be part of the major, embedded minor, or the stand alone minor, as pre-requisite or required courses, or institutional service courses.

## **6. Course Offerings by Frequency and Demand for Multiple Sections**

Each course will be offered as needed based on program size and number of majors. This could mean that certain classes will be offered every term, others only once a year. It could also mean for smaller programs that selected courses will be offered once every other year.

- a. Based on enrollments trends and with particular attention to 2014-15 enrollments, those courses needing to be offered with greater than annual frequency will be identified and determined in the schedule based on enrollment outlook for on-campus and online offering.
- b. Multiple sections of course offerings will be opened as needed, with extra sections listed in the schedule as suppressed. Advising staff will be consulted on the optimal time schedules to aid flexibility in students' planning.
- c. Disciplines with service course obligations requiring multiple sections may need to schedule required courses in the degree program in alternating year scheduling in order to maximize instructional and enrollment capacity.
- d. Courses that are not part of a major or minor, do not serve another major on campus, or are not EOU graduation requirements should be eliminated from the schedule at this time.

## **7. Institutional Determinations and Outcomes**

Substitutions or waivers to accommodate curricular shifts and/or teach outs may be necessary, and will be requested at the Discipline program level as a first priority.

- a. Catalog determination of a minor consisting of 15 lower division and 15 upper division credits may be applied where there is no expectation of Capstone work by the student.
- b. Expected outcome of sustainable scheduling of disciplinary curricula and institutional service courses as listed above: Students will select courses from broader disciplinary areas, as they will not have additional courses beyond requirements within a given major or minor.

These goals and the curricular and operational principles that underlie them will help us to ensure not only that we have an appropriate mix of academic programs, but the resources to sustain them over the long-term as well.

With regard to these resources, it remains highly unlikely that we will enjoy the level of state support and tuition revenues that would allow us to maintain our current slate of programs and our current regular instructional staff. Nor can we continue to add more adjunct faculty through maintaining or even increasing our current online adjunct/overload levels without deep damage to the high quality of teaching and learning that our students currently enjoy.

The answer, then, must lie in reviewing our current academic program mix to ensure that what we are offering matches regional and student needs and does so in ways that reflect long-term sustainability relative to the resources we have available to support those programs and to maintain the instructional integrity and quality that are our hallmarks at EOU. We cannot continue to be all things to all people and must seek to focus on doing what we need to do and doing it well.

We need to take a hard look at the totality of the courses we offer and how each one of those course offerings relates to program requirements, program electives, and University and general education requirements. The course inventory data and tool at <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/06/Course-Inventory-V3.xlsx> demonstrates our initial effort at this very granular undertaking. Slicing the course inventory data according to coding identify those courses which are not immediately identifiable as either program requirements or University/general education requirements results in a huge number of courses that are offered outside of the program requirements.

These courses are identified in both summary form and detail in the spreadsheet at <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/06/Courses-with-low-enrollments-V2.xlsx>. As the spreadsheet data illustrates, there are roughly 1,820 course credits tied to the courses in the list, though not all courses can be eliminated, as some may be appropriate for general education requirements, general electives etc. Having noted that, though, many of the courses on the list should be eliminated as these courses diffuse enrollments from other required (and often low-enrolled) courses. Please note that the list excludes courses such as practicum, capstone, thesis, etc.

Building on the progress made with EOU's 2011 Sustainability Plan and the 2013 Plan Update (NOTE: these plans and associated/subsequent documents may be found at the bottom of the President's Budget and Planning webpage, <http://www.eou.edu/president/budget/>), the five primary strategies aimed at this, EOU's 2014 sustainability update, focus on the following:

1. Reset of instructional workload release.
2. Elimination of most concentrations in degree programs.
3. Reductions and eliminations of academic programs.
4. Further reduction of administrative positions.
5. Restructuring of college administrative operations.

Discussion of each of these strategies and associated DRAFT recommendations follow in the Strategies section.

### ***III. Strategies and Recommendations***

#### **1. Reset of instructional workload release.**

As the EOU Faculty Senate response to the draft version of this 2014 plan update notes, college and institutional leadership should "refrain from past practices in which administrative duties have been assigned to teaching faculty in lieu of teaching responsibilities." These past practices have become institutionalized over a decade or more to the point that EOU's instructional capacity has been significantly impacted. The Spring 2013 Update recommended that the academic dean of each college will conduct a case-by-case review of all assigned instructional release time. This academic year, the amount of instructional workload release granted across all

three colleges, exclusive of those two faculty positions which are articulated as having administrative duties (Writing Center Director and Art Gallery Director) and of the reassignment associated with our current half-time associate deans totals 179 credits or 4.0 FTE (assuming 45 total workload credits) or 5.0 FTE (assuming 36 instructional workload credits). This workload release is distributed as follows:

- 41 credits in the College of Arts & Sciences.
- 27 in the College of Business.
- 111 in the College of Education.

While the total hours of re-assigned time in the College of Education total 111, many of these are not course release in the same sense that other workload release is. Given the structure of Education curricula, many of their release hours are in actuality instructional duties related to the program, though served outside of more typical course/class boundaries. Examination of these workload release hours in Education have aimed at distinguishing between those granted for instructional vs. non-instructional reasons. The first pass suggests approximately one-half of those hours are for non-instructional purposes, consistent with the inflated costs structures demonstrated by the program relative to program peers.

This recommendation focuses on suspending all current instructional release time granted for non-instructional duties for the 2014-2015 academic year. The suspension/elimination of instructional workload release across all three colleges should result in the reduction of the need for **3.0 FTE**, primarily in the overload/adjunct category.

On a case-by-case basis over the next year, the deans will review (subject to provost's approval) the need for instructional release time, according to the following general principles:

1. Instructional release time granted should be tied to specific duties and/or tasks that are clearly articulated and connected to the time frame for which the instructional release is granted. Duties or tasks which cannot be articulated should not be granted instructional release time. To do otherwise may not be fair to the larger program area faculty and may, in fact, harm the program's health and vitality over the longer term.
2. The college dean, in consultation with the faculty member, will make every effort to load non-instructional duties or tasks as service load or other load in a given year before actually granting additional load credit as instructional release time. If instructional release is inloaded as service/other workload credits, care should be taken to maintain workload space to support ongoing commitment-to-discipline. Such space is key to the quality of our teaching and learning across our academic programs and must not be compromised. Similarly, care should be taken to maintain space in service load for service to the institution, particularly with respect to shared governance participation. In order to maintain ongoing commitment to discipline for our faculty, no more than 6 load credits of the 9 total beyond the 36 for instruction (tenured and tenure-track faculty) should ever be loaded for service in lieu of release time. There should always be load space in a given year available for ongoing commitment-to-discipline and/or shared governance. It should be up to a given faculty member to make those choices in terms of how he/she prefers to balance non-instructional load credits in a given year, so that the appropriate dean may assign workload accordingly.

3. Similarly, the institution (at the program, college, and institutional levels) should remain mindful of realistic expectations for service/other work-loading. It may well be that choices to engage in non-instructional service duties or tasks may preclude participation in other University service for a given timeframe and vice versa.

As instructional workload release is reinstated case-by-case, consistency for such release must be maintained both across program areas as well as across colleges.

**3 FTE = \$165,000**

## **2 . Elimination of concentrations within degree programs.**

EOU's academic program curricula, as has been noted in both the 2011 Sustainability Plan and the 2013 Plan Update, have expanded over past decades in all areas while contracting in relatively few (until the 2011 and 2013 plan actions). Climbing student enrollments somewhat masked the effect of this curricular sprawl; off-campus enrollments in particular covered declining enrollments in on-campus programs. A curricular reset will occur across the curriculum through the elimination of separate concentrations, emphases, groupings, or tracks in EOU's degree programs which will have the dual effect of focusing faculty instructional workload more tightly AND of focusing student pathways to completion and eliminating the diffusion of students across multiple courses within and across program areas. While the reductions related to the elimination of degree programs will primarily reduce the need for large numbers of online adjunct and overload instructional FTE, it is worth noting that almost HALF of EOU's student credit hours in any given year are generated through online adjunct/overload instruction. The savings related to the reduction of these FTE will be primarily reductions in online adjunct/overload FTE.

The broad recommendation in this section of the sustainability plan update entails eliminating concentrations in most major/degree program curricula—to include emphases, groupings, tracks, or any other disciplinary specialization that segments and diffuses student enrollment in lower- and upper-division coursework—and moving all programs institution-wide to a set number of courses for each major or minor with carefully selected elective courses designed to consolidate course level enrollments while serving the educational needs of the students.

The academic deans will work with those degree programs which need to maintain distinct professional/career paths within their majors, to develop a case to be presented to the EPCC and subject to final approval by the Provost and President to maintain the paths. Effective cases will note peer programs serving similar numbers of students at peer institutions to EOU, relative to career and professional needs in that field. In no case shall the maintenance of such distinct paths within a major be allowed if the maintenance of those paths cannot be accomplished within the bounds of existing instructional capacity (faculty FTE) within that program.

It is crucial to note that both the spirit and intent in this recommendation is not to force all programs into a one-size-fits-all approach to curricular structures across all three colleges, rather to provide an opportunity for an across-the-board curricular reset. Indeed, as articulated in EOU's AAP response to the initial draft of this plan, we should strive to

*“Develop curricular structures that allow re-packaging of courses into concentrations [degree pathways] while avoiding reliance on enrolled courses. This might occur through interdisciplinary concentrations served by previously under-enrolled courses from multiple majors, and/or by requiring courses to serve at least two concentrations [pathways] whether they serve in major of origin or serve another major. This might also require a move toward more prescribed, higher credit majors that better serve our students for career and professional*

*tracks. For example, a major might have three concentrations [pathways], and any given course would have to serve two of them, ensuring that it is not under-enrolled.”*

The course inventory data tool <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/06/Course-Inventory-V3.xlsx> and summary spreadsheet <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/06/Courses-with-low-enrollments-V2.xlsx> strongly support the proposition that we have enormous room to further focus our program curricula through the elimination of both extraneous courses and concentrations in all major programs.

**Instructional savings (primarily overload and adjunct) across colleges = ~ \$1 million**

### **3. Academic program reductions and eliminations.**

As the EOU Faculty Senate response to the draft version of this 2014 plan update notes, a “reasonable balance must be established between streamlined program offerings, the number of program choices, and student access opportunities. We recommend that the decision to eliminate academic programs be the *very last* to be pursued in the final version of the 2014 Sustainability Plan.” However, as has been the case with our growth of low-enrolled courses, which were masked by rising student enrollments, EOU’s enrollment decreases have underscored the need to reduce some programs to further streamline some of our existing minors. Some of these efforts will entail the reduction in force of regular, bargained faculty positions. The recommendations below were developed through the use of an extensive course-level data tool, as well as the data used in previous sustainability plans and follow-on efforts such as the Delaware data project, and our current and historical data as housed in EOU’s Institutional Research. The multiple and multi-dimensional data sources used for the following recommendations are available in Section VI of this document (Data Sources), and involve as comprehensive a range as is possible of enrollment, graduation, cost (direct and indirect), scheduling, and curricular data.

#### **Program Recommendations:**

In concert with the institution-wide elimination of most concentrations,\* the following program reductions and/or eliminations are proposed to best position EOU and our overall academic enterprise for long-term sustainability amidst both continuing enrollment and external challenges. If programs cannot be sustained with the faculty FTE as indicated in the recommendations, then further discussions with the President, Provost, Dean, and Program Faculty will determine what level of program offerings can be sustained within those boundaries.

*\*Concentrations throughout this section of the document include emphases, groupings, tracks, or any other disciplinary specialization that segments and diffuses student enrollment in lower- and upper-division coursework.*

### **A. Anthropology/Sociology**

The anthropology/sociology program houses a two-discipline major, and the academic minor is also a *two-discipline minor*, with required coursework from both sociology and anthropology. The minor is elective-based and flexible, with two-thirds of the minor consisting of upper division credits distributed between the two disciplines. This has been especially appealing to online students, and assists them in completing their degrees in a timely manner. There is no separate anthropology minor. Responding to regional need and with the expertise of our anthropology faculty in Native American scholarship, the program also houses the Native American Studies minor. The Native American Studies minor requires a number of courses from our two-discipline major, as well as additional courses outside anthropology/sociology offered by adjunct instructors from tribal communities across Oregon and the Northwest. As the need for adjuncts is re-evaluated, the anthropology/sociology program is recommended to continue their efforts to focus and streamline concentrations and electives in their curriculum and scheduling to be sustainable within their current instructional 5 tenure track FTE in anthropology/sociology.

### **B. Art**

The Art program has long been proactive and foresighted in their response to declining enrollments and have spent countless hours reworking their offerings to present the best possible opportunities to our students with more limited resources. Indeed, all of our best data continues to indicate that the Art program is one of the best-managed programs on campus. That our continuing enrollment declines—both on- and off-campus—have led to the current necessity of further reducing a program faculty which has already been reduced over the past year cannot be articulated as anything but tragic. Nonetheless, the art program has been recommended for reduction due to historically low graduation rates (an average of 7 students/year over the past five years) and under-enrolled upper-division courses. 4.0 FTE will remain with the program, for a savings of 2.0 FTE realized through the retirement of one faculty member and elimination of one tenure-track position. Though the program faculty have already performed beyond expectations, the major should be focused in such a manner that it can be sustained with 4.0 FTE.

### **C. Biology**

The Biology program faculty have been diligent over the past year in responding to the June 2013 Sustainability Plan Update recommendations regarding their curricula. Their efforts have resulted in a degree program that provides for both the study of life at the molecular and cellular level and the study of biological systems as they relate to natural resources and their utilization by humans. It is noteworthy that recruitment of students into health professions from rural areas is a high priority within the state of Oregon as we face looming deficits in skilled health care professionals who wish to continue to reside in and serve rural areas. The program faculty educate and prepare students for success in professional schools, government agencies, and in other regional employment opportunities. To reflect these ongoing contexts, the program will continue to offer a streamlined and focused biology major and minor utilizing 5.0 FTE, with savings realized from elimination of adjuncts and a 1.0 fixed term FTE position (though further discussions regarding program service of the OSU and OHSU programs may result in redrafting of the MOU with them).

### **D. Business**



Over the past two years, the College of Business has engaged sweeping work that has significantly focused in-load faculty instructional capacity. While from some perspectives both SCH (and revenues) are down in the college this year because of the reduction of undergraduate business courses from 5 to 4 credits each, during the winter and spring of 2014, the College reduced the number of sections offered in the COB by 10 to 15 courses in an attempt to reduce overload and hiring adjuncts, resulting in a savings of approximately \$100,000. The dilemma facing the College in these efforts centers on either increasing SCH by adding more sections to courses and paying faculty overload and/or increasing use adjuncts, or reducing the overall numbers of sections offered to control overload/adjunct use. The latter will decrease SCH in any given term. However, this does not affect the overall SCH per student in the course of degree completion, as is evident in the increase in student headcount by academic standing. (See data at [https://isdepot.eou.edu/public/ir/historical\\_data/hc\\_by\\_major/hc\\_by\\_majors.html](https://isdepot.eou.edu/public/ir/historical_data/hc_by_major/hc_by_majors.html))

The leadership and college faculty have worked to accomplish the following:

1. Starting in Academic Year 2012-13, no purely elective business courses were offered; twelve courses were eliminated from the schedule. Removing these courses allowed in-loading of degree-required courses and put the focus on program requirements.
2. At the direction of the 2013 Sustainability Plan Update, the College eliminated two concentrations, International Business and Tourism. While a teach-out of these concentrations is in progress, the ultimate result is that five courses will no longer be offered.
3. Starting in Winter 2014, all five-credit business courses moved to four credits, resulting in a significant decrease in the amount of faculty overload without additional need for adjuncts.
4. To ensure that business students get enough upper division (UD) courses after the credit change, UD electives were added to the Leadership, Organization and Management (LOM) and Marketing concentrations. To accommodate this, three courses from the International Business concentration and two from the Tourism concentration were moved into LOM and Marketing.
5. In Fall 2013, the College of Business accounting program was recognized by the Institution of Management Accountants (IMA) as offering a program that prepares students to test for the Certified Management Accounting designation. To accommodate this recognition, a single additional course will be offered on-campus and online once a year.

While the Business program should continue their considerable work along all of these lines and while they should continue moving toward eliminating concentrations within the Business Administration program, their primary focus should continue to be the strategic use of faculty FTE to minimize the use of adjunct faculty. Program faculty should continue to monitor their curricula through professional accreditation and the continuous program review that it requires.

In any case, given the specific needs of Accounting students, the current career pathway should be maintained pending a potential Accounting major. Finally, there will be the elimination of 1.0 FTE in business at MHCC and further reduced adjunct costs with a faculty retirement.

## **E. Chemistry/Biochemistry**

While the chemistry program has been recommended for FTE reduction due to historically low graduation rates and under-enrolled upper-division courses and labs, the chemistry degree and the biochemistry degree should be streamlined into one hybrid chemistry-biochemistry degree. This model is viable with 4.0 FTE and can be found at other similar institutions in our larger region. The availability of the hybrid chemistry-biochemistry major will allow EOU to maintain a strong STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) presence on the EOU campus as well as provide long term sustainability for the program and crucial support for both Education's teacher prep programs and for Statewide STEM priorities. The combined 5-year average graduation rate of chemistry and biochemistry is 8 per year, indicating that a combined major would be sustainable. 4.0 FTE will remain with the program, for a savings of 2.0 FTE realized through the retirement of one faculty member and the elimination of a tenure-track faculty position.

Additionally, discussions centered on combining the environmental safety duties with Chemical Hygiene Officer's position (which is being vacated by retirement during this next year) with faculty instructional duties in other program areas should continue with all due haste, with the aim of recapturing the 5<sup>th</sup> Chemistry faculty FTE through a combination of duties across multiple areas. This 1.0 FTE could combine the chemical hygiene officer position with teaching responsibilities that may also include the physical science sequence (SCI 101-102-103) and math courses. Chemistry faculty have strong mathematical background due to the heavy dependence of chemistry on mathematics. This expertise could be utilized to assist with the lower division and particularly with courses in statistics. This would retain expertise in physical chemistry at Eastern Oregon University and would provide needed FTE within both departments. However, while it may be possible to assign some mathematics courses to Chemistry faculty, there are some challenges and constraints. The mathematical background of scientists is often quite specialized, and not necessarily suitable training for the teaching of general audiences, as Math faculty serve in many of their classes. Due consideration should be accorded the need for the Math program faculty to offer training and/or mentorship for such joint appointments. Such shared appointments should—in the best case scenario—not be regarded as a long-term solution which deflects momentum from the Mathematics Program's need for additional tenure-track positions.

## **F. Computer Science**

**EOU reinstated the CS program on July 3, 2014, and any terminal notices were subsequently rescinded.**

One part of EOU's mission states that "EOU connects the rural regions of Oregon to a wider world." One important connection is playing a role in the region's economic development. On the national scale, computing careers (computer application and software engineers, web developers, and systems analysts) comprise three of *US News & World Reports* highest hiring occupations. Locally, Amazon in Umatilla and Cayuse Technologies represent an influx of new high-tech economic growth for the region. In 2011, Zach Lunden, Umatilla's then City Planner, contacted EOU's CS program to learn how many CS degrees we award each year; he was in negotiations with a "major player" who was considering establishing a data center and wanted to know if EOU would be a local source of programmers. Satisfied with the overall conditions, including a local source for skilled professionals, Amazon is completing its Umatilla facility now.

Although small, EOU's CS program provides a tangible benefit to the regional economy. One of EOU's Focal Priorities is to create and sustain a "Seamless K-20 Pipeline." At the state level, STEM education has become a priority, and EOU has recently been awarded a

\$312,000 grant to serve as a STEM hub. No program in the College of Arts and Sciences is yet directly linked to this venture, but the last four years of the pipeline are college, and science, math, and technology that must play some role to serve the state's 21<sup>st</sup> century needs. CS should be integral to EOU's mission.

However, in light of the fiscal challenges faced by EOU, and the particular budgeting challenge faced by the CS program owing to long reliance on funding from ETIC, unless there is some change with the allocation of ETIC money, CS cannot continue to operate as a baccalaureate in the immediate future. However, with reduced FTE the program could continue to serve other programs that require programming classes, and to offer a collection of courses that would allow interested students working on (or completing) other degrees the option of acquiring enough programming skills to enable them to seek entry-level positions in the technology industry. This move would also allow the maintenance of the CS major foundation, to be revitalized pending ETIC and related funding discussions over the next 2-3 years. Without ETIC funding, the recommendation is that 1.0 FTE remain with the program, for a savings of 1.0 FTE realized through the elimination of the second tenure-track faculty position. After the 2014-15 academic year (during which the current 2.0 FTE will be in place), if more stable funding for the CS program has not materialized, the program should transition into a suspension mode, offering a reduced set of courses as described above and building partnerships with the regional community colleges.

### **G. Education**

The College of Education (excluding PHYSH) has seen a slight decrease in undergraduate enrollments from 295 to 257 over the past year; however, the MS in Education enrollments have remained consistent over the past four years, with a spike in enrollments in 2012. While we have seen a drop in our MAT program enrollments over the past 5 five years, as the market for teachers has changed drastically on the state and national level, we look to add nearly 45 more students to the MAT program in the Fall of 2014. The College continues working with TSPC (Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, Oregon's teacher and teacher program certifying agency) to be the first Oregon program to be certified under TSPC's new standards and preparing for a new wave of teacher certifications and practices on the horizon from the Oregon Department of Education and the OEIB.

The education program has identified savings through restructuring practicum/lab courses and the elimination of a .49 FTE position at MHCC, as well as the closing down of the CUESTE cohort location in Coos Bay (the FTE attached will be moved back to EOU's main campus in support of the larger program during this next TSPC accreditation year).

### **H. English/Writing**

The English/Writing program has been proactive in their efforts to meet the principles laid out in the 2013 Sustainability Plan Update, as well as in anticipating the elimination of concentration/emphasis areas across their major curriculum proposed under this Sustainability Plan Update. Most notably, their work has embraced the principles of "enhanced program completion, streamlining, and access for students" and "resourced-based approach to curricular management and scheduling," by:

1. Including prerequisites on checklists,
2. Reducing scheduling conflicts by eliminating the BA requirement,
3. Offering a 60-credit major,
4. Offering courses in a rotation designed to serve students efficiently,
5. Reducing offerings from old to new major by 69 cr. hours,

6. Creating a minor that is a subset of the major,
7. Eliminating concentrations,
8. Eliminating courses that are not part of the major or service courses,
9. Adhering to block scheduling and utilizing the entire instructional day, and
10. Scheduling class meetings that align with the number of credits.

Further, in their ongoing “determination of sustainable scheduling of disciplinary curricula” and in their ongoing work with examining “course offerings by frequency and demand for multiple sections,” the program faculty have made significant progress in:

1. Scheduling only program courses listed on the checklist for the new major,
2. Offering multiple sections of service courses with cascading enrollment,
3. Identifying courses needing to be offered with greater than annual frequency,
4. Offering multiple sections of service courses with cascading enrollment, and
5. Offering courses in a rotation designed to serve students efficiently.

Given the sweeping changes that the English/Writing program faculty have developed over the course of this year, much of the multiple data sources which went into the program recommendations do not clearly represent the emerging programmatic picture in English/Writing. Though this general sense is true enough of several other program areas as well, the comprehensive and sweeping nature of English’s latest shifts make meaningful patterns even harder to discern. Accordingly, granular attention will need to be paid to how the new curricula are implemented over the coming two years to ensure that the benefits intended are not diffused through ineffective implementation. Ultimately, the English/Writing program will need to function sustainably with 7.0 faculty FTE (6.5 instructional FTE, given the joint nature of the Writing Center Director’s position). (Notwithstanding that one of the English/Writing faculty members is transitioning to the Vice Provost’s Office, they will still maintain 7.0 FTE.)

### **I. Fire Services Administration**

No recommendations to the Fire Services Administration program are made at this time. (It is worth noting that the FSA curriculum is a nationally/Federally-approved FSA curriculum that is brokered with EOU through Western Oregon University, the regional coordinator for the national curriculum.)

### **J. General Education**

With reference to the March 12, 2014 slate of [General Education recommendations](#) from the Academic Futures Taskforce workgroup, it is recommended that an EOU team of faculty and administrators attending the 2014 AAC&U Institute on Integrative Learning and the Departments return to campus in fall with the following:

- a clear understanding of integrative learning,
- a concept map for general education curriculum at EOU that emphasizes 21<sup>st</sup> century learning outcomes consistent with EOU’s GEC learning outcomes,
- curriculum design options and associated review criteria that intentionally integrate GEC offerings in breadth and skill areas with information literacy and first- and second-year experience curricula.
- a communication plan for vetting options with faculty, an implementation plan, an assessment plan and cycle, and a recommendation for infrastructure needed for greater faculty oversight of the management, assessment, and reporting of the quality of student learning in the general education learning outcomes.

Some suggestion has been made by EOU's Faculty Senate (Memo in Response to the Sustainability Plan) that "recommendations to change General Education do not seem critical at this time, and may siphon away needed energy and focus from retrenchment needs" are certainly relevant given the pressing demands on everyone's time over the next year. However, the work put into motion by the Academic Futures workgroup and the subsequent integrative learning group's efforts over the summer are best seen as a strategic investment/positioning that is needed now, in order to ensure that we can move expeditiously and nimbly relative to evolving our Gen Ed core in the near-to-mid term. Not to put these efforts into motion would inevitably delay the ramp up of work that needs to be addressed sooner rather than later, in any case.

### **K. Geography**

While there is great potential for recasting our Geography program to work in closer synergy with several other program areas in our academic colleges—particularly with respect to GIS and land use and environmental management areas and cultural and physical geography, the small numbers of students served through the minor make it untenable to sustain given our current level of institutional resources. The programs to which geography courses previously contributed have been eliminated. Well-enrolled lower-division geography courses serve the general education needs of students in both the on campus and online environments. The geography minor is recommended for suspension, pending resources for strategic reinvestment. 1.0 FTE will remain with the program to teach well enrolled on-campus and online general education courses, for a 1.0 FTE in savings realized through the elimination of an online adjunct position. This recommendation also entails the assignment of the remaining Geography faculty member to the program areas of Economics and Political Science, in the CAS Division of Social Sciences and Modern Languages, to further facilitate the already productive curricular discussions of shared synergies and opportunities across the program areas.

### **L. Geology**

The 2013 sustainability plan recommended elimination of the minor with a focus on only those courses for which there is demand and for those modalities in which the demand is reflected. The further recommendation in this 2014 plan update is that the 1.0 FTE dedicated to geology courses be eliminated, with notification to OSU that their GEOL 201 curricular requirement be changed accordingly. This reduction results in the loss of a 1.0 FTE tenure-track position.

### **M. History**

In acknowledgment of the numerous 310/410 courses offered under the History program over the past several years, the History faculty have been responsive in their efforts to streamline their curriculum and to follow the EPCC expectation of removing courses from their program for every new course created. As of Winter quarter 2014, program faculty have completed the process of turning their temporary courses into permanent numbers and/or deleting courses no longer needed to serve the program's students. The efforts have been effective, as demonstrated by the leanness of their major requirements at 60 credits. It is also worth noting that, in terms of upper division courses, students hoping to matriculate in two years need to take *whatever* upper division courses are offered in a given year, regardless of the topic. While the History faculty recognize the desirability of program graduates (both majors and minors) having some breadth upon completing the program, their current approach to curricular management strikes both a thoughtful and a sustainable balance between such program breadth and our available instructional capacity.

More specifically, of the History courses listed in the course inventory tool as x10s that were taught by new or visiting professors, ten of those courses have been effectively eliminated due to faculty departures, six have been deleted completely, and another four were converted to permanent catalog numbers, as noted above. The major has been streamlined and is readily completed in two years (or less). The program faculty have also turned their capstone course (HIST403) into a UWR course to help students fulfill that University requirement in a focused and concrete discipline-specific context, without having to wait for additional UWR courses to be offered.

Finally, to address bottlenecks that sometimes occur with the current Minor requirements, the History faculty has paperwork coming forward next fall which will eliminate any distribution requirements from the minor, allowing students to simply take the required number of credits (30) with any courses available, rather than distributing credits between U.S. and non-U.S. courses.

Taken together, these efforts are spot on relative to the challenges facing EOU as we move forward into the future. Accordingly, it is recommended that the history major maintain their current instructional capacity of 3.0 FTE, and continue the considerable work they have already accomplished specifically aimed at further reducing program overload.

#### **N. Liberal Studies**

The Liberal Studies capstone has become unsustainable and problematic in terms of the financial and human resources required to manage and oversee the quality of the capstone in its current form. As EOU's Faculty Senate points out, faculty "as experts in their disciplines, are best equipped to determine degree requirements and the intricacies of a complex University curriculum." And, this general perspective is consistent with our regional accreditation standards that require faculty to control our curricula. However, given the impact on both students and the University under the current capstone requirements, a temporary action is clearly required to pave the transition to the work of faculty members engaged in the integrative learning workgroup this summer. Except for students who have already planned completion of the capstone during Summer 2014 under supervision of a faculty member with whom arrangements have already been made, it is recommended that removal of the current liberal studies capstone as a barrier to completion become effective as of Summer 2014 for all other Liberal Studies students. Until such time as a single culminating capstone course may be designed and emplaced to serve all majors, beginning in fall 2014 students will be advised to take an additional 400-level program elective—as identified by each program area after publication of the plan—in lieu of a capstone. Savings in capstone overload costs have already been factored into overall savings in adjunct and overload across the colleges.

It is further recommended that the Vice Provost keep the Provost and Faculty Senate informed about the outcome from the integrative learning workgroup's ad hoc report to NWCCU regarding the Liberal Studies major, its coherence as a program with entrance and exit points for transfer students, its oversight and assessment by a Liberal Studies Council of faculty reporting to the Vice Provost, as well as the installation of a common capstone experience shared by all majors through which the learning scaffold of the major can be evaluated and improved on an established cycle of assessment.

Accordingly, it is imperative that care be given in the design of existing minors so that measures of quality and rigor, along with strengthened academic oversight, are in place and that the minors are regularly assessed in accordance with the NWCCU

recommendation. Increasing competition for students from OSU's eCampus lend particular urgency to this work on an increasingly alarming scale.

### **O. Library Science**

No recommendations to the Library Science program are made at this time. (It should be noted that the LIB courses, while not attached to a major or minor program per se, do serve both University and program-specific needs across the institution and should remain as currently constituted.)

### **P. Mathematics**

The Mathematics program faculty have a strong history of regularly reviewing their curriculum to determine whether it continues to meet their expectations for rigor, as well as how effectively it serves student needs. Such review work led to the major program revision of 2007-2008, which in turn has coincided with significant growth in the number of declared majors and minors. Notable as well is that the Mathematics program maintains the highest student credit hour production in the College of Arts and Sciences, thus effectively subsidizing numerous other programs. That they do accomplish this with the lowest proportion of tenure-track faculty in the College is also notable (and potentially alarming—see notes under the Strategic Reinvestment section below pertaining to the Eagle Cap College concept). The program faculty has already deleted some under-enrolled courses from the schedule and will await further analysis of their enrollments to determine whether any remaining courses do not serve EOU student needs. Accordingly, the Mathematics program should retain their current 4+1 MAT pathway for prospective high school Math teachers, as well as their major and fully embedded minor.

Moreover, the program faculty continue to see increasing demand for STAT-243 and its online equivalent, STAT 241-242. Given that this demand and the departure of a fixed-term faculty member this year have created a considerable gap in coverage, opportunity also exists for appointment of qualified faculty from other program areas, specifically the physical sciences, to provide coverage of these (and perhaps other) courses. However, as noted above in the Chemistry-specific section, while faculty in the physical sciences have strong backgrounds in selected areas of mathematics, they rarely have the wide exposure, depth, and experience in mathematics required to be an effective member of a program that relies as heavily on generalists to serve student needs as does the Mathematics program. Such reassignment must necessarily include the mentoring and training requisite to maintaining instructional effectiveness and program integrity for our students. At least .75 FTE from the Physics and Chemistry programs could be reassigned to the Math program, with 0.75-1.5 FTE savings in adjunct and fixed-term positions. In addition, math needs to reduce the number of the concentrations and streamline their curriculum accordingly.

### **Q. Media Arts/Communication**

Growth in the program over the past two years has been primarily in the communication area. In light of student enrollment growth in the Communication concentration and low enrollments in several upper-division multimedia courses, the University cannot sustain multimedia and film production curriculum at this time. 3.0 FTE will remain with the Communication concentration and program faculty should continue their focus on both efficient and streamlined coursework in Communication. All instructional capacity in the program will focus on sustaining a Communication concentration.

## **R. Modern Languages**

Modern language programs should be key to our institutional goal of preparing students to serve an increasingly diverse and global society. Despite the core nature of modern languages as an integral element of the liberal arts, as articulated in EOU's current mission, our current Spanish minor is clearly not meeting potential needs for students in either the program itself or in other programs across the University, as demonstrated by consistently low enrollments in upper-division courses. Accordingly, the Spanish minor is recommended for elimination due to lack of enrollment in upper-division courses and little demand. It is further recommended that the MODL curriculum be eliminated and the first- and second-year Spanish curriculum be paced appropriately for non-transfer students seeking satisfaction of the DFL requirement and/or two years of a modern language. Additionally, and more importantly over the longer term, close discussions between the Spanish faculty and the College of Education ESOL program faculty should proceed with the greatest possible urgency, aimed at reshaping our Spanish program offerings to meet current and emerging fluency and literacy needs for ESOL students (and more generally for ALL Education students, given developing shifts for teacher preparation in motion at the state-level in Oregon). Such discussions would have much-needed immediate benefit to our ESOL students and program AND would provide a sound template for how such Spanish fluency and literacy instructional capacity could be integrated with other program areas such as Sociology, Business Administration, health-related programs, and others. 0 FTE in German and 1.0 FTE in Spanish will remain with the program, for a savings of 2 tenure-track FTE positions and adjunct/fixed term FTE associated with MODL and online courses.

## **S. Music**

Though EOU's Music program plays a key role in our mission as the educational, economic, and cultural engine of our region, the program's increasing curricular complexity over time, coupled with uneven enrollments has created barriers for both recruiting and completing students. Recognizing these challenges, the Music faculty have worked diligently over the past two years to overhaul their program curricula and create both more access and flexibility in program offerings. Their efforts have been both thoughtful and have resulted in the program's ability to better serve student needs in certain areas. However, the program remains both complex and vulnerable, given our continuing fiscal challenges and declining enrollments. Building on continuing discussions among the program faculty and program faculty in other areas concerning how to best focus the Music program and best position it to meet emerging needs and curricular opportunities (i.e. Musical Theatre), program faculty have developed a proposal that would streamline the Music baccalaureate degree, focusing on the vocal strengths of the program reconceptualized as a Bachelor of Arts in Music, rather than the comprehensive Bachelor of Music degree currently in place. This proposal addresses concerns with low graduation rates and unsustainable under-enrolled upper division courses in the current major, has graduated an average of 6.6 students a year—including a single year with 15 graduates in 2008-2009. Accordingly, the Bachelor of Music degree program should be reduced to a Bachelor of Arts, focused on vocal performance and supported by a total of 3.0 regular faculty FTE. Such a shift will allow the major to continue serving the cultural engagement needs of the University and regional communities within the bounds of available resources. This recommendation will result in a reduction of 2.0 tenured/tenure-track positions plus fixed term and adjunct positions affiliated with the music program.



## **T. Physical Education/Health**

The PHYSH program consists of three distinct program concentrations within the degree. As a result of multiple curricular revisions over the past few years, related to both our Sustainability Plan and normal curricular management by the program faculty, the structure of the program has been focused on the current iterations of these areas and other concentrations have been dropped. All three of these areas—Exercise Science, Health and Wellness, and Physical Education and Sport—each serve different student populations within the overall degree. Moreover, each concentration has robust enrollments, which have remained steady or increased over time. The distinctions between these career pathways and the specific student needs they serve make it clear that eliminating or further combining these concentrations would result in a serious reset of the program that could substantially reduce SCH, due to loss of students who attend EOU and enroll in the program to engage in a specific field of study aimed at a specific career pathway. Students in Health and Wellness are prepared to work in community health settings, where they can educate on and promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Physical Education and Sport primarily prepares students to teach physical education (after attaining teacher licensure through a program such as the MAT here at EOU) or become a coach. Exercise Science prepares students to work in the fitness industry, sports performance settings, and for graduate work (such as physical therapy or advanced degrees in exercise physiology). Additionally, the program consistently draws students to their online offerings with which students are often able to obtain credit towards a teaching license or endorsement in other states.

Accordingly, no changes are recommended to the program at this time, other than continuing ongoing efforts to reduce unsustainable instructional overload for regular faculty. (Note: this includes continuation of the activities courses offered through PHYSH—though not connected to discrete academic program requirements, the courses are well-enrolled and meet multiple University needs.)

## **U. Physics**

The Physics minor has been recommended for elimination due to low enrollment in the minor—an average of 1 student a year over the past five years has graduated with a minor in physics. The recommendation is to eliminate the calculus-based physics sequence and to offer only an introductory sequence that satisfies the physical science majors and minors. The FTE no longer required for the physics program will be reassigned to Mathematics. This results in the elimination of any adjunct/fixed term position(s) and a 0.5 FTE tenure-track position associated with the Physics program.

## **V. Philosophy/Politics/Economics and Public Administration**

Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) has long played a leadership role in providing a unique quality educational experience to geographically dispersed and economically challenged Eastern Oregon University students. PPE was the first degree program at EOU to be fully deliverable online and continues to enjoy robust online enrollments which hold significant long-term revenue potential. Given the current trend of declining on-campus enrollment, the ability to fully deliver degree programs to both online and on-site students is one of the keys to the future fiscal sustainability of Eastern Oregon University.

Given the series of recent changes to the higher education governance landscape in Oregon, the Philosophy, Politics and Economics program is uniquely positioned to contribute to the mission of Eastern Oregon University. The Oregon Education

Investment Board's Equity Lens focuses on providing funding incentives linked to serving underserved students. The history of serving non-traditional students and underserved students at Eastern Oregon University in both on-campus and online modalities has long been one of the strengths of the PPE program. Philosophy, Politics and Economics has long been the program of choice for Pacific Islanders who matriculate to La Grande to ensure a better life for their people. PPE has long served geographically displaced students via its innovative and rigorous on-line program, which has produced a number of graduates who have assumed leadership positions throughout communities in Oregon. An assessment of past performance, and a corresponding evaluation of the future 'vision' for Eastern Oregon University, reveals Philosophy, Politics and Economics as a core academic program that will make a significant and long lasting contribution to the future educational and fiscal success of Eastern Oregon University, and moreover, the state of Oregon.

Despite these program strengths over time, the program faculty recognize that the nature of the current fiscal dilemma confronting Eastern Oregon University calls for deep reflection into the very nature and existence of all academic programs and have engaged difficult discussions in their program over the course of this year. Their assessment has revealed multiple challenges to the Philosophy, Politics and Economics program in need of being addressed at this critical juncture. Despite this, their consensus is that the current situation is rife with possibilities to strengthen the existing program by making a series of structural adjustments that will serve the best interests of generations of future students while enhancing the fiscal vitality of Eastern Oregon University.

Accordingly, the following recommendations are made for the PPE program, all within the bounds of 3.0 faculty FTE, plus existing online adjunct instructional capacity:

*Recommendation 1: Implement a Politics & Economics (PE) degree, eliminating the current Philosophy minor and the required upper division Philosophy courses in the current PPE degree.* Given the substantial decline in Philosophy enrollments to historically low levels, continuance of Philosophy course offerings in the current resource-depleted environment is one of the primary challenges confronting the PPE program, and presents a sustainability issue that must be addressed at this critical juncture. Hence, a significant revision of the current PPE program is called for, which holds long-term potential to serve the best interests of students and contribute to EOU's mission fulfillment. The shift proposed by program faculty draws on suggestions forwarded by current PPE students, with the intent of serving the best interests of students while creating a unique program on the Oregon higher education landscape with significant potential to attract new students to Eastern Oregon University. This shift in the major could also entail a corresponding modification in the current Political Science minor.

*Recommendation 2: Suspend the Public Administration Major and modify the Public Administration minor to a Public Policy minor fully encapsulated by the refocused Politics and Economics major.* Given the current fiscal situation and lack of faculty resources, the Public Administration degree program cannot currently be offered by existing program personnel. The program recommends suspension of the current Public Administration Major, pending isolation of available faculty resources to support this degree program, especially specialized upper division course offerings (POLS 353, Community and Regional Planning, POLS 354, Public Personnel Management) needed to protect the rigorous content of the program. This is truly unfortunate, as recent curricular

changes, along with the market for public administration graduates, has resulted in significant student demand for this mission critical program which was enthusiastically supported by profit and non-profit agencies throughout the Eastern Oregon region. Substitution can be made on a case-by-case basis to allow for current students to complete their degree during the teach-out/suspension period. A proposal for a revised Public Policy minor which builds on the existing course offerings, and moreover, the strengths of existing faculty, is being actively articulated by program faculty.

*Recommendation 3: Move forward with a distinct Economics major and fully-embedded Economics minor, as approved this year by EPCC, Faculty Senate, and Provost's Council (6/5/14.* Since the Public Administration major has been recommended for suspension and the PPE major for reduction to a streamlined PE major, the distinct Economics major can be offered within the overall bounds of 3.0 faculty FTE allocated to PE and Economics and Economics coursework currently offered for the PPE/PE degree. In addition, it is strongly recommended that the Economics program be returned to the College of Business. The Economics faculty and dean of CAS, in consultation with the dean of COBE and the business faculty will determine the particulars and process regarding this move.

#### **W. Psychology**

No recommendations to the Psychology program are made at this time; however, work should continue to reduce overload as much as possible within the current envelope of resources.

#### **X. Religious Studies**

The Religious Studies courses will no longer be part of EOU curricular offerings. 0 FTE will remain, for a savings of 1.0 FTE.

#### **Y. Theatre Arts**

The Theatre program is an essential part of the University's Mission and the specific Core Theme: "As an educational, cultural and scholarly center, EOU connects the rural regions of Oregon to a wider world." The Theatre program serves the cultural engagement needs of the University by allowing the whole EOU community to participate in a given production whether the students are Theatre majors or not. EOU faculty and staff also participate in our productions. The program also allows community members to participate in a given production both on and backstage. Then these productions are presented to the community at large and the region. Our current production of *Les Miserables* is a perfect example where close to a hundred individuals including students, faculty, staff and community members are involved both performing onstage, as orchestra or behind the scenes. Then there are the hundreds that have filled the seats of the theater to witness the art form that is theatre, musical theatre. Some have even come as far away as southern California to see *Les Miserables*. Clearly, the Theatre program at EOU is very important to the rural region that is eastern Oregon.

However, the Theater program has been recommended for reduction due to low-enrolled upper-division courses and ongoing low graduation rates. The major and minor, which has graduated an average of 6 students a year in the past five years, should be further condensed and restructured to be sustainable with 3.0 Faculty FTE. The enrollment vulnerability of the current curriculum should be addressed through developing opportunities for the above-noted Theatre participants (non-majors and minors) to continue to participate in productions AND to gain credit for general education courses

which serve the needs of EOU's general population of students. Their current efforts in developing an online minor in Theatre is a signal effort in thinking aimed at meeting the needs of students who are not currently served by program offerings.

3.0 FTE will remain with the program, for a savings of 1.0 FTE realized through elimination of 1.0 FTE tenure track faculty position.

Additionally, opportunity exists for further non-instructional staff consolidation of duties that could result in further savings in the future. This opportunity centers on the Heath and Environmental Safety position shared by the Theatre and Art programs and charged with overseeing the operation, safety, and maintenance of Art and Theatre shop space in Loso Hall. The Theatre program faculty has expressed a willingness to discuss how the current Theatre production faculty member could cover these safety responsibilities himself, with the aid of a student Asst. Technical Director that is budgeted through Theatre's SIF account. This is an interesting idea that could both meet University compliance needs and result in greater opportunities for students within the program and deserves to be pursued.

Finally, the Theatre faculty has repeatedly demonstrated their willingness to engage creative discussions aimed at leveraging opportunities for synergies across EOU's fine and performing arts programs. These discussions, whether focused on Musical Theatre or a potential Bachelor of Fine Arts degree or other ideas for collaboration should be supported and pursued as highly desirable opportunities for EOU's fine and performing arts to continue evolving in ways that reflect both student needs and the synergy gained by sharing resources rather than segmenting them.

Assuming that the aforementioned program-specific recommendations can be accomplished both soundly and expeditiously, we should be able to realize the following targeted savings across all three colleges: **\$1,720,423.**

However, should we not be able to realize these actions and their associated savings, or if enrollments continue to decline beyond those levels already projected, then we will need to be prepared for further program reductions/eliminations.

#### **4. Further reduction of administrative positions.**

EOU's administrative infrastructure has been continuously reduced and/or restructured over the past four years in such areas as enrollment management, advising, and other functional areas in all divisions across EOU. For instance, while the BART plans of several years ago resulted in the creation of the Division of Enrollment Services (DES), headed by a Dean of Enrollment Services, decisions both prior to and in connection with the original Sustainability Plan in the Spring of 2011 resulted in the division functions being decentralized, with the Financial Aid office being combined with Student Accounts as Student Financial Services (under Finance & Administration) and the Admissions office being integrated into the Advancement office, as University Admissions & Advancement. The Registrar's office, intake advising, and overall enrollment management coordination across offices was then combined under the Director of Enrollment Operations, and the Dean of Enrollment Services position was eliminated.

Similarly, these same efforts led to the decentralization of what had been, under DES totally centralized academic advising, with our current model of on-campus college professional advisors reporting through the appropriate academic deans, the off-campus professional advisors

reporting through Regional Operations, and our single remaining intake/undecided advisor reporting through the Director of Enrollment Operations.

(For fuller details, review the two prior sustainability plan documents, as well as EOU's current organizational chart at <http://www.eou.edu/hr/files/2014/02/Org-Chart-2014.pdf>.)

In any case, despite the numerous restructuring and reduction efforts over the past four years, there remain a few areas where additional cost reductions are possible without unduly impacting the institution's core role and mission. As our latest round of administrative reviews suggest, these further reductions total approximately 7.0 FTE and are as follows:

- Eliminate director's position within Student Success and Engagement, **1.0 FTE**.  
Note: This position is funded through auxiliary services. The impact of this will be in the ability of auxiliary services to be in a better position to support the efforts of the University.
- Not restoring the Learning Center staffing levels saving **.5 FTE** of directors' position.
- Reassigned Human Resources Associate Director, **.5 FTE**.
- Reduced Liberal Studies Director position, **.5 FTE**.
- Closure of Baker County & Southwest Oregon Regional Centers, **2.5 FTE**.
- Eliminate OS 2 position at MHCC, **1.0 FTE**.
- Restructure OS 2 position at MHCC, **1.0 FTE**.

The director's position in Student Success and Engagement is the Director of Housing and Student Involvement, which has been vacant for most of this year. The duties associated with this administrative position have been reassigned to the Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life and to the Assistant Director of Student Involvement. These two positions were upgraded to Director positions, thus relieving the Division of Student Success and Engagement of the need to refill the third position.

As a consequence of the restructuring of the Division of Student Success and Engagement, some of the Learning Center Director's position responsibilities were shifted to the Student Success Operations Manager, thus allowing the ongoing reduction of the Director's position to a .5 FTE basis.

The Associate Director's responsibilities in Human Resources were shifted this past year to the Director of Human Resources, the Assistant to the HR Director, to the Payroll Operations Manager, and to a new classified data entry technician as the result of the incumbent leaving EOU for another position within the OUS. The temporary reallocation of duties has worked well enough to make it possible to make those shifts permanent, resulting in a savings of .5 FTE.

Similarly the retirement at the end of this year of our current Liberal Studies Director led to a series of discussions concerning both the past and ongoing needs of the program, as well as the tasks required of the institution relative to Liberal Studies as a result of our Year 3 review by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The 1.0 FTE Administrative Faculty position supporting Liberal Studies, APEL, and ASL can be restructured as an Office Specialist 2 position dedicated to tactical support needed in the Vice Provost's office for all University-wide curriculum scheduling and assessment that underpins the Vice Provost's coordinating and oversight functions in Academic Affairs. The permanent savings for such a shift amounts to .5 of the original director's FTE. [NOTE: other discussions concerning Liberal Studies curricular management are articulated elsewhere in this plan.]

Finally, declining off-campus enrollments combined with operational shifts in both the south coast area in Coos Bay and the Baker County area in Baker City suggest the closing both the Baker County and Southwest Oregon Regional Centers and shifting those students and duties to other regional advisors/directors. While this shift is certainly not an ideal solution, the impact of these closures can be absorbed with little overall negative effect on EOU's Regional Operations. The positions associated with these reductions total 2.5 FTE. **Administrative Position reductions/eliminations = \$499,391**

##### **5. College administrative operations restructure.**

Though we explored the single dean model through the 2011 Sustainability Plan process and discarded it as suboptimal at the time, our current falling enrollments and other administrative efficiencies that have been captured over the past two years have led numerous people to suggest that the time is ripe to refocus attention on gaining further administrative reductions through such an approach. Given the larger leadership transitions at the institutional level, however, combined with the still-emerging governance and fiscal pictures at the state level, any concrete explorations or trials of a single dean model are just too risky right now to entertain. (See the College Task Force Deliberations Report at <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2012/04/EOU-College-Task-Force-Deliberations.pdf>)

As was originally articulated in the Provost's memo to the faculty dated September 9, 2011 <http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2012/04/Provost-Task-Force-Memo-to-Faculty-9-29-11.pdf>, the functional responsibilities that a dean's office must address are clustered around four broad areas:

- Annual faculty evaluations.
- Course scheduling and curricular planning and management.
- Academic programming to serve our distant students.
- Academic advising.

In an effort to better meet these functional responsibilities, in 2012, EOU expanded its two-dean model to include a system of associate deans who oversee the scheduling, personnel evaluation, and day-to-day support operations in the colleges.

Retrenchment measures in the colleges will require careful management by deans who have sufficient authority to implement, oversee, and manage reductions, collaborations, curricular planning, and curricular implementation as set forth in the plan. The two-dean model will be retained for the duration of the implementation of retrenchment measures. Gaining administrative efficiencies while reducing administrative costs across colleges require a reduction in the associate dean structure from 3 FTE to 1.5 FTE, for a total savings of 1.5 FTE in administrative costs. The administrative resources allocated to each college during this period should reflect an overall level of three 0.5 Associate Deans to server the needs of the three colleges, though care should be taken to understand that the specific and unique needs of each of the three colleges will likely dictate college-specific means of utilizing those allocated resources, rather than a broader one-size-fits-all approach across all three college. Savings for this recommendation would be approximately **\$182,000 (w/OPE)**.

##### **Non-Personnel Reductions**

Additional savings of \$250,000 will be realized through various reductions and savings. Some of these will be “one-time” or of limited duration, while others will be on-going. These reductions include: eliminating or limiting cell phone stipends to no more than \$40 per month; salary savings from various vacated positions—most notably—in executive positions; and reductions in travel including travel related to the State Board of Higher Education committees due to its restructuring.

**\$250,000**

**TOTAL Savings = \$ 3,816,814**

#### **IV. Additional Considerations & Strategic Reinvestment**

As AAP’s response to the initial draft of this update notes, the systemic disinvestment in higher education “has progressed, small public universities serving rural regions of their parent state have disproportionately suffered due to changes in state allocations to higher education, and Eastern Oregon University is no exception. As Oregon has significantly disinvested in higher education over the past 25 years (now spending only fifty cents for every dollar the student spends), the larger institutions in the state have managed to adjust to the semi-privatization model. As these conditions developed, the Oregon University System was unable to mitigate the differences between the small regional universities and their counterparts serving the larger population centers. Because of this, the funding formulae for the small regional universities in Oregon have been inadequate. This is has been especially problematic for EOU, due to its small size and its mission to serve the poorest region in the state. This has forced EOU to run its operations with the smallest operating budget per student in the state. EOU’s faculty also generate more student FTE per faculty member than any other faculty in the state while at the same time they are the lowest paid faculty in the state. For EOU, this inadequate funding formula has also translated into a series of recurring financial crises that have led to continuous retrenchment over the past decade. This repeated retrenchment has devastated the morale of the entire campus community – from administration to faculty to staff, and on to the students.”

In light of this perspective both EOU’s AAP and the Oregon State Board of Higher Education strongly suggested in their feedback to the initial draft of this sustainability plan update that an additional section be added to the final version of the update, focused on both longer-term further considerations and specific ideas and strategies for institutional reinvestment once enrollments stabilize and the fruits our sustainability planning take hold and begin returning our institution to more stable ground. The suggestions below begin with further considerations aimed at gaining additional operational efficiencies and savings over the near-to-mid-term, followed by specific ideas aimed at strategic reinvestment in our institution.

#### **Additional Considerations & Strategic Reinvestments**

One consideration in particular articulated by EOU’s AAP is crucial over the near term as EOU moves toward long-term sustainability. It is quoted below in its entirety:

“The updated plan should include a commitment from management to develop a long term plan for sustained political action aimed at funding EOU appropriately. This should include the entire EOU and regional community. This plan needs to include the message that EOU will never survive as a private institution because it has no appreciable endowment and it serves the poorest region in the state. As part of these efforts, EOU constituents, including faculty and students, must enter into dialogue with regional community members in order to educate and mobilize local community leaders on the

political action front. This is critical to efforts to secure state allocations that ensure a sustainable EOU.”

The importance of this suggestion cannot be overstated; it should be implemented immediately.

Along with the above recommendation, a great deal of focus and attention of the responses has been on marketing and promoting the University. Six years ago, a market study was conducted. This market study, conducted by SEM Works (Jim Black and Associates), included analytical market analysis of EOU's brand awareness in key markets, proposed brand enhancement strategies, focus groups to determine brand positioning statements and "tag line" along with recommendations for changes to signage and web presence. Many components of that plan were implemented; however, due to fiscal constraints, the full plan was not implemented. Namely, this included the extensive advertising reach outside of the immediate region and the hiring of staff positions solely focused on marketing and promotion. The newly constituted leadership team will review the Black Report and to determine A) if an update of the study is warranted given the changing marketing demographics and if so, an RFP should be released over the summer begin in the fall; B) which parts of the plan can be implemented immediately in the short run; and C) which staffing positions, if any, should be created to oversee the implementation of these efforts. Regarding the third topic, if it is determined that new staff positions are not warranted/feasible, he along with the appropriate individuals will need to determine the priority of current duties and what will be removed or reduced to accommodate the additional marketing and promotion duties. Investing resources to significantly increase EOU's visibility at a much higher level through avenues including advertising, publications, brand recognition, the web, social media and search engine optimization is strongly recommended. Support for awareness of EOU's faculty, student and alumni successes through news and media sources must also become a priority to demonstrate the University's leadership and innovation in higher education. Targeted marketing should also be considered for specific student population segments such as Latinos, out-of-state and other identifiable target markets. Clearly, marketing needs to be a priority for EOU moving forward and the entire University community will need to understand their role in this process.

In tandem with marketing the University, many comments have been received regarding the admissions process and strategies of EOU. Recently, an investment was made in technology improvements to assist in these efforts and the results should be noticeable in future years, especially in terms of improved student recruitment communications and processes. A significant pathway forward to EOU is to enhance its efforts to capture transfer students. A strategy is currently being developed and it is recommended that the admissions and regional centers team immediately revise and develop a new transfer strategy focusing on EOU's primary benefits and begin implementation as soon as possible. As part of this strategy development, it is recommended that an analysis be conducted of current staffing levels within the office of admissions as well as other EOU employees who can directly and positively impact the transfer student population. The result of this, in all likelihood, will call for an increase in staffing levels and/or a reconfiguration of duties and organizational structures to capitalize on this market. Concurrently, an examination of the current strategies for first time freshman needs to occur which will also benefit from a staffing analysis of the duties, expectations and size of the current office. Funding to support recruitment activities in additional name purchases, publications, student communications, travel, campus visits, online campus tours, special events, telecounseling and other efforts should have a high priority for any new investments. Finally, in a cost saving measure and, given the expertise of the executive team at that time, the office of admissions was moved organizationally to the Division of University Advancement. It is



recommended that Interim President Kenton and the members of the executive team determine if this organizational structure should remain or propose and implement new changes.

Additional considerations also articulated by multiple members of our EOU community have centered on long-running discussions concerning the restructuring of our HUM course sequence for new students. While the general consensus is that the second term HUM 102 carries high value for new students, it is just as clear that the first term HUM 101 course should be closely examined for revision. Directions for a more productive approach to HUM as a high-impact practice have suggested that the sequence be restructured as a two-course sequence across the first and second years for new students, with HUM 101 focused on the content currently contained in HUM 102, and a new second-year HUM 201 focused on continued success and degree completion, aimed at helping students transition successfully to their upper division experience.

As suggested above in Section III of this update, we should also fully consider the implementation of a “one-dean” model at EOU. This scenario was proposed in the first version of the Sustainability Plan and was analyzed through the Task Force in 2011. In addition, the President and Provost seriously considered recommending it again in this draft. While we believe that such a move should not be made over the immediate term, at the same time, we believe that the notion of creating a “one-dean” model may be in the best interests of Eastern and as decisions are made over the next year, that a careful analysis and planning should be made to move in this direction. This model and study should include the consolidation and centralization of support services for the dean, faculty, and the students within the various divisions. Furthermore, as integrative learning and programs will become more common, this model could be a catalyst for such exploration.

Another suggestion for additional immediate consideration concerns differential tuition for the College of Business. Many universities have a “tuition differential” for programs that have A) market demand and B) different cost structures based on personnel costs. Given the market demand for our business programs, both at undergraduate and the MBA levels, we recommend that Budget & Planning and the Tuition Committee analyze the feasibility of a “differential of tuition” on a per credit basis of up to \$10 per undergraduate business courses and up to \$20 MBA courses.

Similarly, differential tuition for the Computer Science major if ETIC funding is leveraged toward base funding, holds significant potential for that program’s long-term health. Given forecasted growth in A) market demand for technology-based software employment and B) different cost structure based on personnel costs, we recommend that the Budget and Planning and the Tuition Committee analyze the feasibility of a “differential of tuition” on a per credit basis of up to \$10 per undergraduate computer science courses.

Currently, Eastern Oregon University does not charge an "application fee." Such a fee is standard at all other Oregon public universities and at the vast majority of institutions of higher education throughout the country. A minimal application fee helps EOU's enrollment functions in several ways: it is a manner in which a student shows interest in attending Eastern because they are willing to pay a small fee (or request a waiver) in order to have their application processed; it enables enrollment offices to sort those applications out first and prioritize these students in their contact communications. It must be noted that even our community college partners with open access require a \$25 application fee. Strategically, and in recognizing that a significant portion of our students are Pell-eligible and therefore low-income, Eastern will seek to implement an application fee that is reasonable and acceptable in our markets where the average is

approximately \$50. Students unable to pay this amount will be eligible for a waiver, accessible as part of the new online application.

In terms of strategic reinvestment, the single greatest set of considerations facing EOU in the near term have been articulated by various constituencies across the campus (most particularly in AAP's response to the initial draft of this update), the community and the state and center on increased recruiting of students, increased retention of students, and increased graduation of students. A key concept in coordinating all of these needs and bringing integrated efforts together centers on the Eastern Promise, an initiative that arose at Eastern Oregon University and which has gained an enormous amount of positive attention and support at the state level. Designed to introduce regional high school students to early college courses, its long term goals include raising the level of preparedness for college curricula and increasing the numbers of college graduates in Oregon. Eastern Promise has been funded with \$2 million by the Oregon State Department of Education. While the current grant is in place through next academic year, it would be possible to structure future incarnations of the project in a way that faculty members whose positions have been terminated by the retrenchment could assume teaching/leadership duties for Eastern Promise endeavors. Faculty in English/Writing, Geology, Biology, Spanish, Communication and Chemistry could potentially be given the opportunity to teach Eastern Promise classes and become involved with the administration and long-term management of the project. There are many possible variations to the approach, including scenarios where the laid-off faculty teaches some of his/her original load and some for Eastern promise. This approach would necessarily be planned in consultation with programs and laid off faculty. This strategy might be especially useful for laid-off faculty who are close to retirement or for those who are for some reason bound to La Grande. For a number of reasons, dedicating full time or nearly full-time Ph.D. faculty would be a boon to the Eastern Promise project. First, assigning full time faculty to the project will ensure a degree of thoroughness that is absent when faculty are trying to squeeze Eastern Promise teaching into their regular teaching loads. Second, these individuals are experts in their fields and have the potential to stimulate students in ways that are not currently available (granted, some adjustments in rigor and content will be necessary). Third, EOU teaching faculty converted to Eastern Promise will be very experienced at organizing and executing learning experiences for students, and will likely provide significant creative input to the long term development of the project. AAP estimates that it would be possible to structure future Eastern Promise projects in a way that could generate (save) 3-4 FTE. Additionally, as part of the efforts to advance early college experience through Eastern Promise, the University will consider initiating a developmental college experience for all high school students enrolled in EOU courses and a bridge for less prepared incoming students. Eagle Cap College is a proposed academic unit of Eastern Oregon University. This concept will be initially funded through Eastern Promise related grants.

Created as one of the subgroups of the 2013-2014 Academic Futures Task Force, we are developing plans for a center for study of rural sustainability. The center embraces and expands EOU's identity as a rural-serving institution by fostering closer collaboration with community and regional partners. Welcoming the participation of faculty affiliates from any discipline, the center is designed to involve students in all phases of study and service, and to build on current faculty/student work. The subgroup is gathering data on existing collaborative activities, creating a timeline for development, and exploring curricular models that have the capacity to transform students' learning environments and strengthen EOU's relationships with the communities we serve.

Another idea that holds great near-term and long-term potential concerns student recruitment and retention efforts aimed at students from key underserved communities, and entails developing

TRiO and CAMP Transfer Scholarship programs. (This idea was most clearly articulated below in draft update response by Dr. Cori Brewster, as an outgrowth of her sabbatical project undertaken this year.) Specifically, we should shift 10 existing tuition waivers to support a scholarship competition for high-performing students enrolled in CAMP and TRiO programs at Oregon community colleges, as well as at Columbia Basin Community College in the Tri-Cities. We would use this annual scholarship competition as a vehicle for advertising EOU, building and strengthening relationships with TRiO and CAMP programs on campuses across the region, and recruiting students from these large, promising, and “captive” markets more broadly.\*

To apply for the scholarship, all students would be required to apply to EOU. Each transfer scholarship would cover two full years of tuition for students to attend college on campus in La Grande. This stipulation would not only support students’ success—continuing on the intensive, on-campus academic interventions they have already received through TRiO and CAMP—but advance two important goals for EOU: increasing enrollment in upper division courses on campus, and growing the peer and family networks essential to recruiting and retaining underrepresented students to attend college in La Grande.

Additional benefits of this TRiO/CAMP proposal include the following:

- 1) It would allow EOU to capitalize on the significant investments other campuses have already made to increase the academic readiness of low-income and first-generation college students, targeting a population of transfer students with a higher likelihood of persistence through graduation.
- 2) It could be advertised and promoted at very low cost to EOU, as communication would be directed through TRiO and CAMP offices on each campus, with additional follow up by EOU staff at regional centers.
- 3) It would target a group of students who have already benefitted from and largely bought into the educational model EOU has to offer: highly interventionist, with small cohorts of students, free tutoring, and individualized attention from both advisers and instructors.
- 4) Eligible students who did not receive the scholarship would still be offered admission and opportunities to apply for other forms of financial assistance; the critical connection to EOU and Admissions staff would have been made.
- 5) Because students in TRiO and CAMP already receive assistance from program staff in completing scholarship and admissions applications, their likelihood of following through is higher than among students not enrolled in such programs and/or marketed to on their own.

\* There are close to 2000 students enrolled in Student Support Services and CAMP programs at Oregon community colleges in any given year, approximately half of whom are college sophomores. There are several thousand more students enrolled in Talent Search and Upward Bound programs administered through two- and four-year colleges around the state if the scholarship program were expanded to recruit first-year students. See <http://www.oregon-trio.org/PDF/Oregon-TRIO-Programs-2013-14.pdf>

Connected to recruitment strategies is student retention. EOU has long sought to replace current student transfers and dropouts with new students, which certainly helps; however, retaining students must be seen as of equal importance as new student recruitment. Current freshman to

sophomore retention rates approaching 60% must be mitigated. A Task Force of faculty, students and staff worked on this issue over the past year and sought new solutions for student retention that included actions and activities at multiple levels, including student study plans and process efficiencies. It is recommended that University leadership review these recommendations and seek to establish an ongoing organized process and identify strategies, methods and evaluate the need for a responsible position charged with these duties aimed at reversing Eastern's downward retention projections.

At present Eastern Oregon University is the only public institution in Oregon and Washington State without a Career Center Director and Career Center. A Director would oversee the establishment of a Career Center that would be focused on, but not exclusively, resume and portfolio development, interview skill development, social media presentation and presence for EOU students, coordination of internship, service-learning and volunteer placements. In addition the director will coordinate off-campus events and activities such as career fairs in Portland, Seattle, Tri-Cities, Boise and our Eastern Oregon service area while developing EOU alumni networks to develop career related opportunities.

Eastern Oregon University has partnered with the new Oregon University System *Career Center Collaborative*, which includes participation from all of Oregon's public institutions of higher learning. Tentatively called "Oregon Career Connect," this "consortium" will be rolled-out at the June 11th meeting of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission Student Success & Institutional Collaboration Subcommittee. "Oregon Career Connect" will initially involve a software infrastructure implemented by all Oregon public institutions of higher learning that will share job, internship and other career opportunities throughout the state of Oregon. It is intended that the Director of Career Development/Services will oversee software installation while developing our newly established EOU campus Career Center that will also be accessible to our students on-line and at various EOU site locations.

## **V. Conclusion**

These are difficult times for many universities across the country—especially small to mid-sized regional universities—as we deal with significant changes in our operating environment. This update to our Sustainability Plan builds on the changes that we have made over the past four years. We have altered our administrative structures immensely and have been extremely creative in how we have combined functions and duties. We have, as well, initiated academic changes along the way. At the same time, we have proven to be innovative in meeting statewide goals and objectives—Eastern Promise is a primary example, as are the leading edge grant projects in our College of Education.

As we have monitored our efforts in holding down costs and implementing our plans, we have clear successes we can point to. However, a primary issue we are now dealing with is a significant decline in enrollments this past year as well as a continuing decline projected for next year. These declines will return EOU to pre-great recession enrollment levels. And, as momentous changes in our funding structures—moving from a “student credit hour” funding model to an outcome based model—we must make considerable cost reductions as well as restructure our program offerings to ensure a foundation to build from in the future.

As the reductions of this plan are implemented, there are sure to be changes. The focus, however, should not. And that is to create a structure of programs that work together and in tandem to meet the needs of our student sand the region. At the same time that these reductions are

occurring, we cannot also lose sight that reinvestments of resources needs to occur. These reinvestments need to be done in areas that will build on our core themes, increase the number of students we serve, enhance our efforts in meeting regional needs and ensure the long-term viability of Eastern.

Eastern has survived for over 85 years by focusing on students and the region. This hasn't changed and should not change. By doing as this plans lays out, it will indeed thrive for another 85 years.

## *VI. Data Sources and Links*

The data sources used for the Spring 2013 Plan Update:

<http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/06/Sustainability-Plan-Update-2013-Final.pdf>

<http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/06/Appendix-A-Instructional-Review-Program-Files.pdf>

<http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/06/Appendix-B-Instructional-Review-Common-Data-Files.pdf>

The Delaware Study data presented by OUS (Brian Fox) this past fall:

[http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/10/EOU\\_DCS\\_Full-Report.pdf](http://www.eou.edu/president/files/2013/10/EOU_DCS_Full-Report.pdf)

Our standing Institutional Research data dashboards:

<http://www.eou.edu/ir/historical-data/>

<http://www.eou.edu/ir/degrees-awarded/>

[https://isdepot.eou.edu/public/ir/enrollment/Term\\_Enrollment.html](https://isdepot.eou.edu/public/ir/enrollment/Term_Enrollment.html)

And the key data source is a course inventory tool and data, along with accompanying instructions:

<http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/04/Course-Inventory-Definitions-Other-Required-Column.pdf>

The data and tool itself may be downloaded at:

<http://www.eou.edu/provost/files/2014/06/Course-Inventory-V3.xlsx>

For information on previous administrative changes, refer to the previous plans. Below is the link to the current Organizational Charts:

<http://www.eou.edu/hr/files/2014/02/Org-Chart-2014.pdf>

Official responses to the Draft Sustainability Plan:

[AAP Response](#)

[Budget and Planning Response](#)

[Faculty Senate Response](#)