



EASTERN OREGON
UNIVERSITY

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:
MONDAY MUSINGS

February 24, 2014

Colleagues,

Over the weekend I received numerous encouraging e-mails and other messages, and had impromptu conversations at various community events as a follow up to my University communication on our enrollment and fiscal pressures. It was clear that time and care was taken in reading the entire message and putting the details into context.

It was also equally clear that many of you have been engaged in the various conversations regarding our future and are eager to put these ideas to work. As we begin to formally weave many of these suggestions together, it will be important to not only address the current challenges, but to also position Eastern for continued and future success in serving our students and region.

As we examine the possibilities of a pathway forward to overcome our challenges, it is essential to remain focused on where we, as a University community, desire to land.

Through the various conversations and messages I received, there is clearly a realization that we cannot continue to cost-cut our way to get ahead. Rather we must now set in motion methods of revitalizing and energizing our essential programs. We have many strengths and a solid foundation to build upon and we should take care in our planning efforts over the next several months to build on these. Therefore, we must think strategically and innovatively as we revision and transform our University. This transformation needs to be effected not only "program by program," but across program areas both within our academic colleges and across all three colleges. We have posed the question to our Academic Futures Task Force, "What should our academic programs look like to best serve our regional mission and our students?"

In answering that question, we need to build on our past successes, but more importantly, we must anticipate the many challenges we are encountering as the academy changes wholesale around us. This thought process, too, is not limited to academic programs, but to our administrative and support units as well. We must alter our thoughts on various strategies and conditions we have held as "sacred" and remain diligent in our efforts to move beyond the current paradigms, adjusting to the new environment we operate in.

While we must decrease total expenditures to meet revenues, we cannot only cut costs. We will also reallocate and secure funds to invest – or reinvest – in the areas and

programs that will enable us to fulfill our commitment to our students and the region. This includes recruiting, retaining and graduating students, as well as providing instrumental services to our region. To be sure, this will require concentrated discussions and work. It will not be an easy task, and as difficult decisions must be made in the end, it will be a challenging time for all of us.

This dialogue reflects a sense of working together as a University community to get through these times. This is not about one area proving its worth at the expense of another. It is how we as a single unit deal with a confluence of issues and challenges that, while daunting, we will resolve, overcome and persist.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and ideas as we move forward together.

Star of Eastern Oregon University

Student-centered, campus leader, mentor, civic-minded – all of these qualities describe this week's Star of EOU. From volunteering to recruit students in any venue, to working with them individually to discuss career and academic goals, Mary Koza remains focused on helping students achieve their dreams. Clearly, Mary exemplifies the strength of character and dedication necessary to attract, retain and support students. Mary began her career at EOU over 15 years ago as the coordinator of onsite Weekend College classes for the Division of Distance Education and has held a number of leadership roles since, most recently as the director of Liberal Studies. She leads by example – working respectfully with faculty, administrators and staff in a collaborative and positive, outcome-focused manner.

Engaged in her community, Mary volunteers for a number of organizations including the Grande Ronde Symphony Orchestra, Grande Ronde Hospital Board and other philanthropic groups with goals centered on generating scholarships for higher education. She makes a point of mentoring others into leadership roles and was recognized as a Woman of Vision and Courage in 2012. She reminds her co-workers of the need for succession planning to sustain a strong and vibrant future for EOU, with even more emphasis recently as last week she announced her plans to retire at the end of this academic year. Mary, thank you for being a Star for our University and community.

Kudos and Miscellaneous

Congratulations to our women's basketball team for taking home the Cascade Collegiate Conference Regular Season Title the second year in a row with an impressive and gutsy comeback win over Evergreen State Saturday night. They will host the first round of the Cascade Conference Tournament at 7 p.m. Tuesday against Northwest Christian.

Our men's basketball team also qualified for the Cascade Conference Tournament with an exciting win over Evergreen. They will travel on Wednesday to the College of Idaho.

Congratulations to Dr. Donna Rainboth for leading a successful effort to secure a \$312,510 Regional STEM Hub grant from the Department of Education. In awarding the grant, officials from ODE wrote "We were impressed with the degree of partnership, engagement and commitment of your community to improving outcomes for students and educators, and we are excited to be able to support your efforts!" Congratulations to Donna and all of those who assisted her in this effort.

On Wednesday, join Liang Ho, diversity and cross-cultural consultant and trainer, for a lively discussion of "Cultural Diversity: Everything You've Always Wanted to Know and Ask About." Her presentation begins at 3 p.m. in Zabel Hall, Room 101. View the flier on [Google Docs](#) for more details.

This Thursday the colloquium features Dr. Rebecca Hartman and her research of "Trailer Park Queens: Images of Gender, Class and Leisure in Mid-Century Mobile Home Advertising." Dr. Hartman examines mobile home advertising campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s that both featured women prominently and were often directed toward women consumers. Her presentation begins at 4 p.m. in Ackerman Hall, Room 210. A reception with question and answer session will follow. For more information visit www.eou.edu/news-press/colloquium-hartman.

Last week many faculty, staff and students answered the call in raising donations of food for community members in need. Dr. Bill Grigsby is leading this charge and empowering students in his Sociology 420 course by coordinating the Governor's State Employees Food Drive. In addition, Professors David Axelrod, Nancy Knowles and Ars Poetica Student Director Will Bowman were instrumental in last week's student reading at Joe Beans, which was very successful in generating donations. While the need remains year round, the Food Drive will continue through March 4. Contributions will be given to Community Connection for distribution to food banks serving La Grande, Cove, Union, North Powder and Elgin. For more details, contact Dr. Grigsby at bgrigsby@eou.edu or visit www.eou.edu/news-press/2014-food-drive.

Finally, join me for coffee between 10 and 11:30 a.m. tomorrow, Tuesday, Feb. 25 in Zabel Hall, Room 102 (foyer outside of the PE & Health offices). I welcome the opportunity to visit with you.

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob Davies
President