



March 25, 2021

To the Board of Trustees  
Western Oregon University  
Monmouth, Oregon

We have audited the financial statements of Western Oregon University (the University) and the discretely presented component unit of the University as of and for the year ended June 30, 2020, and have issued our report thereon dated December 2, 2020. Professional standards require that we advise you of the following matters relating to our audit.

**Our Responsibility in Relation to the Financial Statement Audit under Generally Accepted Auditing Standards and *Government Auditing Standards* and our Compliance Audit under the Uniform Guidance**

As communicated in our letter dated April 24, 2020, our responsibility, as described by professional standards, is to form and express an opinion about whether the financial statements that have been prepared by management with your oversight are presented fairly, in all material respects, in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America and to express an opinion on whether the University complied with the types of compliance requirements described in the *OMB Compliance Supplement* that could have a direct and material effect on each of the University's major federal program. Our audit of the financial statements and major program compliance does not relieve you or management of its respective responsibilities.

Our responsibility, as prescribed by professional standards, is to plan and perform our audit to obtain reasonable, rather than absolute, assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit of financial statements includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, as part of our audit, we considered the internal control of the University solely for the purpose of determining our audit procedures and not to provide any assurance concerning such internal control.

Our responsibility, as prescribed by professional standards as it relates to the audit of the University's major federal program compliance, is to express an opinion on the compliance for each of the University's major federal programs based on our audit of the types of compliance requirements referred to above. An audit of major program compliance includes consideration of internal control over compliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances and to test and report on internal control over compliance in accordance with the Uniform Guidance, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over compliance. Accordingly, as a part of our major program compliance audit, we considered internal control over compliance for these purposes and not to provide any assurance on the effectiveness of the University's internal control over compliance.

We are also responsible for communicating significant matters related to the audit that are, in our professional judgment, relevant to your responsibilities in overseeing the financial reporting process. However, we are not required to design procedures for the purpose of identifying other matters to communicate to you.

We have provided our comments regarding internal controls during our audit in our Independent Auditor's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters Based on an Audit of Financial Statements Performed in Accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* dated December 2, 2020. We have also provided our comments regarding compliance with the types of compliance requirements referred to above and internal controls over compliance during our audit in our Independent Auditor's Report on Compliance with Each Major Federal Program and Report on Internal Control Over Compliance Required by the Uniform Guidance dated March 25, 2021.

### **Planned Scope and Timing of the Audit**

We conducted our audit consistent with the planned scope and timing we previously communicated to you.

### **Compliance with All Ethics Requirements Regarding Independence**

The engagement team, others in our firm, as appropriate, and our firm have complied with all relevant ethical requirements regarding independence.

### **Qualitative Aspects of the Entity's Significant Accounting Practices**

#### *Significant Accounting Policies*

Management has the responsibility to select and use appropriate accounting policies. A summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the University is included in Note 1 to the financial statements. There have been no initial selection of accounting policies and no changes in significant accounting policies or their application during 2020. No matters have come to our attention that would require us, under professional standards, to inform you about (1) the methods used to account for significant unusual transactions and (2) the effect of significant accounting policies in controversial or emerging areas for which there is a lack of authoritative guidance or consensus.

#### *Significant Accounting Estimates*

Accounting estimates are an integral part of the financial statements prepared by management and are based on management's current judgments. Those judgments are normally based on knowledge and experience about past and current events and assumptions about future events. Certain accounting estimates are particularly sensitive because of their significance to the financial statements and because of the possibility that future events affecting them may differ markedly from management's current judgments.

The most sensitive accounting estimates affecting the financial statements are:

- Collectability of receivables and student accounts are based on past history and current market conditions. We reviewed the underlying assumptions and past history to determine that the estimate appears reasonable

- The remaining obligation under the other postemployment benefit (OPEB) plans is based on actuarial estimates provided by Milliman and audited by independent auditors. We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the OPEB assets/(liabilities) in determining that they are reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.
- Management’s estimate of the net pension liability is based on actuarial estimates provided by the Oregon Public Employee Retirement System (OPERS). We evaluated the key factors and assumptions used to develop the net pension liability in determining that it is reasonable in relation to the financial statements taken as a whole.

### *Financial Statement Disclosures*

Certain financial statement disclosures involve significant judgment and are particularly sensitive because of their significance to financial statement users. The most sensitive disclosures affecting the University’s financial statements relate to:

- Note 14 – Employee Retirement Plans – This describes the details and assumptions of the Oregon Public Retirement System (OPERS) Plan and the related net pension liability.
- Note 15 – Other Postemployment Benefits (OPEB) – This describes the details of the postemployment benefit plans.

### **Significant Difficulties Encountered during the Audit**

We encountered no significant difficulties in dealing with management relating to the performance of the audit.

### **Uncorrected and Corrected Misstatements**

For purposes of this communication, professional standards require us to accumulate all known and likely misstatements identified during the audit, other than those that we believe are trivial, and communicate them to the appropriate level of management. Further, professional standards require us to also communicate the effect of uncorrected misstatements related to prior periods on the relevant classes of transactions, account balances or disclosures, and the financial statements as a whole. There were no uncorrected or corrected misstatements identified as a result of our audit procedures.

### **Disagreements with Management**

For purposes of this letter, professional standards define a disagreement with management as a matter, whether or not resolved to our satisfaction, concerning a financial accounting, reporting, or auditing matter, which could be significant to the University’s financial statements or the auditor’s report. No such disagreements arose during the course of the audit.

### **Representations Requested from Management**

We have requested certain written representations from management which are included in the management representation letter dated December 2, 2020 and March 25, 2021.

### **Management's Consultations with Other Accountants**

In some cases, management may decide to consult with other accountants about auditing and accounting matters. Management informed us that, and to our knowledge, there were no consultations with other accountants regarding auditing and accounting matters.

### **Other Significant Matters, Findings, or Issues**

In the normal course of our professional association with the University, we generally discuss a variety of matters, including the application of accounting principles and auditing standards, operating conditions affecting the University, and operating plans and strategies that may affect the risks of material misstatement. None of the matters discussed resulted in a condition to our retention as the University's auditors.

The financial statements include the financial statements of Western Oregon University Development Foundation (the Foundation), which we considered to be a significant component of the financial statements of the University. The financial statements of the Foundation were audited by other auditors, and we did not assume responsibility for the audit performed by the other auditors, rather we have referred to their audit in our report. Our decision to refer to the report of the other auditor is based our evaluation of the materiality of the Foundation with respect to the financial statements as a whole. Our audit procedures with respect to the Foundation included required correspondence with the other auditor, obtaining and reading their auditor's report and the related financial statements, and other procedures as considered necessary.

### **Other Information in Documents Containing Audited Financial Statements**

Pursuant to professional standards, our responsibility as auditors for other information in documents containing Western Oregon University's audited financial statements does not extend beyond the financial information identified in the audit report, and we are not required to perform any procedures to corroborate such other information.

However, in accordance with such standards, we will review the information inputted into the data collection form and will consider whether such information, or the manner of its presentation, is materially consistent with the financial statements.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Trustees and management of the University and is not intended to be, and should not be, used by anyone other than these specified parties.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eide Bailly LLP".

Boise, Idaho