**Memorandum**

DATE: April 21, 2015

TO: Laurie Burton, President, WOU Faculty Senate

FROM: Michael Phillips, Diane Tarter and Paul Disney

RE: Passport Initiative

The Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education (WICHE) has launched the Interstate Passport Initiative. Two colleges are representing Oregon: Western Oregon University and Blue Mountain Community College. Last week, three faculty members from WOU (Paul Disney, Diane Tarter and I) attended a meeting at WICHE in Boulder, Colorado on behalf of WOU.

The Passport Initiative is an interstate learning outcomes-based framework for block transfer that focuses on lower-division general education (somewhat similar to the AAOT in Oregon).  It’s supported through the HECC.  The goal of the Passport Initiative is to develop Learning Outcomes, Proficiencies, and Passport Blocks (the list of courses or other learning experiences that meet the proficiencies and learning outcomes).  Students, once they get their Passport, would be able to block transfer from one institution to the other throughout the Western states without needing to repeat general education classes.  The Passport is designed to improve graduation rates, shorten time to degrees and save students’ money.

At the recent meeting, we were working on two areas - Critical Thinking and Creative Expression. The goal of this early stage was to negotiate a first draft set of Learning Outcomes in both areas.  Representatives from eight Western states were at the meeting, where we looked at each state’s learning outcomes (Oregon’s were based on the AAOT and Leap outcomes), looking for points of agreement.  Then, we negotiated a set of Learning Outcomes that were acceptable to all representatives.

We are providing the draft Learning Outcomes for both Critical Thinking and Creative Expression, and welcome any feedback from the faculty.