



SPRING 2024 |

DEAN'S NEWSLETTER

WESTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

Message from the Interim Dean

BY DR. KRISTIN LATHAM-SCOTT

I have enjoyed this academic year immensely as I have met new students, staff, and faculty, worked on initiatives, deepened my connection to our campus data, listened to successes and challenges, contemplated campus strategic planning, and learned more about the people, divisions, programs, and units of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

You all have completed substantial work this year, including developing, scheduling, and running over 1400 course sections, 65% of the university's student credit hours (SCH). You have also advanced scholarly and creative work, often with student participants and engaged in program review and other assessments. Y'all have served on numerous committees, ad hoc workgroups, professional service associations, supported students with hundreds of advising sessions, and more. Together, we are addressing challenges and change management, such as enrollment, loss of personnel and hiring, student onboarding and retention, and how best to support our students as they progress through their degree pathways. This week we will graduate hundreds of our students, to their next adventures and steps in their careers.



Looking toward next year, I am excited by the planned work of CLAS to continue offering excellent undergraduate and graduate curriculum in sustainable ways that serves our students, creative and scholarly work of our faculty and students, and the data-driven and thoughtful input of our dedicated employees in CLAS and around campus. My goals continue to be centered around building community, increased opportunities for feedback and conversation, celebrating and promoting excellence in teaching, and further discussion around generative AI technology and how to embed its presence thoughtfully and intentionally into our campus.

Thank you all for a well-done academic year, and the significant investment of time, talent, community, and love for our college and our campus at WOU.

Best wishes, Kristin

WELCOME NEW COLLEAGUES TO CLAS

Introductions of new CLAS members:

BreeAnn Liddle, *APA for Behavioral Sciences*

Renee Ray, *APA for Natural Science & Mathematics*

Dr. Lauren Bouchard, *Assistant Professor of Gerontology*

Dr. Lisa Porter, *Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy*

Dr. Shruti Gadkari, *Assistant Professor of Occupational Therapy*

Familiar Faces, New positions:

Veronica Magallon-Smith, *APA for Criminal Justice Sciences*

Ara Duddleston, *Recruitment and Retention Advisor, Division of Business & Economics*

Dr. Ricardo Pelegrin Taboada, *Assistant Professor of Ethnic Studies and History*



Program Notes

Recent tidbits from some of our programs

Computer Science

- The Division of Computer Science partnered with The Oregon Game Project Challenge (OGPC) for its annual event in May 2024, bringing hundreds of students to the WOU campus. OGPC is a video game development competition for middle and high school students that draws teams from all over Oregon.

Business & Economics

- The Department of Administrative Services (DAS) has partnered with the Business & Economics Division to offer courses in accounting as part of the Career Mobility Program.

Criminal Justice Sciences



- Criminal Justice held the 38th annual Career Day for both high school and existing students. Approximately 100 high school students attended a welcome address, alumni panel, student panel, and campus tour. The Center for Career Pathways also hosted a ProConnect event with 37 agencies for approximately 75 existing students.

Natural Science & Math

- NSF Award of \$420,000 to Drs. Steve Taylor and Jeff Templeton in Earth and Environmental Science Department for a three-year GEOPATHs (Pathways into the Geosciences – Earth, Ocean, Polar, and Atmospheric Sciences) grant. This builds intentional GeoSTEM learning communities, coordinated campus partnerships, and community connections that will support student success and career pathways into the Geoscience profession.

Creative Arts

- The Cannon Gallery of Art has featured the artwork of WOU's Art & Design department faculty, staff, and students. The culminating event was ArtFest in May 2024, a day-long celebration of regional high school and community college student exhibitions, activities, and a reception.

Social Science

- In April, history students and WOU's Phi Alpha Theta honors society, volunteered for the afternoon at the City of Monmouth Archives, relocated and refiled boxes including the earliest documents of the city's history to the present.



Behavioral Science

- The WOU Occupational Therapy Doctorate Program has been granted candidacy status in their accreditation through ACOTE (Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education) and is enthused to welcome the first cohort of students in Fall 2024.



- The WOU-Talmadge Psychology Mentoring Program builds skills for academic success and emotional and social growth by partnering undergraduate psychology students with middle school students and continued this year, established in 1999. The current Program Coordinator, Dr. Brooke Dolenc Nott, was featured talking about the program in the Portland Observer, Volume LII, No. 5, March 2024.

Humanities

- Write Place continues its work from the WOU campus under the direction of Dr. Henry Hughes. Most recently, the Native American writer, scholar, photographer and activist Kimberly Blaeser was hosted for an event in May 2024.

WOU STUDENTS



National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS)

The English Department is proud to announce that Jasper Beck, a senior majoring in English, has won the prestigious College Undergraduate Poetry Competition by the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (NFSPS). The contest requires students to submit a manuscript of 10 poems, and Jasper's collection, titled "Creator & Destroyer," was selected as the winner from among 31 submissions from 24 schools in 15 states.

Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice graduate student in Justice Studies, Blue Wonhof, presented at the 15th Annual National Missing and Unidentified Persons Conference in Las Vegas, NV.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

Six students, a record number from WOU, were accepted into Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) internships for this summer: David Beeber, Lilly White, Calder Smith, Sophia Tate, Lilia Chapman, and Trevor Thomson.



OACE INTERPRETERS

Western Oregon University Student Projects

Many WOU students engage in research projects under the mentorship of WOU faculty and staff. Six of these students, Amity Deters, Jasmine Wetter, Jasper Beck, Daisy Garibay, Haven Pickup, and Cole Horning, presented to the WOU Board of Trustees on April 16, 2024. In addition, below are projects and publications that feature work done by WOU students while working with faculty mentors:

- Johnson, C.J. & Winters, E. (Under review). Informal caregiving experiences: Challenges and opportunities for an Age-Friendly University. Faculty sponsor: Cannon, M.L. PURE Insights.
- Spanish majors Eny Gonzales, Kimberly Fuentes, and Jennifer Pérez Ramos, were selected to serve as interpreters for the Oregon Associate for Comprehensive Educate (OACE) annual conference in Seaside, OR.
- Jaxon Hutchinson, English Major, co-presented with Dr. Rob Troyer at the International Linguistic Landscapes conference in Hamburg, Germany.
- Psychology student Alexis Pacheco has partnered with Dr. Rob Wittingham in writing a manuscript on optimal dosing levels for cognitive interventions recently accepted for publication in the Topics in Geriatric Rehabilitation journal.
- Horning, C. L., & VanderPyl, T. (forthcoming 2024). Countering the master narrative: A critical race theory and value of life analysis of unrecognized capital. In T. VanderPyl, & S. Sanchez (Eds.), *Exploitation and criminalization at the margins: The hidden toll on unvalued lives*. Lexington Books.
- Dr. Elizabeth Swedo joined two students, Zephen Wilkinson and Jakob Ritter, who presented papers at the Northwest Regional Phi Alpha Theta Conference April 2024 at EWU, Cheney WA.



Faculty Recongnition

- All three Mario & Alma Pastega Faculty Awards for 2024 have been awarded to faculty in CLAS. Dr. Brooke Dolenc Nott was awarded for Excellence in Teaching, Dr. Patricia Goldsworthy-Bishop was awarded for Excellence in Scholarship, and Dr. Earlene Camarillo was awarded for Excellence in Service.

<https://wou.edu/pastega-award/?q=Pastega%20Award>

- Dr. Kevin Walczyk, Professor of Music, was selected as the WOU Faculty Advisor of the Year.
- Rebecca McCannell, Professor of Art, was selected as one of twelve U.S. artists to participate in "On the Threshold", a collaborative exchange print portfolio featuring 24 artists from the United States and South Africa. The exhibit of 24 prints will tour internationally in 2024.
- Dr. Patty Flatt, who is part of an NSM ADVANCE Grant that funded \$1M over several years to advance STEM careers by empowering network development, shared that the work of this project under an ASCEND grant will be featured in "A Toolkit for Mid-Career Academics: Cultivating Career Advancement", edited by Vicki L. Baker, Aimee LaPointe Terosky, and Laura Gail Lunsford, released on April 9, 2024.

