

Dear WOU community,

As you have probably heard, WOU recently purchased Salem's Vick Building at 525 Trade Street SE. This 36,000 sq ft building is located in the downtown core, and will become the permanent home of WOU:Salem in fall 2020.

Prior to the purchase of the Vick Building, we considered a variety of data about the opportunities in Salem. Much of the data was disseminated in public presentations. As we begin a new academic year, we want share key information points in the hopes that it will spark ideas about more ways WOU can serve our region.

For example:

- Salem and Eugene switch back and forth as Oregon's second largest city; right now, Salem leads with over 173,000 residents (2018 estimate from the US Census).
- Salem is the only state capital of its size that does not have a substantial, face-to-face, public university presence.
- Salem's largest employers – the state of Oregon, city and county governments, Salem Hospital, private sector companies – face retirements and require more highly-skilled workers.
- In Salem, the median annual income of workers with a four-year degree is more than \$20,000 higher than that of workers with a high school diploma.
- While 86.7% of Salem residents over 25 have a high school degree, only 27.1% have earned a four-year degree. More than 50,000 working-age Salem residents (ages 25-64) are positioned to pursue college if convenient, affordable and high quality options are available. The over 17,000 bachelor's degree holders provide a market for graduate programs.
- Salem has a larger proportion of residents under 18 (24.3%) than the nation as a whole (22.4%), and a smaller proportion of residents over 65 (13.3%) than the nation as a whole (16.0%).
- In 2017-18, Chemeketa Community College awarded almost 1400 Associate's degrees and almost 1000 career/technical-related certificates to Oregon residents.
- In 2017-18, other community colleges on the I-5 corridor (i.e., Clackamas, Linn-Benton, Mount Hood, PCC, Lane) awarded over 3600 career/technical-related certificates and over 7500 Associate's degrees. About 40% of the certificates and 50% of the Associate's degrees were awarded by PCC.
- The Salem-Keizer School District is the second largest in Oregon; it serves almost 12,000 high school students. Many Salem-Keizer students begin college at Chemeketa Community College, but face limited public university options for completing a four-year degree.

This year WOU:Salem is offering classes in the Professional Learning Center at the Willamette Education Service District.

- In Fall 2019, we are offering nine undergraduate courses (average enrollment of 10.9 students) and four graduate courses (average enrollment of 15.75 students). The enrollments exceed projections and are encouraging given how new this work is to WOU.
- We have a tentative schedule of 17 courses for Winter 2019.
- We are continuing to explore which courses, programs and support services make sense for WOU:Salem. The Writing Center is holding appointments at WOU:Salem, and we are working with Student Success & Advising and Service Learning & Career Development to plan quarterly activities.
- We have hired two student workers to assist with technology and other support needs.
- This year, the Salem Teaching PLC is reading and discussing Kathryn Linder's *The Blended Course Design Workbook*, and is working to invite her to campus during the spring term.

Because WOU:Salem focuses on serving working adults, classes have a hybrid format where they meet face-to-face once a week (at most). At this time, WOU:Salem operates from 5:30-9:30 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. Once in the Vick Building, we will be able to expand into daytime hours, Saturdays and summer months.

We welcome your ideas about how your program might participate in WOU:Salem.

- Some programs may be able to offer a path to degree completion in Salem
- Many programs could offer General Education courses
- Many programs could offer upper division courses to support your majors, Interdisciplinary Studies students, AB in Liberal Studies students and other students for whom Salem is a convenient location to make progress towards a degree.
- We have also heard ideas about community partnerships and other ways WOU can connect with its new neighbors.