Governance and the Future of Public Higher Education Throughout Oregon

Eastern Oregon University
Oregon Institute of Technology
Southern Oregon University
Western Oregon University
Four Universities
One View

• We represent four separate universities with four distinct and unique missions
• We are in different places—physically, economically, financially, and culturally
• We share a common view on the future of public higher education in Oregon
• We perceive the need for a statewide system of public higher education
Key Assumptions and Outcomes

• Achieve 40-40-20 by 2025
• Remain financially viable
• Align resources with goals (outcomes)
• Serve the entire state:
  – Educationally
  – Economically
  – Socially
The Impact of the Four Smaller Universities

- 20,610 students are served by the small universities:
  - 21% of all OUS students (and 23% of its undergraduates)
  - 78% of these students are from Oregon (71.5% for all of OUS)
  - 91% are undergraduates (85% for all of OUS)
  - 16% of our students are from underrepresented (19% of OUS total)
  - 57% of our students are female (compared to 52% for OUS)

- Total State budget allocated to small universities: $108,915,202
  - 22% of Education and General

* = Student Data from 2010 OUS Factbook
+ = Budget data from 2011-2013 Budget Worksheet presented to Presidents Council on Oct. 6, 2011, and prepared by Vice Chancellor Jay Kenton
Institutional Strategies to Achieve 40-40-20

- WOU
- SOU
- OIT
- EOU
Four Questions

• What are the current constraints, and freedoms, with current governance? (Pres. Maples)

• How do financial conditions impact our current strategic plans? (Pres. Cullinan)

• What actions are being implemented to replace state funding? (Pres. Davies)

• How can Oregon best meet its responsibility in providing public higher education? (Pres. Weiss)
Advantages of Institutional Boards

- Regional knowledge
- Institutional passion
- Political leverage
- Immediate feedback and access
- Strengthen connection to area issues
Challenges of Institutional Boards

- Regional versus statewide focus; missing the bigger picture
- Focus on minor campus issues (athletic losses, curricular items, local complaints, parking)
- Tendency to steer university away from a strategic statewide plan
- Significant confusion among governing, advisory, and foundation boards
- Difficulty in finding high quality individuals to serve
- Significant time and cost spent managing a local board
- Competitiveness among public higher education boards in Oregon
- Splintering/diluting of higher education message in the legislature and in the public eye
What can the OUS Board do now to assist?

- Be a visible advocate for each of our institutions—on our campuses and throughout Oregon
- Support our missions and roles
- Understand our unique challenges
- Believe that bigger is not always better
In conclusion:

– Form and structure should follow strategy and goals
– We recognize the need for a statewide system of public higher education and we support the most effective and efficient way of providing that – through a single State Board of Higher Education
– Institutional governing boards will not assist us in achieving broader statewide and regional goals for our universities
– Structural changes may have unintended consequences at our universities