



**Meeting of the
Oregon Tech Board of Trustees
Klamath Falls Campus
CEET Board Room &
Virtually via Teams
Friday, October 17, 2025**

 Oregon Institute of Technology	Oregon Tech Board of Trustees Retreat In Person Only Juniper Preserve, Bend OR Monday, Aug 18, 2025 4:00 PM– 5:30 PM Tuesday, Aug 19, 2025 8:30 AM– 5:00 PM Wednesday, Aug 20, 2025 8:30 AM – 12:00 PM
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**Board of Trustees Retreat
Minutes**

Monday, August 18, 2025

Trustees present:

Chair John Davis, Esq.	Keegan Dentinger, non-voting member
Vice Chair Vince Jones	Michele Vitali
Cecelia Amuchastegui	Aaron Hill
Stefan Bird	Dr. Mark Neupert
Dr. Vijay Dhir	Celia Nunez
Dr. Johnnie Early	David Cauble
President Nagi Naganathan, ex-officio	Don Gentry

Trustees not present:

Mike Starr	Kanth Gopalpur
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University Representatives and Visitors in attendance:

Diana Angeli, Executive Assistant, Office of the President
Brian Caufield, Esq., Director of Labor Relations Services, USSE
Dr. Mandi Clark, Vice President of Student Affairs
Dr. Hesham El-Rewini, Provost & VP for Academic Affairs & SEM
Dr. Ken Fincher, Vice President of University Advancement & Board Secretary
David Groff, Esq., General Counsel
John Harman, Vice President Finance & Administration
Dr. Gregg Hamann
Kevin Neely

Call to Order & Welcome - Chair John Davis

- Consent Agenda: Approval of the Minutes of the June 2025 Meeting

Grounding in Our Role

Presenters: Chair Davis & Vice Chair Vince Jones

- Chair Davis opened with reflections on the BOT's purpose and responsibilities, highlighting ORS 352.025 requirements (minimum 4 annual meetings).

Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going?

Presenter: President Nagi Naganathan

Over the past eight years, Oregon Tech has made strong strides across academics, research, and institutional capacity. Academic innovation includes the successful launch of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program, multiple new master's degrees, and a dozen new certificates, alongside planning for an osteopathic medical school. Enrollment trends are positive, with headcount, credit hours, and freshman numbers all rising. Research activity and congressional project support are expanding, while community and student engagement programs have strengthened health, wellness, and partnerships. More than \$170 million in capital improvements and strategic space studies are positioning the university for the next phase of growth, and financial stewardship has yielded reserves, sustainability funds, and a new capital campaign even amid broader fiscal pressures.

Looking forward, Oregon Tech aims to deepen its statewide relevance and strengthen its identity as Oregon's polytechnic university that "Improves the Human Condition." Institutional priorities center on health and wellness, medical school development, and leveraging AI in education and operations. The university faces external reviews, budget challenges, and enrollment cost pressures, but it remains focused on bold aspirations—expanding online and clinical programs, enhancing the first-year experience, and solidifying its reputation as a hub of innovation, applied learning, and mission-driven excellence.

Board Recessed for the Day

Tuesday, August 19, 2025

- *Dr. Hesham El-Rewini & John Harman*
 - o Oregon Tech's focused approach to remain viable.
 - o Trustees asked about tuition, remission, and new financial aid legislation.
 - o Concerns about training new chairs to understand financial responsibilities.
- *Dr. Greg Hamann*
 - o State budget structural deficit; importance of telling higher ed's community-level impact.
 - o HECC focus: relevance, alignment, affordable access, belonging, workforce development, leadership.
 - o Need for collaboration across institutions, AI/innovation use, and regional clarity of purpose.
- *Kevin Neely*
 - o Tie higher ed transformation to economic development & jobs.
 - o Push innovation, collaboration, ROI messaging, philanthropy tied to "big ideas."
 - o Challenges: higher ed not seen as team players; opportunities exist but credibility is lacking.
- Q&A with *Hamann, Neely, and Naganathan*
 - o 3-year degree feasibility, credential reform, calendar structure, investment opportunities outside Willamette Valley.

Strategic Plan 2021-2026 Review and Discussion – *President Naganathan & Trustees*

- **Pillar 1 – Student Success:** measurable goals, dashboards, retention challenges, co-op ethos, scholarships, AI programs, targeted enrollment plan.
- **Pillar 2 – Innovation:** future programs (AI, accelerated degrees, PA/nursing expansion, summer term innovation), economic development role, flexible/online pathways.
- **Pillars 3 & 4 – Community Engagement & Institutional Excellence:** brand visibility, marketing, alumni base growth, readiness for DO school, fundraising, research support, new master's/doctoral programs, industry partnerships.

Executive Session

The Board met in executive session to discuss the recently completed labor negotiations.

Board Recessed for the Day

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

- **Chair Davis** outlined goals: complete “parking lot” items, end retreat by 11 AM.
- Recognition: *Trustee Vince Jones’s and Trustee Michelle Vitali – This will be the last retreat they will be participating as trustees.*
- *Chair Davis then summarized the discussion under the four pillars while also identifying cross-cutting themes and outlining next steps for the BOT.*

Pillar 1: Student Success

Priorities:

- **Enrollment Growth:** Continue to grow by filling programs with capacity and adding new capacity where it is financially viable.
- **Retention:** Emphasize individual attention, strengthen advising and scheduling.
- **Oregon Tech Promise:** A guiding principle highlighting individual attention, affordability, career success, and co-curricular opportunities.
- **Global & Holistic Development:** Expand study abroad, student clubs, and experiences that embody “improving the human condition.”
- **Experiential Learning:** Internships, co-ops, and healthcare/tech partnerships.
- **Future-Ready Curriculum:** AI, cybersecurity, semiconductors.

Discussion Highlights:

- BOT scholarship proposal; Office of National Scholarship secured Oregon Tech’s first Udall Scholar.
- Trustees stressed the importance of internships (MECOP/CECOP), robust advising, and expanded global opportunities.

Pillar 2: Innovation

Priorities:

- **Future Programs:** New directions in medical school, graduate management, and online education aligned to market needs.
- **Curricular Flexibility:** Combined/accelerated degrees, year-round pathways, efficient academic calendar.
- **AI Integration:** Embed AI across all aspects of teaching, research, and delivery.
- **Innovative Business Processes:** Reimagine internal systems to support innovation.
- **Regional Economic Role:** Help drive Southern Oregon’s prosperity through tech and applied research.
- **Graduate Attributes:** Resilience, adaptability, leadership, and integrity.

Discussion Highlights:

- Trustees urged embedding innovation across *all* pillars, not siloed.
- Healthcare clusters (PA, DO, Nursing) and interdisciplinary degrees were specifically discussed.

Pillar 3: Community Engagement

Priorities:

- **Brand Presence:** Increase marketing visibility through commercials, billboards, and testimonials.
- **Partnerships:** Strengthen collaborations with local businesses, healthcare systems, and community stakeholders.
- **Alumni & Sponsorships:** Build stronger alumni advocacy and explore sponsorship programs.

- **Student Opportunities:** Expand community-based projects, internships, and applied research.
- **Economic Development:** Oregon Tech should act as a convener and partner for regional economic development.

Discussion Highlights:

- Trustees debated local vs. statewide vs. national marketing strategies.
- Consensus that Oregon Tech must be more assertive in its economic convener role.

Pillar 4: Institutional Excellence & Strategic Investments

Priorities:

- **Organizational Readiness:** Streamline staffing and processes.
- **Faculty & Research:** Strengthen research office, increase scholarships, and support faculty innovation.
- **Strategic Investment:** Trustees brainstormed potential candidate areas for strategic investments. Candidate areas included brand awareness campaign, expansion of high-demand programs, medical school planning and feasibility studies, cluster hires (esp. management/business), fundraising and development officers, program incubation (PIT Crew), summer school promotion, student life and engagement, industry partnerships, faculty research and related infrastructure, and online programs. Concerns raised about lack of readiness due to existing leadership gaps; report expected in October BOT meeting.

Key Cross-Cutting Themes

1. **Enrollment Management (Recruitment + Retention)** – Targeted growth, retention strategies, scholarships, student credit load, support for majors with low enrollment as appropriate.
2. **Innovation & AI** – New interdisciplinary AI program, accelerated degrees, online flexibility, co-op expansion, economic development role.
3. **Branding & Visibility** – Stronger marketing campaigns, “not the best-kept secret,” national visibility through ads and philanthropy.
4. **Institutional Readiness** – Planning and preparing for the DO school, faculty and staff professional development, resilience, leadership succession, strong business processes.
5. **Community & Partnerships** – Alumni, regional partnerships, statewide collaboration, industry internships, economic development integration.

BOT Interests & Action Planning

- Refine 8–10 BOT goals for a 3-to-5-year horizon (2026–2029 or 2026–2031).
- Reports should be visual (with photos), concise, aligned with mission, incorporating both metrics and appropriate narrative.
- Focus on early interventions for retention, faculty retention, student financial pressures, and federal policy impacts.
- Desire for “show & tell” elements at BOT meetings (student stories, tours, travel abroad).
- Dates for future meetings were discussed and agreed upon.
 - o Oct 14–17 (Klamath Falls)
 - o January (virtual – dates TBD)
 - o April 7–10 (Portland-Metro)
 - o June 2–5 (Klamath Falls)
 - o Next retreat: Aug 17–19, 2026
- There was a clear consensus among the trustees that Oregon Tech must stay nimble, distinctive, and future-focused—advancing student success, embedding innovation, engaging communities, and pursuing excellence to be a world-class polytechnic university of choice. ■