

EOU goes 'test-blind' to benefit incoming students

Eastern Oregon University no longer requires standardized test results for financial aid.

The change benefits incoming students and their families, especially those from marginalized communities. University scholarships and merit-based awards will be determined based on students' grades, rather than ACT or SAT scores.

EOU Admissions Director Genesis Meaderds said becoming test-blind makes EOU's admissions process smoother and easier to navigate for prospective students.

"EOU has been test-optional for years for admissions," Meaderds said. "The challenge was that we never were test-optional for scholarships and financial aid, so students were being admitted, and then if they didn't have SATs or ACTs on file, they were ineligible for many merit-based scholarships."

Meaderds met with a committee of university staff for a year to discuss the change. The group reviewed studies that found evidence

of racial and socioeconomic bias in standardized tests. Test anxiety or learning differences can also impact students' ability to perform in this setting. They also found that a student's high school grade point average (GPA) is actually the best indicator of college success.

"Getting this changed for financial aid is a big deal because now students can receive aid just based on their GPA from high school," she said. "Students love that because many of them just don't take those tests."

She listed barriers to testing that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. Many students had to travel out of state to a testing center, pay significant fees or acquire transportation in order to take an SAT or ACT placement test. Meaderds noted, though, that EOU began the process of going test-blind before the COVID-19 pandemic made standardized testing even more difficult to access.

"It wasn't a COVID question, it was a student access question," Meaderds said. "As an access to excel-

lence institution, EOU now has a very simple process: they apply, send transcripts and get an admissions decision, then they automatically are eligible for aid."

Admissions directors from every university in Oregon met last January to release a statement that none of the institutions would require SAT scores for admission. EOU has now stepped up that commitment, no longer requiring test scores even for the most selective scholarships.

"It's been amazing to communicate directly with parents and students about the awards they're immediately eligible for," Meaderds said. "EOU is continuing what we always strive for: providing access to higher education. With such a large portion of our students coming from one or more underserved communities, this is just continuing to live out that aspect of our mission."

Learn more at eou.edu/admissions. EOU scholarships are open for application through Feb. 1 and can be found at eou.edu/fao/scholarships.


Looking a lot like Christmas



Heppner city crew has lit up the town. -Photos by Janelle Ellis.

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AT 5PM

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Office building in great condition right on main street in Heppner. Located in the heart of the business district it's ready to move into. Includes front lobby, private office with window to the front. Former bank building with lots of storage. A small kitchenette/break room and a restroom. Alarm system installed. If you are looking for an office or even a small store space this will work for you. Call today for a showing.

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SALE PENDING



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There are two homes on this property. The bigger one is a 3 bedroom 1 bath 958 sq ft now renting for \$800 per month. Smaller home is a 1 bedroom 1 bath 576 sq ft renting for \$400 a month. There are water rights from the creek to water the yard and a shed in the back. Located on a dead end street. Call for an appointment and have a look.

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Two bedroom one bath home on quiet street in Heppner. Lots of personal items that come with the house. Has 2 car garage, chicken coop and garden area. Priced reasonable and with some care, clean up and fix up will make a nice home for you, or as a rental investment property. Call me for an appointment to see.

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Information deemed correct not guaranteed



Does your business or organization have a holiday event planned?
Do you just want to wish the community good tidings?
Contact Giselle at the Heppner Gazette-Times to have your advertisement included.

Deadline for the December 16th issue is Monday, December 14th at 5pm

Deadline for the December 23rd issue is Monday, December 21st at 5pm

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