

WESTERN COLORADO UNIVERSITY

Director of Athletics



WESTERN
COLORADO UNIVERSITY



The Opportunity

Western Colorado University invites energetic, collaborative, and visionary professionals to apply for the position of Director of Athletics. This unique opportunity allows a seasoned leader to build on the successes and traditions of a nationally recognized NCAA Division II athletics program.

Reporting directly to the President, the Director of Athletics is responsible for the overall vision, leadership, strategic planning, and administration of Western Colorado University's comprehensive NCAA Division II Intercollegiate Athletics program, which includes 14 NCAA-sponsored teams and two varsity sport programs, serving approximately 500 student-athletes. This role also oversees Junior Mountaineers and Conference and Event Services, managing approximately 40 annual conferences/events and serving nearly 8,000 attendees.

The successful applicant will have a proven track record in collaborative and inspired leadership and management within an athletic, or related, field. They will have demonstrated experience working closely with alumni, community, and other supporters to encourage engagement and cultivate financial support. Candidates must uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethics while demonstrating exceptional interpersonal and communication skills.

Living & Working in the Gunnison Valley

Located in the heart of the Rocky Mountains on Colorado's Western Slope, Gunnison offers a perfect blend of old-world charm and modern amenities. With seemingly endless outdoor recreation opportunities and a vibrant ranching community, the area has something for everyone. The University and tourism are the key drivers of the economy, supported by the fact that approximately 80% of the county consists of gorgeous public lands. Agriculture also plays a significant role, with about two-thirds of private land dedicated to ranching operations.

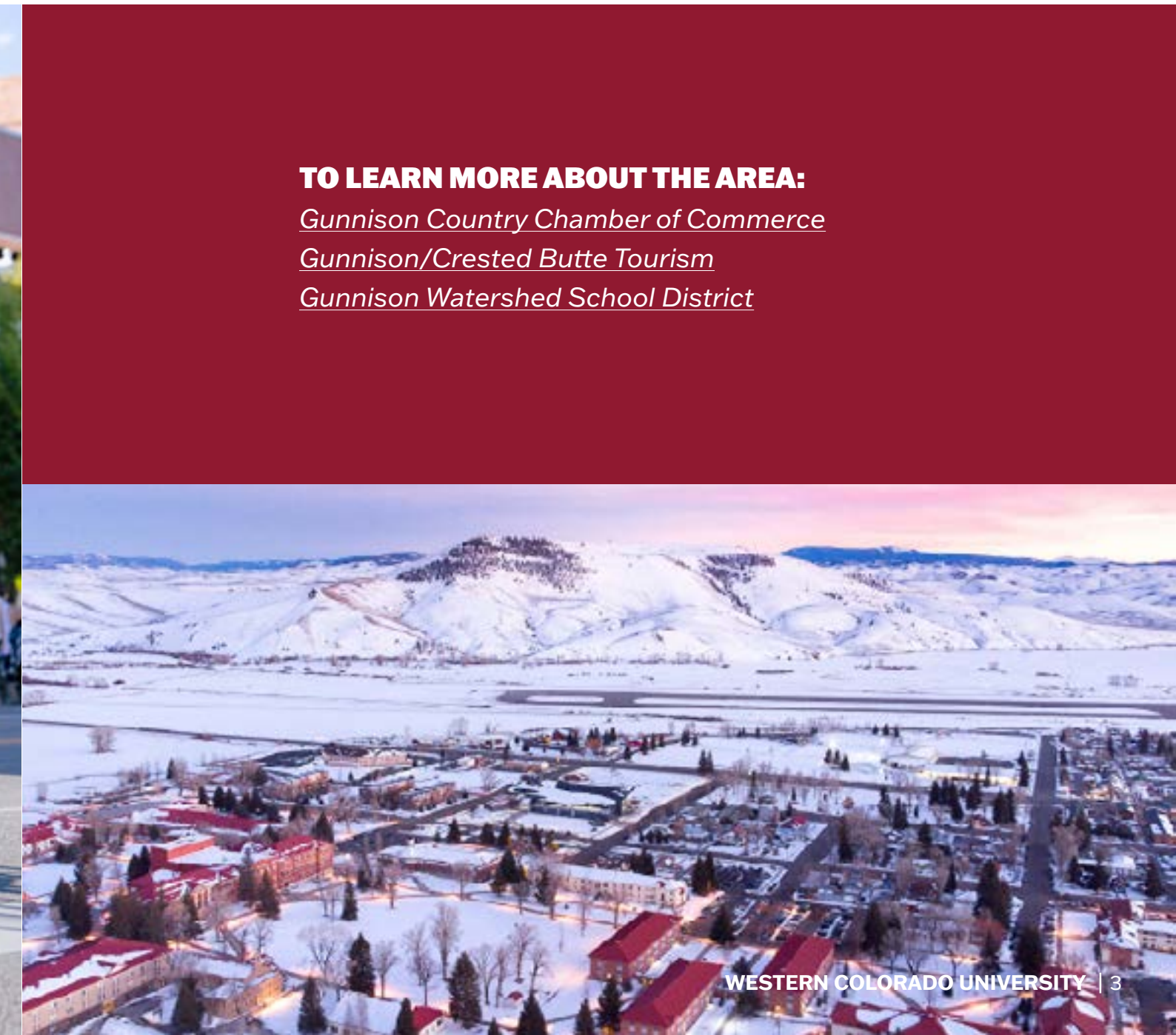
The Rocky Mountains and the Gunnison Valley are not merely a breathtaking backdrop; they are an integral part of the student experience at Western. Our institution is proud to have an incomparable sense of place, derived from faculty, staff, students, and our local community embracing the magnificent beauty of nature embedded in the Western

educational experience. This sense of place is a part of every person who joins the campus community. Students, faculty, and staff who choose Western possess the values of courage, growth, integrity, stewardship, and inclusivity. These qualities are developed and deepened through an experience focused on connection and relationships in classes with an average size of 17 students.

In the summer, the Gunnison River and the Blue Mesa Reservoir are playgrounds for rafting, swimming, fishing, sailing, and motorboating. Mountain bikers, hikers, and trail runners can explore 750-plus miles of singletrack trails, some easily accessible from campus. In winter, Crested Butte Mountain Resort, half an hour away, is bustling with skiers from all over the world. A free bus — with a stop on campus — transports students, faculty, and staff to and from the resort. Western is also a 40-minute drive

from the ski terrain of Monarch Mountain, situated on the Continental Divide. The University and the Gunnison Valley community have a symbiotic relationship with a rich texture of intellectual discovery and the vibrancy of student learning. The Gunnison Valley provides the University with opportunities for experiential learning and exploration. The University enhances the intellectual curiosity of the valley, broadens its diversity, and provides an array of enrichment and entertainment opportunities through lectures, performances, workshops, and athletic events.

Gunnison County (pop. 17,300) has three main municipalities: Gunnison, a city with a population of about 6,800; Crested Butte, a town of about 1,700; and Mt. Crested Butte, population of about 1,000. Gunnison is 200 miles southwest of Denver, the state's capital.



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AREA:
[Gunnison Country Chamber of Commerce](#)
[Gunnison/Crested Butte Tourism](#)
[Gunnison Watershed School District](#)



The Position

Reporting directly to the President of the University, the Director of Athletics serves on the President's Cabinet and works closely with members of the Senior Cabinet. The Director will lead with vision, creativity, and a strategic purpose that honors the storied tradition of Mountaineer Athletics. The Director works closely with the Western Colorado University Foundation and Advancement Office to cultivate and steward relationships with alumni, donors, families, and external stakeholders to secure financial support for sport programs, capital improvements, and department-wide initiatives. This position leads with a focus on student-athlete success, competitive excellence, academic achievement, and community engagement.

Essential Job Duties and Responsibilities

- Provides visionary leadership to the Intercollegiate Athletics Department and Conference & Event Services, developing competitive athletic programs that support student-athletes academically and athletically. Leads the department's development of vision, mission, and goals, assesses performance towards those goals, and develops a culture of continuous improvement. Manages personnel, budgets, and resources and sets department policies.
- Oversees all athletic fundraising in partnership with the Office of Advancement, including setting annual goals and cultivating major donors. Supports the Mountaineer Athletic Association (MAA), manages Conference & Events Services, directs annual campaigns and events, and develops corporate partnerships while engaging alums and donors for ongoing support.
- Promotes Western Colorado University and the Athletics Department through active engagement with campus leadership, RMAC and NCAA representatives, and external partners and stakeholders. Represents the institution at professional conferences, alumni events, and public functions, building institutional visibility and community support.
- Ensures the department operates with the highest level of integrity and in full compliance with all applicable federal (including Title IX), state, university, NCAA, and RMAC rules and regulations pertaining to the athletics department.

Minimum Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree.
- Five (5) years of experience in intercollegiate athletics, higher education, professional sports, or a related leadership role in business or industry.
- Proven leadership and management skills, particularly as they relate to establishing and communicating priorities, advancing innovative practices, building strategic partnerships, and solving complex problems.
- A collaborative management approach with relationship-building skills, experience building a team, and leading and/or supervising the work of others.
- Demonstrates a strong work ethic and actively supports student athletes and programs beyond work hours.
- Highly effective written and oral communication skills with the ability to deliver information in a clear, concise, and articulate manner to multiple stakeholder groups.
- Demonstrated commitment to equity and inclusion with a high degree of cultural awareness and competence, demonstrating respect for a diversity of identities and experiences.
- Comprehensive understanding of the role of intercollegiate athletics at a small regional, public university committed to a mission of promoting intellectual maturity and personal growth.

Preferred Qualifications

- Master's degree.
- Seven (7) years of experience in intercollegiate athletics, higher education, professional sports, or a related leadership role in business or industry.
- Strong planning and fiscal competencies, including experience with financial and enrollment modeling.
- Experience with alum engagement and fundraising.
- Experience with the administration of a Division II athletics program.
- Collegiate coaching experience, preferably on the Division II level.
- Demonstrated record of being a visible, engaged, and community-embedded leader.
- Strong record of promoting student athletes' academic and athletic excellence, personal development, well-being, and full participation in all aspects of campus life.
- Demonstrated commitment to follow the letter and spirit of NCAA rules.

How **Success** for the Director of Athletics Will Be Defined

A strong intercollegiate athletics program is a vital component to a thriving institution. It provides fulfilling experiences for student athletes, builds esprit de corps and encourages engagement and participation from the campus community and inspires philanthropic support. The Director of Athletics' near-term priorities to achieve success will be focused on the following:

#1
Build a strong and sustainable culture by fostering open communication and collaboration among coaches, staff, and student-athletes, ensuring everyone feels valued and included. They will prioritize ethical leadership and demonstrate a visible commitment to community engagement, setting a positive example that will strengthen trust both within and outside the department, and create a sense of shared purpose and pride.

#2
Cultivate financial support by engaging alums and advancing fundraising initiatives to ensure that programs have access to the resources they need to thrive. They

will grow strategic partnerships with local/regional businesses and community organizations that will secure additional sponsorships and funding opportunities. They will implement effective financial planning, allowing for the optimal allocation of resources and supporting both the growth and sustainability of all athletic programs.

#3
Support academic achievement and athletic excellence among Western's student athletes. They will ensure that coaches and staff work together to provide guidance, mentoring, and resources tailored to the needs of student-athletes, empowering them to thrive in both their academic pursuits and their sports.



About Western

Western Colorado University offers a distinctive educational experience for bold, curious learners. With more than 100 areas of study—from STEM and business to the arts and humanities—students have the freedom to explore their passions while preparing for meaningful careers. Western combines academic rigor with accessibility, bridging the gap between cost and a student’s ability to pay.

Known for its small class sizes, hands-on learning, and access to the outdoors, Western fosters a supportive, high-impact environment. Faculty are experienced professionals dedicated to mentoring students who go on to make contributions across Colorado and beyond.

Founded in 1901 as the Colorado State Normal School, Western was the first college on Colorado’s Western Slope, focused initially on teacher education. Over time, it evolved into a comprehensive four-year institution emphasizing liberal arts and professional studies. In 1923, it became Western State College, marked by the creation of the iconic 420-foot “W” on Tenderfoot Mountain—a symbol of school pride that remains central to campus traditions.

Western’s school colors—crimson and slate—represent the Paintbrush flower and sage of the Gunnison Valley. Its original mascot, the fawn,

symbolized grace and alertness. In the 1950s, the Mountaineer became the official mascot through a student contest, further cementing the school’s adventurous spirit.

The University has steadily expanded its academic offerings, adding new programs in engineering, nursing, and other fields that meet the needs of today’s workforce. Western launched its first graduate programs in the 1920s and reintroduced them in 2007 after an 18-year pause. These programs are now mission-driven, faculty-designed, and tightly connected to industry, emphasizing real-world learning and professional development. Graduate enrollment has doubled in the past decade.

In 2012, Western’s name changed to Western State Colorado University to reflect its growth and quality of education. It was simplified to Western Colorado University in 2019. This progression mirrors its expanding impact and commitment to excellence.

Athletics have long been a part of Western’s identity. Located at nearly 7,800 feet, Western has the highest NCAA-sanctioned athletics program in the country. The University has produced Olympic athletes and national champions in skiing, cross country, wrestling, and other sports.

In recent years, Western has added state-of-the-art buildings such as the Paul M. Rady School of Computer Science & Engineering Building, the Borick Business Building, the Mountaineer Fieldhouse, and a significant renovation of Mountaineer Bowl. Four transformational gifts have resulted in the Paul M. Rady School of Computer Science and Engineering, the Clark Family School of Environment and Sustainability, the Rady Family Sports Complex, and the Geiman Scholars Program.

Through an innovative partnership with the University of Colorado Boulder, students in the Rady School of Computer Science & Engineering can earn a nationally ranked engineering degree while benefiting from small class sizes and project-based learning on Western’s campus.

In 125 years of service, Western has grown to offer many areas of undergraduate study and nine graduate degrees while providing students with transformative academic experiences that prepare them to lead in their fields and communities.

QUICK FACTS

- Public University featuring liberal arts, sciences, and professional programs
- Coed residential campus that serves approximately 3,700 students through residential, hybrid, and online programs
- Located in picturesque Gunnison, Colorado, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains
- More than 25 majors, nine graduate programs, over 30 accelerated degree programs, and partnerships with other state schools



Men's NCAA Sports
Basketball
Cross Country
Football
Track & Field
Wrestling

Women's NCAA Sports
Basketball
Cross Country
Soccer
Swimming & Diving
Volleyball
Track & Field
Wrestling

Co-Ed Varsity Sports
Esports
Cheer

About Mounaineer Athletics

Mountaineer Athletics is a nationally recognized NCAA Division II program that has a storied tradition of transforming student athletes through hard-work, unique experiences and meaningful relationships. We strive for championships and pride ourselves in preparing student athletes for successful lives. By living our values of compassion, pride, character and elevate, we create an environment that encourages growth and ensures our student athletes have some of the best experiences in NCAA Division II.

Western is a proud member of the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference, the most historic athletic conference in Division II. We sponsor 14 NCAA sponsored sports along with two varsity programs (eSports and Cheer).

Mountaineer Athletics has produced 121 individual national champions, 15 team national champions, 1,178 All-Americans and 41 Academic All Americans. At the end of the fall 2025 sports season, Western sits at #6 in the Division II Learfield Director's Cup, our highest placement in history.

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

15	121	1,178	98	41
Team National Titles	Individual National Titles	All-American Honors	RMAC Team Championships	Acadmeic All Americans



	Learfield Cup	RMAC All-Sports Cup
2024-25	76 th	5 th
2023-24	28 th	5 th
2022-23	30 th	8 th
2021-22	67 th	6 th



Conference & Events Services

Western Colorado University offers a comprehensive and robust Conference and Events Services program that is managed by the Athletics Department. A vital revenue source for athletics, Conference and Events Services manages approximately 40 events and conferences hosting nearly 8,000 attendees throughout the year. Attendees range from middle to high school students to professionals seeking continuing education and training.

Junior Mountaineers

The newest in the Athletics portfolio, Junior Mountaineers offers year-round, licensed adventure camps that blend athletics, outdoor recreation, and STEAM learning led by experienced staff and Western students.



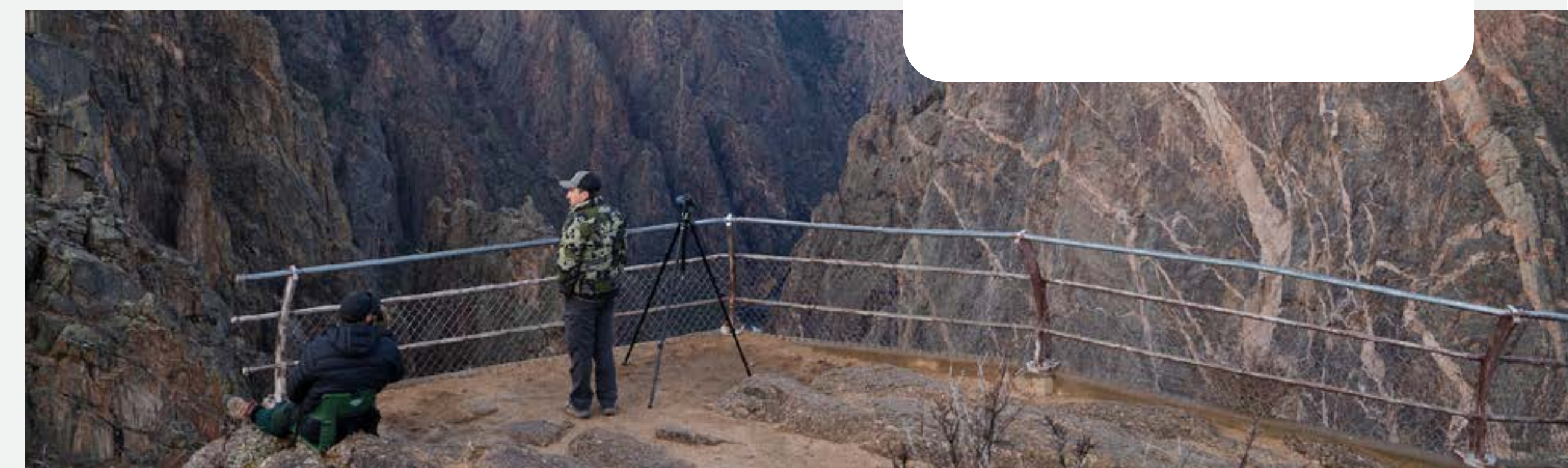
JUNIOR
MOUNTAINEERS
CAMP



Student Experience & Campus Life

Western's students come from all backgrounds and ages, often with a common goal: a success-driven learning experience that will enhance their contribution to the world and their ability to lead a meaningful life. Students, faculty, and staff who choose Western possess the values of courage, growth, integrity, stewardship, and inclusivity. With an average class size of 17 students, these qualities are deepened through an academic experience focused on connection and relationships. They pursue academic excellence in a wide range of areas — from Exercise & Sport Science (ESS) and research in our High-Altitude Performance (HAP) Lab to conservation issues in the Clark Family School of Environment & Sustainability.

Outside the classroom and beyond our NCAA Division II programs, our students participate in Mountain Sports, club sports and intramural sports among other extracurricular and co-curricular activities. Regardless of major, they are part of music ensembles, the Western Theatre Company, and Mountaineer Media. Additionally, Western offers a robust student government and more than 50 clubs, further enhancing students' collegiate experience. We know people of different backgrounds bring various experiences and perspectives to the classroom and community. We strive to foster a respectful, welcoming educational and social environment and take a firm and unyielding stance in support of diversity, inclusivity, scientific inquiry, and creative expression.



17

Average Class Size

1,578

Undergraduate Students

1,421

Concurrent Enrollment

374

Graduate Students

295

Non-Degree Seeking Students

University Stats at a Glance (Fall 2025)

3,668

TOTAL STUDENT
HEAD COUNT

STUDENT ENROLLMENT



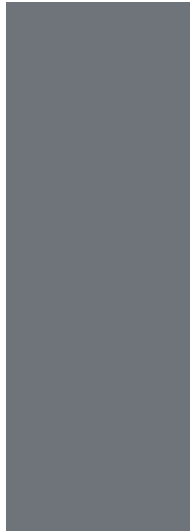
- 43% Undergraduate Degree Seeking
- 39% Concurrent Enrollment
- 10% Graduate Degree Seeking
- 8% Non-Degree Seeking

52%



identify as
FEMALE

47%



identify as
MALE

1%

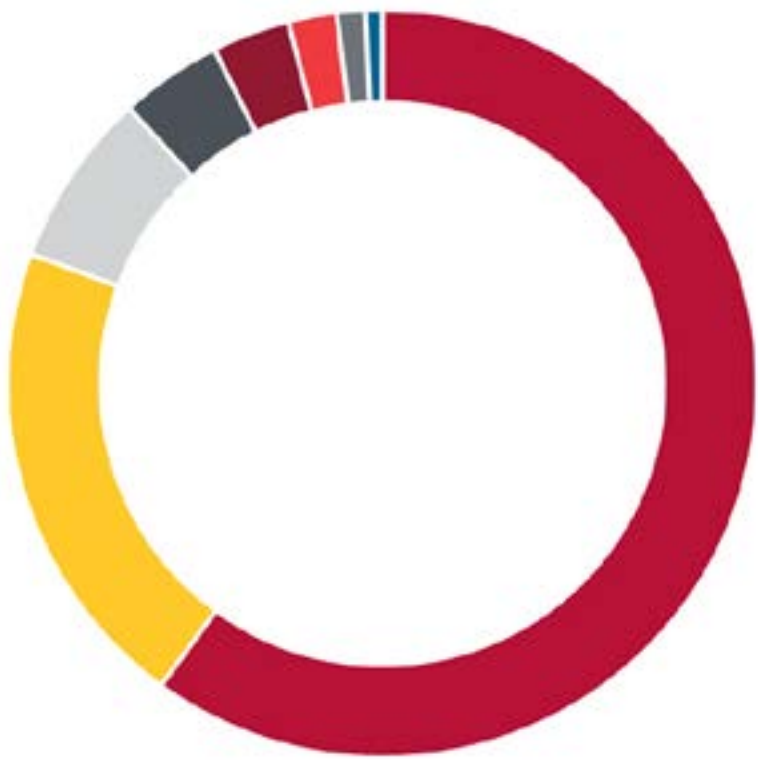


not
reported

FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS



ETHNIC DIVERSITY



- 61% White
- 20% Hispanic
- 8% Unknown/Other
- 4% Black or African American
- 4% Multi-Race
- 2% Asian
- 1% American Indian or Alaska Native
- >1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Western
students are
from almost
every county
in **Colorado**

50
states & **17**
countries

ARE REPRESENTED

80%
of Western Students
Receive Some Form of
Financial Aid

73%
Retention Rate
for First Year Students

Financial Information

Western’s FY2025-26 total budgeted operating revenue is **\$82.4 million**. This includes:

- **\$22.7 million (28%)** from undergraduate tuition and fees
- **\$25 million (30%)** in state appropriations
- **\$9.5 million (12%)** from sources with restricted use (federal and state financial aid, Rady School support, etc.)
- **\$19.2 million (23%)** from auxiliary sources (residence halls, facility fees, food service, bookstore, conference services, etc.)
- **\$5.8 million (7%)** from graduate tuition and fees

Western’s FY2025-26 total budgeted operating expenditure is **\$82 million**. This includes:

- **\$37.8 million (46%)** in faculty and staff compensation
- **\$21.9 million (27%)** in general operating expenses (department operational support, student employment, travel, utilities, etc.)
- **\$14.6 million (17%)** in scholarships and fellowships (including federal, state, and private support)
- **\$6 million (7%)** in debt service payments
- **\$1.5 million (2%)** in strategic initiatives

UNDERGRADUATE YEARLY COST OF ATTENDANCE (FY25-26)

	Colorado Resident	Nonresident
Tuition	\$7,476	\$20,928
Required Fees	\$4,035	\$4,035
Optional Fees	\$450	\$450
Double Room	\$5,627	\$5,627
Board (15-Meal/Week Plan)	\$5,456	\$5,456
Total Annual Cost	\$23,044	\$36,496

Compensation & Process

The Search Committee will begin a review of applications in mid-February and continue its work until an appointment is made. To assure full consideration, application materials should be submitted online at western.edu/jobs by February 9, 2026.

To apply for the Athletic Director position, candidates are requested to submit the following:

- Resume or CV;
- A letter of interest that addresses how the candidate's experiences and qualifications connect with the required/preferred characteristics and priorities as expressed in this position profile; and
- Contact information for at least three references (to be contacted with candidate's permission at a later date).

In compliance with the Colorado Job Application Fairness Act, in any materials you submit, you may redact or remove age-identifying information such as age, date of birth, or dates of school attendance or graduation. You will not be penalized for redacting or removing this information.

The annual salary range for this position is competitive at \$150,000-\$160,000, and commensurate with prior experience. In addition, WCU offers excellent shared contribution medical and dental insurance and retirement plans, generous paid time off, and access to other University benefits, including (after one year of employment) free Western tuition for dependents and opportunities to apply to a national tuition exchange program for dependents.

Western Colorado University is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes all applications, including from veterans and those with disabilities.

CONTACT

Nominations and expressions of interest in this position are encouraged. Please direct them or any questions to ADsearch@western.edu.

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JOIN US ON
**OUR SIDE OF THE
MOUNTAINS**



WESTERN
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