

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Why is WesternU changing the name of the medical school?

The renaming recognizes the generous support and transformative vision of the Heatherington Foundation for Innovation and Education in Health Care. This change strengthens our identity and supports the expansion of osteopathic medical education in the Pacific Northwest. Most importantly, it reflects our enduring mission to educate compassionate, skilled physicians who serve patients and communities. The name change supports that mission by helping us expand our reach and deepen our impact through humanistic medical education.

Who made this decision?

The WesternU Board of Trustees approved the name change after careful consideration and planning. The decision reflects a strategic vision for the University's growth and impact.

Was this change donor-driven?

The name honors a transformational gift and land pledge from the Heatherington Foundation but aligns with WesternU's mission and long-term strategy. The university remains committed to academic independence and integrity.

When does the name change officially go into effect?

An implementation timeline will be developed and carried out by a committee of key department and college representatives. Updates will be shared as soon as they are available.

Will students or faculty have a say in the implementation?

Yes, feedback will be gathered throughout the transition to ensure clarity, consistency, and minimal disruption.

COLLEGE IDENTITY

What happens to the COMP-Northwest name?

The Oregon DO school will be referred to as the Heatherington College of Osteopathic Medicine (H-COM), formerly "COMP-Northwest". "COMP-Northwest" may still be used during the transition until all systems are updated.

Additionally, the college formerly known as COMP/ COMP-Northwest will be known as COMP/ H-COM.

How should we refer to the Oregon DO College moving forward?

The official name is Heatherington College of Osteopathic Medicine (H-COM). The official date of transition will be determined soon.

Will acronyms change?

Yes. H-COM will replace COMP-Northwest. please use the full name or simply the acronym “H-COM” instead of “COMP-Northwest” wherever possible.

Will signage, websites, and email signatures be updated?

Yes. These will be updated in phases. Guidance will be provided.

STUDENT IMPACT

What school name does the Class of 2026 graduate from?

Diplomas are issued under the institution’s official name on the date of conferral. If you graduate during the transition, your diploma will reflect the name currently in place (either COMP-Northwest or H-COM). WesternU is currently reviewing options for a replacement diploma under the new name and will share details if this becomes available.

What name will be on my transcript and diploma?

Students graduating before the change may retain COMP-Northwest. Those graduating after the official change will receive H-COM. More details to come.

Will this impact my ability to match into residency?

No. Accreditation, curriculum, and institutional reputation remain unchanged. Residency directors will be notified of the name change.

ACCREDITATION & CURRICULUM

Will COMP and H-COM still be linked as they are now?

Yes. Heatherington College of Osteopathic Medicine (H-COM) and what was formerly known as COMP-Northwest remain part of the same academic program and college under WesternU. The Oregon campus continues to operate as an Additional Site and extension of the unified curriculum, faculty, and accreditation structure.

The college formerly known as COMP/ COMP-Northwest will be known as COMP/ H-COM.

Does the curriculum change?

No. The curriculum remains exactly the same across both campuses.

How does this affect accreditation?

The name change does not impact accreditation. H-COM and WesternU remain fully accredited and maintain a unified academic structure.

FACULTY & STAFF

Do faculty need to update CVs, bios, or professional materials?

Yes. Updated naming conventions will be provided for CVs, presentations, publications, and LinkedIn. When possible, we recommend using the new name "Heatherington College of Osteopathic Medicine (H-COM)." In digital systems that auto-populate school names, faculty and students may choose the name listed or select "School not listed" and enter the correct name manually. When appropriate, it may be helpful to list both names—for example, "WesternU H-COM (formerly COMP-Northwest)"—to ensure clarity and continuity.

Will business cards, email signatures, and office signage be rebranded?

Yes. Materials will be updated systematically. Guidance and templates will be provided.

How should I refer to the school in external presentations or publications?

Use the updated name and acronym (e.g., Heatherington College of Osteopathic Medicine or H-COM). Legacy references can be noted when appropriate. For a limited time during the transition, you may include "formerly COMP-Northwest" to support clarity and continuity.

BRAND AND COMMUNICATIONS

How will the University communicate this to external partners and organizations?

We are developing a comprehensive communications plan, including outreach to preceptors, hospitals, residency programs, and professional organizations.

Will there be a central contact for questions and concerns?

Yes. A dedicated email and internal SharePoint site will be provided to support transition questions and resources.

Will the media be informed of this change?

Yes. Official press releases, announcements, and strategic media engagement will be part of the rollout.