We are excited to announce and introduce Amber Hoefer as our new Director for Student Leadership, Involvement & Community Engagement at CWU beginning January 1, 2022.

This director position provides vision, administrative leadership, management, supervision, advising, coordination, and implementation of the overall goals and objectives for critical student engagement areas.

The primary purpose of these dynamic areas are to inspire a sense of belonging to the university and promote positive social change within individual communities, the university and beyond.

Through nine years of professional experience in higher education and student affairs, Amber Hoefer has demonstrated skills and engaged in experiences that model her commitment to serving college students. Amber’s current responsibilities at CWU have given her the historical context, ability to identify opportunities, and direct experience with the leadership, involvement, and community engagement experiences offered to CWU students. From facilitating leadership programs and offering service experiences, mentoring students, to engaging in critical conversations on club resources and club equity as well as serving as the primary liaison between the department, the campus, and the local community during staff transition.

While on campus interviewing for the position, Amber was asked to share her approach to her work and how she assesses student learning while providing examples of strategies that impact the student experience. Amber informs her work through four lenses: Purpose-Driven, Human-Focused, Communicator and Strategic Thinker. Through evidence-based assessment and intentional learning outcomes, Amber has developed sound practices to approach her work. Developing a shared vision and moving from
“participation and satisfaction” to “engagement and demonstrated learning” will be the focus of Amber’s leadership.

Amber is committed to campus-wide initiatives throughout the CWU campus serving on multiple committees within student success in addition to serving as the Co-Coordinator for the Queer & Trans Professional Council. Amber has taught multiple first-year seminars, Communication Leadership courses, and co-taught the Student Development Theory course with the CWU higher education graduate program. She has served on regional and national committees, task forces, and held positions with various professional organizations throughout her career. Amber is currently on the NASPActs Subcommittee for the 2022 NASPA Annual Conference and the Washington Student Achievement Council Basic Needs Taskforce.

Amber envisions these areas as the centralized student engagement hub that aims to provide CWU students with an intentional range of experiences and opportunities to develop their leadership style and identity growth, increase a sense of belonging on campus, as well as connections within the campus community and larger Ellensburg community. In addition, Amber will focus campus partnerships through collaborating towards high impact practices related to service and learning communities.

Prior to joining the CWU community, Amber served as the Assistant Director in New Student and Family Services at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNC Charlotte). Amber served and managed multiple campus-wide programs. She chaired and co-chaired multiple stakeholder groups, gathered information on organizational and departmental needs and collaborated on new initiatives to best serve UNCC’s diverse student populations. She oversaw student orientation, academic advising, and registration student program (SOAR). Virtual SOAR, Spring Welcome, and the campus-wide welcome week program (Gold Rush). Prior to serving at UNC Charlotte, she served as the Coordinator for Orientation Programs at Colorado State University (CSU), where she primarily developed specialized orientation programs designed to increase individual student engagement and persistence to graduation including multiple new student camps, online orientation, transfer student orientation, pre-orientation, and specialized student experiences.

Amber began her educational and professional career in higher education at the University of West Florida receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Communications. She continued her education at Oregon State University (OSU) in the College Student Services Administration program where she received her Master of Education degree. In her Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA), Amber worked within the College of Engineering in Women and Minorities in Engineering to serve historically marginalized and minoritized students in science, technology, engineering, and math with resources to be successful in their respective discipline. Amber’s GTA experience gave her a foundation for coaching and mentoring students as they pursue their goals, passions, and career aspirations.

Beyond her career, Amber and her wife use their free time for adventures in the PNW and beyond. They enjoy paddle boarding, hiking, camping, spending weekends in Seattle, and traveling. They are the active parents to four fur babies – 3 cats and a dog – and love spending time with their nieces and nephews. Amber is a creative thinker who dives into wood working projects, amateur automotive work, and is currently refinishing their 1967 Cardinal Camper. Amber enjoys learning new skills and problem-solving in her work and home life.

Reporting to Jenna Hyatt, Ed.D., Associate Dean of Student Living and serving as a leader at the university within the Student Success, we are fortunate to have Amber Hoefer assume this senior leadership position. Please help us to welcome her as Director at CWU. Amber.Hoefer@cwu.edu