

## 2019-2021 Biennium Internal Budget Proposal Narrative

### Division: Academic Affairs

**Evaluation Criteria:** Proposals will be evaluated on every aspect of this template. It is highly recommended that the narrative portion touch on each area. Proposals forwarded to UPRC by unit leaders will be discussed at UPRC and authors are encouraged to attend so that they may answer questions and provide clarification.

#### FIGs Expansion Proposal

- This is a revised version of a previously submitted budget proposal.  
*If box is checked please briefly outline any significant changes and/or indicate why it is being resubmitted.*

[Click here to enter text](#)

**Statement of Purpose:** *(What is the challenge or opportunity being addressed? How does the proposal address this challenge or opportunity? Limit response to 1 page – please link to any existing reports, data, supplemental materials, etc.)*

Western’s Freshman Interest Group (FIG) program provides small, academic seminars and thematically linked classes that increase student engagement and faculty/student interaction for new, first-time students (freshmen) each fall. These seminars comprise “high impact practices” as they provide a learning community and small, first-year seminars for all participants. Over the last decade, the seminars have evolved such that they are now more academic in focus and more closely associated with academic departments, which select the faculty and coordinate the themes with the VPUE. These changes have increased the impact of the program, which has been demonstrated to increase rates of retention for students at all bands of academic preparation. The following chart illustrates rates of first-to-second-year retention for FIG and non-FIG participants over the decade from 2005 to 2014 for instance:

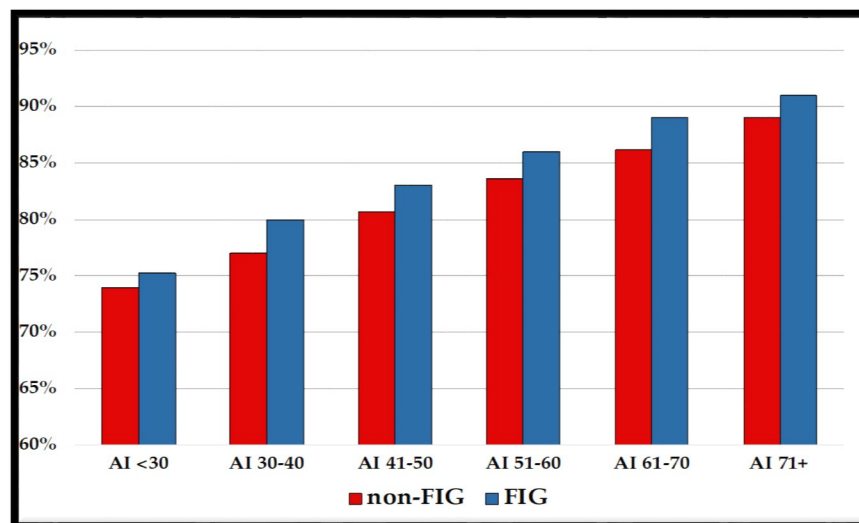
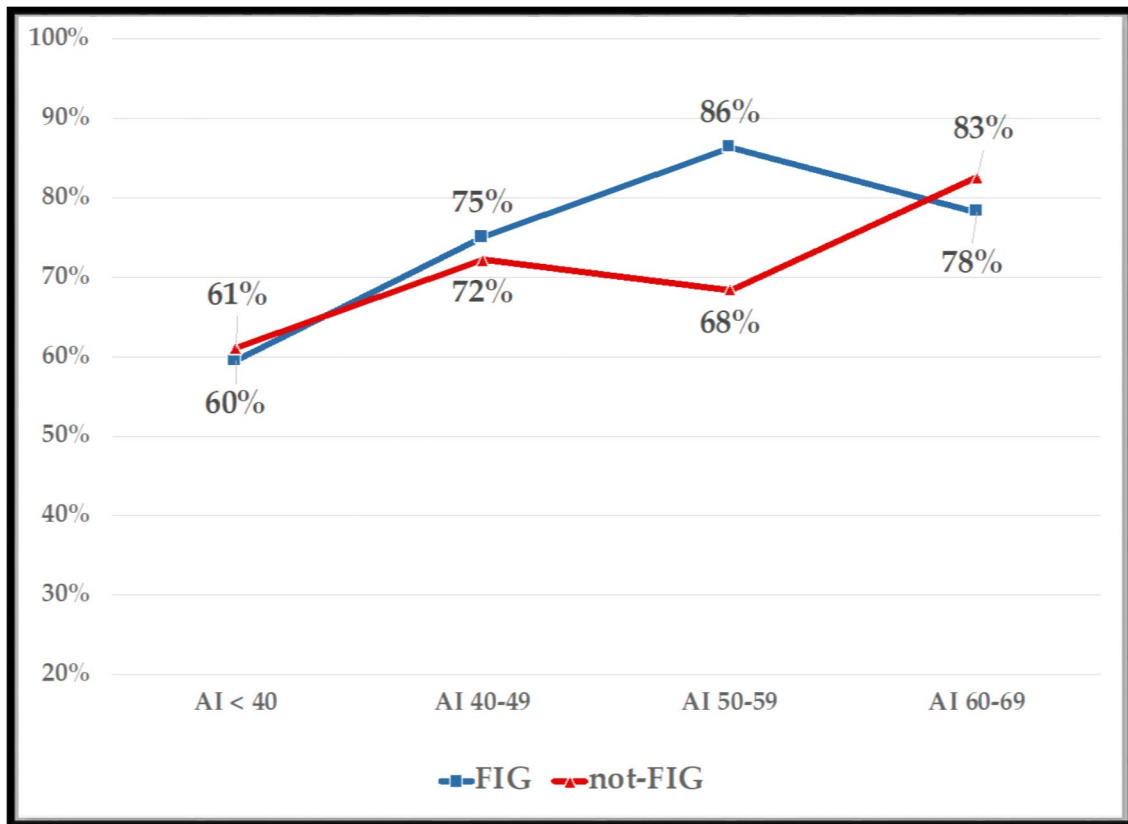


FIG participation is also associated with retention gains for populations of underserved students, such as Pell-eligible students who come to Western with average academic preparation (AI 50-59). This is demonstrated in the following illustration, which graphs rates of retention for FIG and non-FIG Pell-eligible students who entered western Fall, 2017. Notably, the great majority of Western students are in the AI band from 49-59.



However, FIGs are not available to all students. In particular, students who seek majors in CBE and CSE have very few FIGs available to them. Fortunately, an opportunity to address this problem now exists as each of these colleges have expressed interest in designing and offering more FIG seminars. Based on a successful pilot of math-related FIGs, for instance, the math department has expressed an interest in partnering with the VPUE to offer more FIGs. Similarly, CSE and the VPUE have proposed to offer FIGs for science-bound students who are not math-ready to begin chemistry fall term. These students often report feeling adrift and unconnected to the sciences in their first term. Science-focused FIGs would enable these students to engage with CSE and to science-related academic seminars in cohorts of like-minded students while they complete the math requirements needed to begin their science prerequisites.

Consequently, this proposal would fund the creation of additional FIGs designed to support students with an interest in CBE and CSE.

### **Anticipated Outcome(s):**

This proposal is anticipated to increase rates of first-to-second year retention, and graduation, for Western students. In addition, this proposal would increase the number and percentage of new students who participate in “high impact” educational practices.

**Metrics:** *(How will outcomes be measured? Please include current data points and goals. If this proposal will have any impact on the [Overall Metrics](#) included in the university’s strategic plan, please indicate which specific ones here.)*

This proposal is designed to impact the overall metrics, specifically first-to-second year retention and the six-year graduation rate.

**How does this proposal align with your departmental/divisional strategic priorities?** *(Please reference specific items from the recently completed departmental/divisional strategic plan and attach a copy.)*

The University’s strategic plan comprises the divisional priorities of the Provost Office and the Office of the CPUE.

**How does this proposal support the University Mission and Strategic Objectives?** *(Please refer to the [2018-2025 Strategic Plan](#) and indicate which core theme(s) this proposal will help achieve.)*

This proposal supports the core theme of “Advancing Inclusive Success” and “Enhancing Washington Impact” due to the demonstrated impact of FIGs on student retention and, in particular, the retention of Pell-eligible students. More specifically, by making “high impact” educational experiences available to more students, the proposal would help provide a “transformational education.” Similarly, by increasing opportunities for student/faculty interaction, the proposal would help Western to “foster a caring and supportive environment.” Goal 4, concerning “justice, and equity,” is also served by the demonstrated impact of FIGs on reducing the achievement gap for low-income students.

### **What are the consequences of not funding this proposal?**

Not funding this proposal would be expected to result in the following consequences:

- First-year students interested in CSE and CBE would continue to have less access to FIGs than other students.
- Fewer students would have access to the “high-impact” practices of learning communities and a small, first-year seminars.
- An opportunity to increase student/faculty interaction and retention for first-year students would be missed.

**What alternatives were explored?**

FIGs is funded with a combination of state dollars and Enrollment Fee funds. Enrollment Fee support for FIGs has increased and has expanded capacity for the program. However, this increase is not sufficient to equitably provide a FIG for all first-year students who wish to participate in the program.

**Which units (departments, colleges, etc.) will be involved?**

FIGs serves students from all colleges except Fairhaven.

**Equipment needed:**

Click here to enter text

*For major (>\$25k) purchases, please provide the following information.*

**Item:**

Click here to enter text

**Purpose:**

Click here to enter text

**Cost:**

Click here to enter text

**Anticipated Useful Life:**

Click here to enter text

**Replacement Cost if any:**

Click here to enter text

**Human Resources** *(Complete the table below adding additional rows if necessary):*

<i>Position Title</i>	<i>Total Headcount</i>	<i>Total FTE</i>	<i>Salary and Benefits per FTE</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>GUR faculty stipend: two stipends @ \$1,000.00 and seminar faculty salary</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>3.0</i>	<i>\$29,928</i>	<i>\$29,928</i>


*Table above should match data on budget spreadsheets submitted with this proposal. Complete the spreadsheet to get salary, benefit, and total cost amounts. Contact your division budget officer with questions.*

**Operating & Maintenance Costs (include service contracts, installation costs, etc.):**

\$2,400 recurring operating expense

**Space Requirements:**

**What type of space is needed for this proposal? (e.g., private office, lab space, group work/study space, etc.)**

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**What features must this space have? (e.g., fume hoods, plumbing, 3-phase power, etc.)**

Click here to enter text

**What needs can be accommodated within your existing space?**

Click here to enter text

**How much new space will be required?**

Click here to enter text