

Budget Proposal Narrative

WWU FY23 and Biennium 2023-25 Operating Budget Process

Please carefully review the [Call for Proposals](#) with particular attention to the evaluation criteria before beginning this application. Criteria should be addressed throughout the proposal narrative.

Proposal Title: Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE)

Division: Academic Affairs

Department/College: College of the Environment

Department Contact: Dr. Rebekah Paci-Green

Section 1: Proposal Summary and Problem Statement

Check all that apply.

Priority Program and Service Areas:

- Graduate Programs
- Inclusive Student Success

Identified Structural or Legacy Funding Needs (to be used sparingly and in conjunction with Division VP)

- Core Infrastructure, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance
- Remaining funding needs from partially funded prior request
 - *If checked, please identify original funding request amount and actual funding received in narrative section*
- Other [Click here to enter text](#)

Statement of Purpose (One Page or Less):

What are the challenges or opportunities being addressed? How will the new investment(s) in this proposal address this challenge or opportunity? What are the expected outcomes if this proposal is funded?

The College of the Environment seeks funds to **launch an Office for Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE)**, which will support a suite of inclusive student success activities that will transform undergraduate education for all students in the College—with targeted interventions supporting first-generation, Pell Grant-eligible, and racial and ethnic minority-identified students. Innovations in education developed to support the most marginalized students ultimately support and engage all students.

This program addresses three major challenges the College currently faces. First, many students come to Western each year expressing an interest in College of the Environment programs, but insufficient academic readiness, limited opportunities to engage with the College, and a lack of strong support networks have deterred them. Second, students that do enter the College are overwhelmingly white, suburban, and middle-class; this demographic homogeneity limits the diverse perspectives needed for addressing environmental challenges. Third, first-year student retention rates are decreasing, especially for first generation, Pell Grant-eligible, and underrepresented minorities.

To address these challenges, the College proposes a Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE) Office—staffed by a new Director and new student mentors. It will be supported by existing faculty, advising staff, and outreach staff. Research shows that inclusive student success, especially for underrepresented student groups, is consistently facilitated by learning environments that provide a sense of belonging, self-efficacy, instructor and peer role models, professional identity, and social responsibility [1-13]. The RISE Office will support a series of activities from matriculation to graduation. It will leverage existing Western programs and build needed support infrastructure within the College by a) launching a **College Distinguished Scholars Program** and **Peer Mentoring Program** specifically designed to recruit and mentor first-generation and underrepresented racial and ethnic minority-identified students; b) **expanding College presence in first-year programs** such as Viking Launch and Freshman Interest Group; c) opening an **Environmental Student Union space**; and c) provide logistical support to **expand inclusive field and expeditionary courses** that allow students to learn science, math and policy content through coordinated courses of undergraduate field research. Experiential learning is a pedagogical approach that has been shown to increase success in underserved students [2-7, 9, 11, 56-59].

In parallel, faculty will address barriers to admission and retention by developing and offering **student-centered, inclusive skills support courses** in math, science, and critical reading and writing, an evidence-based approach for inclusive student success, especially for underrepresented groups [45-55]. Through these efforts, RISE has the potential to diversify our College's graduates, improve student experiences, and ultimately provide Western with models for inclusive education that can serve as a future recruitment tool.

Summary of Proposed New Investments:

Summarize the new investments included in this proposal (total monetary amount, number of FTE and type of positions, and other expenses). Explain the need for any goods and services or professional contracts.

In 2016, the College completed and adopted its Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. In the intervening years we have been able to achieve many elements of the plan: we substantially increased faculty diversity through recent hires, established standing College and Department-level Diversity and Inclusion Committees, created College website pages focused on ADEI, and revised department-level missions and visions. In 2017, the College reallocated internal funds to hire a College Diversity & Recruitment Specialist. That Specialist has been able to further address student support services for underrepresented students, access scholarships, and student engagement.

Today, expanding our impact is limited by a lack of budget and support staffing. Faculty excited about further advancing ADEI in their courses, research, and mentoring are limited by time and funding constraints, as well as the historic low diversity among College of the Environment majors. This proposal seeks to reduce these constraints.

Approximate direct costs for each new investment are described below:

INVESTMENT 1. DIRECTOR OF THE RISE OFFICE

(~\$65,000 + benefits annual cost, \$10,000 one-time cost)

The College will hire a **new Director** (\$65,000) to staff a Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE) Office, with \$10,000 allocated for recruitment and startup. The existing College Diversity Recruitment and Retention Specialist position, funded through the College, will continue to focus on outreach, including outreach to community colleges, high schools, and prospective students, as well as supporting RISE office activities related to diversity and retention. The Director will oversee implementation and management of the following programs:

Engaging with First Year Experience for Students with Environmental Interests. To improve our ability to directly recruit and mentor first-generation, Pell-Grant eligible, and racial and ethnic minority-identified students, the RISE Director will work with College Administration and Department Chairs to launch a **College-wide Distinguished Scholars program—Environmental Scholars Rising**. The Director will coordinate with Admissions and Outreach to identify, invite and enroll 10 incoming first-year students a year, with the goal of having about 40 scholars at any one time. The College will especially target promising first-year students who are first-generation and racial and ethnic minority-identified students; College advising staff and our Diversity Recruitment and Retention Specialist will engage directly with regional high school advisers to promote the program and encourage diverse student applicants.

The Environmental Scholars Rising program will group students accepted into the program into annual cohorts and pair them with faculty mentors who will follow the cohort until graduation. We expect some students to not stay in the Scholars program through the full four years; transfer students and others whom the RISE Director identifies will be invited to “fill out” the program as needed. Two faculty members -- one from the environmental science branch and one from the environmental studies branch of the College -- will work together to mentor two sets of scholars, for a 1:10 mentor to scholar ratio and built-in interdisciplinary experience for the scholars. Scholars will receive a small textbook stipend, priority registration in College courses, and be invited to participate in a field introduction to regional research and community engagement projects led by College faculty prior to their first fall quarter (See Investment 4).

The RISE Director will support faculty mentors, by meeting with mentors and students regularly, to help identify and provide logistical support for activities and events that support the students’ growth as scholars, engaged citizens, and professionals. The Scholars program will be tailored to the changing needs of the scholars as they enter Western and grow as scholars of the environment.

- In the first two years, scholars’ activities will center around supporting students early academic success, interdisciplinary exploration, and building connections. For example, RISE and mentors will ensure scholars feel comfortable with tech tools and introduce them to campus support services, library services, and student clubs and centers.
- As scholars gain confidence and build connections through their emerging professional identities, faculty mentors will also engage with scholars in ways that allow them to explore the breadth of College of the Environment fields. Together they may organize a campus lecture or film and meeting afterwards to discuss, volunteer on a relevant community project, or host a field-of-study-relevant book club. Faculty mentors may support them in submitting a Sustainability, Equity and Justice Fund (SEJF) proposal.
- As scholars progress further, activities will shift more heavily towards professional development, such as tours of professional organizations, hosting panels of professionals, attending professional conferences and networking events, running mini workshops of writing professional resumes, developing a professional online presence, building portfolios, mock interviews, attending career fairs, and securing relevant internships.

Because the Scholars program will have capacity limitations, and targeting underserved students, the RISE Director and College faculty will also leverage the existing programs on campus to engage with other first year students who may have a curiosity about or affinity with environmental issues. The RISE Director will identify and organize faculty to **engage with the Viking Launch and the Freshman Interest Group (FIG) programs** to expose students to local environmental issues, research, and solutions they could study further through degree programs in the College of the Environment. The RISE Director will collaborate with the Center

for Community Engagement, Outback Farm, RE Sources, Shannon Point Marine Center, Sustainability and Engagement Institute, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association, the Outdoor Center, L.E.A.D., and other university and community organizations to create high-interest, high-impact field excursions that enhance students' sense of place and connection to College offerings.

Enhancing Connection with Pre-majors & Early Majors/Transfer students. The RISE Director will coordinate with Space Administration and Facilities Management to **develop a physical space for student engagement—an Environmental Student Union**. The envisioned space will provide a hub that encourages peer-to-peer social interaction and provides direct access to student-support-services, the RISE Office, College advising and mentoring staff and faculty, Associated Student Senators, campus organizations, and local activities related to sustainability and social and environmental justice. The space will be a hearth for students in, or wanting to become part of, the College of the Environment.

The need and vision for such a space was first articulated by College students of color who submitted and were awarded a student-led Sustainability, Equity, and Justice (SEJ) award in 2019. The goal of that 2019 proposal was to create a safe, inclusive, culturally re-affirming space; provide resources to facilitate student success; facilitate and provide for student organizing; and be part of a network of University resources serving students. The students advocating for this space also saw the space as a place where principles of sustainability would be visible in the development and design of the space. (The SEJF award was unable to be implemented due to fund usage rules and Space Administration constraints; however, students still keenly express need for a space for collaboration and connection.) The Director will develop a coordinated schedule for the Environmental Student Union such that all students – but especially pre-majors, early majors, and transfer students – will be able to connect, collaborate, and form a sense of community that supports their emerging professional identities. We will pay special attention to making the space visually and physically welcoming and affirming for a wide diversity of students.

INVESTMENT 2. PEER-SUPPORT MENTORS

(~\$40,000 annual cost)

The RISE Director will also develop and oversee a **peer-support mentoring** program for underrepresented students. The RISE Director will recruit 10 Peer Support Mentors per year. Some upper-division students in the Environmental Scholars Rising program will be invited to be peer-mentors, which will help to broaden the influence of the faculty mentoring, resource connections, and engagement activities they experienced. However, Peer Support Mentors will also be drawn from across the student body and within the College, including direct recruitment through the Ethnic Student and LGBTQ+ centers, as well as from transfer students, religious groups, and other student clubs on campus.

The RISE Director and College advising staff will use Navigate, the student advising software, along with insights from faculty, peer mentors, and the Diversity Recruitment and Retention Specialist, to identify students most likely to benefit from peer-mentoring and invite them to participate in the program. As with the Scholar's program, first-generation and racial and ethnic minority-identified students will be specifically invited to join the program. While not underrepresented in the College, Transfer students, students living with disabilities, women in environmental science, and LGBTQ+ students face unique challenges in the College. They will benefit from peer-support mentoring that can enhance their sense of belonging and can help connect them to support resources.

Peer mentors will work with the RISE Office to organize activities that will support inclusive academic success, a sense of belonging, and self-efficacy among students as they build their identities as leaders in environmental problem-solving. Peer Support Mentors will work 5-10 hours a week during the academic year and each mentor 5-8 students. Example activities include group advising sessions, faculty meet-and-greets, study sessions, visits to the Writing Center and scholarship center, panel discussions with successful graduates; resume writing sessions; skills acquisition workshops, such as technology training and field safety; and career fair attendance.

Peer mentors will also organize activities to help students form connections with other peers (e.g., recreation activities through the Outdoor Center, community service, films, invited speakers, connecting with dorm programming to highlight and engage new students). They may also reach out to students unaware of the College's offerings, by working with dorm RAs, campus clubs, and student centers.

INVESTMENT 3. FACULTY TRAINING AND SUPPORT

(~\$68,500 one-time cost, ~\$37,000 annual cost)

Many College of the Environment faculty, including the many who participated in the development of this proposal, are eager to deeply reimagine our curricular engagement with students across all four years of their time at Western. Yet, existing teaching, research and service requirements have constrained our ability to do so. Faculty need both one-time funds, to develop and pilot deep and innovative change to curriculum, and ongoing funds to engage in meaningful mentoring of underrepresented students. Advanced training in ADEI best practices and culturally relevant teaching will further support this effort. Such training will employ an assets-based approach that sees underrepresented students as bringing community cultural wealth to their learning and to the wider learning community [14].

Developing Support and Field Courses

With one-time funds of \$34,000 will cover six course releases over a three-year period so that faculty can **develop a series of science and math support courses**. These support courses will

supplement the existing BIOL 204, 205, 206 series, the CHEM 161,162,163, and Math 112 and 114 offerings.

The biology and chemistry series are required for Environmental Science majors; Environmental Studies majors are strongly encouraged to take chemistry, biology and MATH 114. However, the existing biology, chemistry, and math series courses are designed for students majoring in other sciences. College of the Environment students often struggle to find the content relevant, a strong deterrent especially for students with less access to high quality high school math and science courses. Thus, these skills-building support courses will target talented students that may face barriers to entering their desired environmental degree choice or are dissuaded from taking more advanced science courses that would strengthen their knowledge of socio-environmental systems.

These skills-building support courses will be academically rigorous support courses that introduce the culturally relevant environmental contexts for STEM concepts, such environmental justice, pollution, biodiversity, natural resource management, agroecology, and climate change. The tutorials will draw upon research in student-centered learning and inclusive classroom pedagogies to better ensure that the tutorial is a space where students can ask questions and connect STEM learning with their emerging identities as professional interdisciplinary scientists, scholars, and environmental problem-solvers.

Faculty will also **develop a critical reading and writing support course** to supplement existing College core curriculum. It will focus on supporting students as they learn to engage with environmental sector peer-reviewed literature. This literature often spans multiple disciplines, ideological stances, and epistemic positions and some students will benefit from extra support that helps them engage in meta-cognition techniques to critically engage with the readings. Critical writing skills will be taught alongside critical reading.

Generally, College of the Environment faculty develop, propose, and revise their courses as an integral part of their teaching practice. Our courses focus on issues impacted by emerging science, changing policy frameworks, a dynamic natural environment, and growing societal awareness of social and environmental justice intersections. We welcome and relish frequent course revisions and new course development. Furthermore, we frequently seek and are awarded summer teaching grants. However, the skills-building supplemental course development we propose here, as well as the inclusive field courses we describe below, are well beyond typical course development expectations and even the several weeks of support offered through summer teaching grants. Developing these skills-building courses will require a multi-year effort to review existing science series courses, analyze best practices elsewhere, and develop environmental examples and applications, and build the institutional connections to ensure effective implementation. Faculty will further be tasked with monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of these supplemental courses in the first few years, adjusting as needed.

A portion of these support courses will be reserved for students in the Environmental Scholars Rising program and those in the peer-mentoring program as a way to bolster inclusive student success. When additional seats are available, College advising staff will use Navigate to further identify at-risk students with math placement and/or poor grades in science, math, and English 101 courses.

Separately, one-time funds of \$34,000 will be used to cover six course releases over three years to extensively redesign several traditional courses as **inclusive, field-based and expeditionary course clusters**. Initially the foci are likely to be **Marine Conservation, Urban Environmental Justice**, and **Environmental Pollution Monitoring**. These courses will be based upon the Course-Based Undergraduate Research Experience (CURE) format.

When designed and staffed by faculty committed to addressing ADEI barriers in traditional courses, the CURE course format been found to effectively engage students traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields [1-13]. In these course clusters, students will directly engage in research that allows them to gain skills in field observation, data collection, laboratory research, data analysis, and professional written and oral communication in ways that transform separate, traditional courses into an inclusive, integrated, and engaging learning experience.

Care will be taken to address the needs of students with disabilities, students with limited field experience, and students with financial and care responsibilities. The course clusters will ensure multiple methods of engagement, some of which may be lab or campus-based engagement in support of the broader field mission.

We will leverage internal summer teaching grants to further develop field components in existing classes, and over time, expand our field clusters, with other foci possibly including riverine systems, alpine environments, watershed studies, energy transitions, and contaminated site management.

Offering Support and Field Courses

Once developed, annual funds of \$14,300 will cover **10 credits of adjunct teaching instruction per year in biology, chemistry, math and critical writing support courses**. We will offer three 1-credit biology support courses each year to follow the BIOL 204, 205, and 206 series and three 1-credit chemistry support course each year to follow the CHEM 161, 162, 163 series. Two 1-credit support courses will be tailored to support students in MATH 112 and 114 once each a year, primarily targeting students interested in Environmental Studies and Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy departments. Separately, a 1-credit critical reading and writing skills support course will be offered twice a year to supplement existing 300-level core courses in the College.

Recurring funds of \$23,000 annually will support one course release per year for **four faculty mentors** to support the Environmental Scholars Rising program, described earlier. At full implementation, four faculty mentors will support 40 students. The four faculty members will be drawn from across College departments, allowing for interdisciplinary faculty collaboration in mentoring scholars and for students to observe and partake in cross-department and interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.

INVESTMENT 4. INCREASED UNDERGRADUATE ADVISING SUPPORT

(\$26,000 + benefits, annual)

The College has operated under a centralized advising model since 2000, with two professional staff advisers supporting all majors and minors. Since this shift, College majors have grown from 309 students to 624 students. The College currently has 236 minors as well.

To accommodate the more than doubling of this advising load, the college's two advisers have sharply reduced their outreach in regional community colleges and high schools. Even with the reduction of these outreach activities, students frequently cannot get advising appointments in a timely manner, which has resulted in degraded degree planning and delayed time to degree for some students. The impacts are felt most directly by first generation and transfer students who benefit most from robust advising support.

We propose a **0.5 FTE staff undergraduate program adviser** (\$26,000) to support existing advisers, allowing the advisers to improve advising accessibility and allowing advisers to return to regional outreach. With support from the RISE Office, advisers would also engage in further ADEI and culturally-relevant support training to further improve the quality of advising support for historically underserved students.

INVESTMENT 5. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

(\$25,000 one-time, \$52,500 annual)

As part of ongoing program implementation, the RISE Director and a rotating faculty member will engage in continuing education access, diversity, equity and inclusion **ADEI training** (\$3000, annual). One such option is Center for Improvement in Mentoring Experience in Research (CIMER) training, which could be offered as campus training to benefit mentors in Distinguished Scholar programs across Western's campus. Through a combination of existing skills and continued training, faculty associated with the RISE activities will support college-wide reflection and learning; they will facilitate mini-workshops and discussion forums addressing ADEI and evidence-based best practice in inclusive teaching and mentoring.

Funds will also support an annual **2-day training for incoming Peer Support Mentors** (\$4000, annual), facilitated by the RISE Director and in collaboration with lead faculty.

The Environmental Scholars Rising Program will include funds for a small **textbook stipend** for its 40 scholars (\$10,000, annual), which we plan to supplement through seeking philanthropic matching funds. It will also include funds for a **2-day, pre-term workshop** (\$4000, annual) for incoming scholars and mentors, learn about the College of the Environment's work, and tour regional research and community environmental intervention sites. Further funds will be used for **mentors and upper division scholars to attend a regional professional conference or workshop** (\$3000, annual).

To implement field and expeditionary courses, an **equipment investment** (\$20,000, one-time) is needed for safety and communication equipment and data collection tools. Recurring funds will support **ongoing delivery of field courses** (\$10,000, annual), including replacement of consumable data collection and other material, field transportation, and, where needed, community-partnership support. Additional recurring funds will **reduce field course fee barriers** (\$15,000, annual) for first-generation, low-income, and racial and ethnic minority-identified students to ensure that these experiential and field courses do not replicate and amplify existing barriers to participation. The RISE Office will work with the College administration and Foundation to further fund raise and expand course fee subsidies to a wider number of students.

A secondary barrier to field and experiential courses is often gear. We seek funds to invest in **student gear** (\$5000, one time) for students who do not have their own. Importantly, the College will work with the Outdoor Center to manage this gear. A small amount of annual funds will support increased staffing at the Outdoor Center (\$1000, annual) to manage check in/out of gear at the Outdoor Center; this increased staffing, supported through the RISE proposal, will incidentally increase campus-wide access and be more sustainable than developing an internal gear loan program within the College. The RISE Office will work with our development team to create opportunities for alumni and state outdoor retailers to further support gear scholarships and donate gear.

Finally, **supplemental operational funds for the RISE Office** (\$2500, annual) will support engagement events, visiting speakers, office supplies, other incidentals and will supplement the approximately \$5,000 current provided by the College for Diversity Outreach and Retention.

INVESTMENT 6. SPACE RENNOVATION

Addressed in Section 4 of the proposal; waiting for cost estimate from Space Administration.

Please provide data or analysis to support this request and illustrate the anticipated impact of this investment, including in advancing accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion and sustainability.

Washington State’s environmental challenges span many issues: ecological monitoring, sustainable development, pollution reduction, natural hazards planning, and the increasingly encompassing impacts of climate change. While these issues literally effect everyone, environmental impacts are most often felt first and most strongly by groups systemically marginalized by society – immigrants, communities of color, tribal nations, those living with disabilities, and (in Washington State) small-scale farmers and rural communities reliant upon natural resource extraction. For our state to effectively manage existing environmental challenges and innovate solutions, our College must draw from, successfully mentor, and graduate students that broadly represent the State. Doing so is foremost a moral imperative [15-19], but also a practical necessity in supporting effective, creative, and innovative environmental problem solving [20-23].

Need to better recruit and retain diverse students

Demographic trends in state, university, and College of the Environment show that our university and college lags in recruitment and retention of a broadly representative student body [24-26], undermining our mission to produce the next generation of environmental problem solvers.

At the university level:

- The university trails the state and other Washington state regional, public universities in recruiting students of color. While 32.5% of the state are people of color, only 15% of Western’s students were in 2021.
- The university’s retention rate for first, second, third- and fourth-year retention has been persistently lower for first-generation, Pell-grant eligible, and underrepresented minorities. First-year retention rates for underrepresented minorities lagged 10% behind other students in 2020-2021. The lag was also 10% for first generation students and 8% for Pell-Grant eligible students.
- The pandemic increased the retention gap. For underrepresented minorities, Pell-Grant eligible, and first-generation students, the retention gap was the highest in a decade or more.

At the college level:

- Ecology and environmental science disciplines have persistently low percentages of underrepresented minorities, even while other science and technology fields have been able to diversify [22-23, 27].
- While 32% of Western students are first generation, only 26% of the College of the Environment students are, suggesting we are not effectively recruiting and supporting first generation students.

- While 25% of Western students are Pell-Grant eligible, only 22% of the College students are eligible, suggesting we are also not effectively recruiting and supporting low-income students.
- While 11% of Western students identify as underrepresented minorities, only 10% of the College's student so identify. Narrowing this to a 1% gap has taken years of concerted ADEI efforts; our percentage of underrepresented minorities increased from 6% in the 2012-13 academic year to 10% in 2020-21. However, we remain strongly concerned. Western's rates fall well below state demographics. Western and other universities have experienced an alarming drop in first-year retention rates for underrepresented minoritized students during the first two years of the pandemic. These impacts are likely to reverberate for years unless we implement new efforts to recruit, retain, support and mentor these racial and ethnic-minority identified students.
- While the state has rough gender parity, the College of the Environment students has increasingly skewed female. Female-identified students now represent 65% of our students, seven percentage points above even the university. It suggests the College needs to work harder to recruit and support male-identified students.

Need to better support marginalized students at Western

In summer 2020, through the Social Justice and Equity Committee coordinated research to give voice and structure to the needs of underrepresented students, especially in light of pandemic disruption. One College of the Environment faculty member surveyed 50 Black students; another served as project coordinator.

Black student respondents stated that their educational experience had added burdens of negotiating a primarily white institution (PWI), additional work of dealing with racial trauma, and the added labor of trying to reform the university. The students stated they needed immediate technological access support, expanded mental health and identity group support, anti-racism training for faculty, staff and administration and shift in resources towards Black student wellness, retention, and success. Coordinated surveys of Indigenous students, students from immigrant families, disabled and chronically ill students also highlighted students' need for institutional responsiveness to addressing their needs for mental health support, and spaces and formats for forming community and support networks [28].

Need to better connect with first- and second-year students

The gap between students who enter the university with a declared interest in the College of the Environment majors and students who actually select one of the College's majors is presently 14%. Some students will who declare interest in the College may shift to other majors, after discovering a passion they did not know they had. We fully support and applaud that discovery process. And certainly, some students who matriculate with no stated interest in the environment eventually declare a major in the College of the Environment.

However, observations from college advisers and the Diversity, Recruitment and Retention Specialist suggest that this gap has at least two troubling sources – students drift away because the College does not significantly engage with them until junior year and students select other majors because they are deterred by science courses that they do not see as relevant to their

environmental interests. Less certain is whether students also drop out because they face social or institutional challenges that might have been addressable with stronger institutional support networks.

Many students who do major in the College talk about stumbling upon the degrees, often after considerable investment in other degrees.

Need to better support students within College of the Environment

Even when students do find the College and declare their major here, systemic barriers shape their experience. In 2018, the Environmental Studies Community and Equity Committee surveyed College student in several 300-level core classes (n=224, response rate 54.7%) to understand their needs and sense of belonging. From the survey, we found that:

- Students of color were more likely to experience notable bias from peers (p=.05) and more likely to feel that courses do not sufficiently represent important aspects of their culture or identity (p=0.00).
- LGBTQ+ students were also more likely to experience peer bias (p=0.06) and have safety concerns that limited their participation in study sessions (p=0.06) and extra-curricular events (p=<.01).
- First-generation students were significantly more likely to rely upon food stamps or food pantries (p=0.1), have financial situations that prevented them from buying textbooks (p=0.00), participation in international study (p=0.02), and buying needed technology (p=0.01).
- Women were more likely to feel unsafe in the early mornings and evenings, limiting participation in study sessions (p=0.01), computer labs (p=0.00) and extra-curricular activities (p=0.00).

These findings indicate that students interested in the College of the Environment face structural barriers to forming a sense of belonging and identity as environmental scholars. Furthermore, these barriers are vastly more challenging to negotiate for Black, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and first-generation students who simultaneously negotiate institutional unresponsiveness and pervasive biases from peers, faculty, staff, and administration. These findings amplify our concern for marginalized students. They call for our direct and immediate investment in inclusive student success from matriculation to graduation.

Evidence of College of the Environment actions already taken

The College of the Environment has been actively developing and implementing initiatives to address access, diversity, equity, and inclusion. In 2015, faculty and staff from across the College developed a three-year Diversity and Inclusion plan. College faculty and staff approved the 3-year plan in May 2016 [29].

To create the plan, the committee assessed university data, conducted College-wide listening sessions, inventoried resources, conducted background research, surveyed faculty and staff on their related activities on and off campus, help focus group sessions, and conducted a self-awareness assessment. It defined its two key terms this way:

- Diversity is a core value embodies inclusiveness, mutual respect, and multiple perspectives. It serves as a catalyst for change resulting in environmental equity and a reduction/elimination in environmental degradation and disparities. In this context, we are mindful of all aspects of human experiences such as: socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation and expression, spiritual practice, geography, mental and physical disability and age.
- Inclusion is a core element for successfully achieving diversity. Inclusion is achieved by nurturing the climate and culture of the College through professional development, education, policy, and practice. The objective is to create a climate that fosters belonging, respect, and value for all, and encourages engagement and connection throughout the institution.

The College Diversity and Inclusion Plan laid out a range of recommended actions, many of which have been accomplished, initiated, and/or institutionalized.

Table 1. The eight actions completed, seven actions in progress, and three actions not yet started from the College Diversity and Inclusion Plan, including 11 actions that will be supported by this RISE proposal

Action	Status	Notes	RISE*
Institutional Infrastructure			
Establish a Diversity & Equity Standing Committee	✓	Done	
Revise College Mission and Website	✓	Done	
Professional staff development	~	Some retreat trainings. Further systematic training through RISE proposal.	Yes
Expand advising support	✗	Limited funds. Further support through RISE proposal.	Yes
Dedicated financial resources	✓	\$5000 college budget; ENVIS budgeting for DEI in department discretionary funds. Further systematic training through RISE proposal.	Yes
Template for measuring and tracking DEI data	✗	Not yet initiated	Yes
Create an administrative “Diversity Officer”	✓	Hired in 2017; expansion through RISE proposal.	Yes
Audit of Current Climate	✓	2018 ENVIS survey. Continued longitudinal surveying as part of RISE evaluation and monitoring.	Yes

College Climate			
Mandatory Cultural Sensitivity-Awareness Training	~	Some retreat training. Further systematic training through RISE proposal.	Yes
Celebrate Annual Events & Diversity Achievements	~	Reviewing and revising awards Feb 2022	
Quarterly All-College Social Events	✓	Done prior to pandemic; attempted during pandemic but unsuccessful. Planning in place for 2022.	Yes
Recognize Custodial & Service Worker Leadership	x	Not yet initiated	
Rename Existing Centers	~	Partial, College renaming 2021	
Student, Staff, and Faculty Recruitment, Retention, and Excellence			
Develop Pipeline and Pathways Program	~	RISE proposal focus	Yes
Support and Ensure Student Excellence	~	RISE proposal focus	Yes
Curricula Development	✓	DEI reflected in SLOs, college-wide curricular assessment in 2020; creation of enviro justice minor; and more	Yes
TA training	~	New grad TA training course; course modules can be expanded further to address ADEI in classroom/lab	
Recruitment and Retention	✓	Recent faculty hires in college have strong demographic diversity; several bring indigenous research and curriculum	

Evidence of what works to recruit, retain, and support students

Based upon our assessment of current trends, the climate and needs of our students, and an assessment of our College of the Environment Diversity and Inclusion Plan actions, we are ready to make the next level of sustained and deep changes, transforming the way we engage with undergraduate students from matriculation to graduation.

The proposed Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE) Office, staff, and activities are grounded in evidence-based, research on effective recruitment, retention, and support of students, especially those who have been underrepresented in the past.

Research shows that student success consistently results when learning environments provide several factors [1-13], including:

- Sense of belonging and feelings of membership
- Identity as a scholar, with recognition by self and others

- Self-efficacy: confidence and competence in skills and abilities
- Role model development and mentoring
- Sustained engagement between faculty and students throughout the educational period
- Sense of purpose, responsibility, and service to society

When educational programs support these factors, students develop confidence, competence, a resilience mindset, and grit to persevere through challenges. When programs lack several factors, many students languish. These impacts disproportionately impede students who are first-generation, racial and ethnic-minority identified students, or those from economically-disadvantaged high schools. With RISE, we will implement strategies to realize each factor and create collaborative learning environments where students achieve their potential. Students will grow in the context of a connected learning community, where education becomes a “rite of passage” experience that propels them to greater professional aspirations.

The College of the Environment offers a range of field courses and field-based activities, from international travel courses, wilderness courses, field trips integrated into ecology, geography, and planning courses. It also offers service-learning courses that integrate learning, community engagement, and a cohort experience centered on addressing a common challenge.

Yet these programs create several kinds of barriers that limit student participation in programming that could enhance their success as developing scholars. These barriers include a lack of programmatic funding, prohibitive student course fee costs, a lack of information among student about opportunities, a lack of prior experience, and a perception of not fitting in. These barriers disproportionately impact students from groups the College underserves but seeks to reach and support. More generally, enrollment in service-learning courses is typically restricted to seniors, often for important reasons related to resource limits and student academic readiness.

Our plan to expand engagement with faculty mentors, field trips, and more accessible service-learning opportunities to first and second year students is meant to bring the benefits of these programs to student who have typically been told to wait. Evidence backs our choice of actions.

- *Evidence on the efficacy of mentoring programs.* Research also shows that peer and faculty mentoring is an important predictor of retention, especially for underrepresented student groups [30-37]. Having students who are conscious of underrepresented student issues can be instrumental in helping those from an underrepresented background feel included and engaged in the college community and succeed academically [38]. Students are more likely to seek help from their fellow peers than to reach out and access campus support services [39]. Both faculty and peer mentoring support and bridge programs improve student interest, engagement and success, especially in STEM focused disciplines, by strengthen the institutional-level extrinsic factors surrounding students [40-41]. Mentoring also provides psycho-social support by normalizing struggle and helping students develop a sense of belonging [42].

Regionally, co-creating communities of indigenous and other minoritized students has increase retention and success at the graduate level [43]. High levels of peer mentoring are also correlated with improvements in mental health for underrepresented students [44].

- *Evidence on the efficacy of support courses.* Decades of research points to the enhanced learning outcomes for all students, and increased retention of underrepresented groups, when student-centered and active learning methods are employed in STEM courses [45-48]. Novel course formats like bridge, bootcamp, and supplemental instruction have also emerged as a strategy for improving grades, reducing failure, and increasing retention [49]. Such approaches are especially effective in retaining and supporting underrepresented student groups in STEM fields [50]. Bridge courses and mentoring programs can increase retention and persistence; science bootcamps attract higher numbers of women and underrepresented minorities [51]. Interdisciplinary “science bootcamps” for first-year students increase retention and have positive psychosocial effects, when courses supported collaboration, socially relevant content, and opportunity for creative iteration [52]. Programs that incorporate bootcamp courses and networking programs are particularly effective for retaining first-year and Black students in STEM fields [53]. So are along-side support courses focused on encouraging effective study and higher-order thinking skills [54-55].
- *Evidence on efficacy of field programs.* Field programs and cohort-based models that provide opportunities for students to engage with mentors and role models are especially effective at bolstering inclusive student success [2-7,9,11]. Students with underrepresented identities can benefit greatly from inclusive field experiences, leading toward equity in academic outcomes and data shows this improves retention of students from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM fields [3,4,56]. Inclusive ecology field programs can create an ecological scientist mindset by recruiting based upon leadership skills, without requiring prior field experience; supporting students’ sense of place and belonging and culminating with field experiences that create confidence and self-efficacy. Such approaches have been successful with underrepresented students [9]. Direct community collaboration in critical geography courses that center social and environmental injustice [57] also increases underrepresented students’ excitement, learning outcomes, and program retention; such courses can also support community-to-university degree pipelines [58]. Field courses also offer opportunities for centering Black and Indigenous scholarship on disproportionate impacts of environmental challenges, an important corrective action for increasing representation and equity in environmental fields [59]. Across disciplinary foci, field programs help students overcome obstacles to completing degree programs by building connections to peers, profession, and community [2,4] and can help prepare students for careers in the environment sector by enhancing their skill set with field-based skills, improving confidence, and connecting them with community partners such as state agencies and tribes.

References List

For the 60 sources cited in this proposal, see:

[2. CENV RISE Inclusive Student Success--REFERENCES.docx](#)

Section 2: Performance Outcomes and Risk Mitigation

Please explain how the success of the proposal will be measured, if funded. What metrics might indicate that the intended impact was achieved? How can the expected outcomes be directly tied to the investment being proposed?

Provide the targets and explain which method(s) will be used to track progress; [metrics track progress toward University's Strategic Plan](#), estimated return on investment (such as enrollment increases or efficiencies), divisional KPI's, recruitment and retention including specifics for historically marginalized populations, or other.

This proposal aimed at enhancing inclusive student success in the College of the Environment has for major goals, with associated targets:

1. First, the College aims to decrease the loss of students who state an interest in the environment or in specific College majors at admission, but then who do not declare a major in the College.

We will measure this gap yearly using Admissions data on student interests and tracking a sample of these students to major declaration. To identify initial student interest in CENV we will request a student interest report from Admissions. From there, in conjunction with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and reports pulled from *Argos*, (Student Data Management System) we can track year-to-year retention data. Our goal will be to **decrease the attrition rate of students with declared interests**, lowering the loss from 14% to 11% over ten years.

2. Second, the College aims to continue to increase its recruitment and retention of students from underrepresented groups, specifically tracking first-generation, Pell-Grant eligible, and racial and ethnic minority-identified students. Because the College does not control admissions to the University, we will track the percentage of its students in these demographic categories in comparison to the university. Our target is to:
 - Reduce the three-year rolling average gap between University to College percentages of **first-generation students** from 7.7% to under 4% in the first 10 years.
 - Reduce the three-year rolling average gap between University to College percentages of **Pell-Grant eligible students** from 5.7% to under 3% in the first 10 years.

- Increase the three-year rolling average percent underrepresented minorities to While our three-year rolling average percentage of **racial and ethnic-identified students** from 11% to 15% in ten years.
- Broaden our Washington State impact by **increasing the number of high schools and community colleges** from which we are drawing students. Addressing the state's environmental problems will require the skills, perspectives, and efforts of students from across the region.

We will adapt and target activities to ensure equitable diversification and inclusion across departments and programs.

3. Third, the College aims to **increase the sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and identity as environmental scholars** for all College majors. To identify a baseline, we will adapt our internal 2018 College of the Environment Climate Survey, tailoring it specifically to elicit student interaction and engagement with RISE activities. Data will be disaggregated by demographics as much as ethically possible and to be especially attentive to longitudinal change in sense of belonging and self-efficacy among historically underrepresented groups and students living with disabilities. Further our goal will be to understand which constellation of activities/resources support students, disaggregated by demographic group.

Alongside these anonymous surveys, the RISE Director will hold yearly focus group discussions to understand students' experience of the College and their growing sense of efficacy as environmental scholars.

Using both this quantitative and qualitative data, we will assess to what degree, and in what ways, these programs and courses support student recruitment to the College majors, retention within the College, time to degree, success in individual classes, and greater overall academic rigor achieved.

4. The College will assess the effectiveness of the skills-building support courses by tracking student academic records. Our goals will be to demonstrate **increased academic rigor and success in students who complete skills-based support courses**, as measured by:
 - Higher final grades in STEM preparatory courses
 - Increased number of STEM courses taken
 - Increase number of College courses select with STEM course prerequisites
 - Higher final grades in College writing proficiency courses

As we collect and analyze the data on the efficacy of these skills-building courses, we are interested in exploring options for directly offering in-house science course series tailored to the specific needs of College of the Environment majors. However, before

moving towards an in-house model, we will need to assess the faculty capacity, effectiveness, and graduate school access implications of offering environmental science focused chemistry, biology, and math courses internally.

5. Closely **monitoring and evaluating the field and expeditionary course clusters** will also be critically important. Existing assessment instruments for science-based field course that can be adapted to the College's proposed field courses in environmental science and studies [60]. Comparison of the College's field course clusters to other institutions will be explored through the Undergraduate Field Experience Research Network, which supports a listserv, annual meetings, webinars, and network of other institutions.

For proposals that include personnel resources, explain how the proposal improves recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.

The personnel resources included in this proposal are directly tasked with supporting activities and curricular programming aimed at increasing access, diversity, and equity by improving the College's recruitment, retention, success, and sense of belong among underserved groups – first generation students, Pell-Grant eligible students, and ethnic and racial minority-identified students.

The College will explicitly recruit diverse staff and student mentor hires as part of the launching of the RISE Office, through best practices in position advertising, bias training for hiring committees, and selection criteria that seek individuals with demonstrated transformational leadership in supporting and advocating for underrepresented students.

In focusing on retention, the College will formally engage in mentorship and allyship, realizing that those hired may both be in the position of mentoring students navigating social and institutional barriers and experiencing those barriers themselves. A leadership team of faculty and staff with demonstrated commitment and success in ADEI will collaborate with the new personnel in developing, piloting, assessing, and institutionalizing ADEI efforts in the college. Broader support will be provided by the College and Department-level standing committees for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

What might occur to prevent the desired outcomes even if funding is obtained? How will these risks be mitigated?

Beyond new funding, what other criteria or external factors need to occur in order for this proposal to be successful (e.g. economic or demographic factors, etc.)

The success of this proposal depends, in part, on the success of the University's recruitment and retention efforts. While we will be making efforts to establish direct connections with prospective students at high schools and at community colleges, we cannot achieve all our inclusive student success goals without the University achieving similar success. It is our hope

that aspects of this proposal that are successful might serve as models and inspiration for other units across campus.

Our success also depends on the continuance of and improvement to Washington State policies that ensure access to higher education for students across economic strata. Many of our students, particularly those who come from underrepresented backgrounds, face the substantial additional burdens of working – sometimes full time – and of caring for children and elderly family members. Our proposed programs will help these students achieve academic and career success, but they cannot erase these extra burdens.

What are the anticipated consequences of not funding this proposal?

The ideas here have been championed by faculty, students, and staff for years within the College of the Environment. However, without dedicated funding and staffing, the College has not had the capacity to implement this suite of activities aimed at increasing inclusive student success.

Specifically, College student support staff will continue to lack capacity to provide enhanced support and counseling for students with greater needs, as the growth of the student population has outpaced that of staffing resources. This lack of capacity will be felt especially acutely by students from underrepresented communities.

Section 3: Process and Development

Describe Collaborations and Stakeholder Engagement.

What stakeholders were involved, and in what role/capacity? Which groups were engaged and at what stages? How were concerns addressed? What process have you followed to identify unintended consequences that may result from this proposal?

The ideas that underlie this proposal build upon a foundation set by the College of the Environment’s Diversity and Equity Committee and aligned Department level committees. They also represent ideas from multiples small groups of faculty, staff, and students in and between the College’s three departments. These ideas of mentoring programs, a student space, inclusive field-based courses, and skills “bootcamps” have been discussed informally for multiple years.

At the call for proposal in 2021, the dean and department chairs discussed developing a student success proposal during a College Leadership team. In December, a group of 12 faculty (tenured and adjunct) and staff in the College and a representative from the Outdoors Center shared ideas and planned the development of the proposal. In developing ideas, the team emailed and

sought feedback from the Academic Affairs Provost, Brent Carbajal. They met with Jack Herring, VP for Undergraduate Education to understand whether college in the high school programs would support this effort. The proposal lead then met with Rebecca McLean about FIG and Viking Launch programs, with Emily Borda about SMATE and AEES program, with Travis Tennison about FIG and Center for Community Engagement. Grace Jones was contacted to better understand the university's Distinguished Scholars program. A meeting with Space Administration was also held to discuss the idea of an Environmental Student Union space.

College faculty, staff and affiliate input was essential to building the proposal. Ten faculty and staff were directly involved in drafting and extensively commenting on and shaping the proposal. The proposal was shared with all faculty and staff at a College meeting, which sparked additional faculty and staff to read and comment. The proposal was presented and the draft shared with the Environmental Science and Environmental Studies departments in mid-January for more in-depth discussion.

Student input was sought in two ways. The early proposal ideas were discussed with the AS Senator for Sustainability and former AS Senator of the College. Four additional students who serve on the Environmental Studies pilot peer-mentoring development team reviewed the draft proposal and provided extensive thoughts on how to strengthen it. The students themselves, shared the ideas with their peers and funneled creative ideas back to the writing team.

Describe which units (departments, colleges, etc.) will be involved.

Are there other potential partners across the university that could coordinate on a joint proposal? Is the issue being addressed a broader issue across the university?

The three departments of Environmental Science, Environmental Studies, and Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning and the College of the Environment administrative staff will be directly involved in implementing this proposal. They will partner with the Center for Community Engagement and Outdoor Center for many extension and community-linked activities. For first-year and distinguished scholar activities, we will coordinate with Admissions and Outreach and Vice Provost's Office for Undergraduate Education. For monitoring and evaluation, we will coordinate with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and seek guidance from SMATE.

If the Environmental Student Union is housed in Environmental Studies Building, they will collaborate with the Department of Geology to ensure the space is available for and supportive of geology students as well. If the space is located elsewhere, we will identify existing space users and collaborate with them on space use.

Explain if this proposal will leverage resources or commitments from other sources.

Identify any current resources in place, any new commitments, or potential funding partnerships with external entities that have been identified. If exploration is currently underway, note any conversations with university development officers, funding agencies, the Vice Provost for Research, etc.

A College Diversity Recruitment and Retention Outreach Specialist was hired in August 2017 to support ADEI, recruitment, and retention. The current FTE is 1.0. The College allocated \$5,000/year from its self-sustaining funds starting in fiscal year 2019 to support ADEI efforts. The allocation has not occurred in the past two fiscal years because of COVID but is expected to resume more fully in 2022-23.

The Office of University Advancement recently conducted a feasibility study to identify high-net worth alumni and loyal donors and believes the outcomes sought by this proposal are in alignment with the passions and interests of some of these alumni and donors who we will invite to partner with us in supporting this initiative.

Has your department previously submitted this proposal?

If so, briefly outline any significant changes and indicate the feedback received during that budget process.

No.

Describe any alternatives that were explored.

Note both alternative approaches in addressing the problem, as well as alternatives to new funding (repurposing existing divisional funding or one-time fund use). If these alternatives are not being pursued, explain why.

The College repurposed an administrative staff person's position in 2017 to hire the Diversity Recruitment and Retention Outreach Specialist. Further, in Fall 2021 the Department of Environmental Studies allocated one-time funds from its self-sustaining funds to hire, train, and develop a pilot peer-to-peer mentoring initiative with four undergraduate student mentors. This initiative will likely be supported in future years, but won't be able to be scaled up or expanded to the entire College without external support.

The Environmental Studies Department and Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy Department have informally encouraged students to use a very small, poorly laid out class and meeting room as a Student Space. The location and odd shape of the room limit student knowledge of the space and the size of group interactions; however, students had begun to form a student-centered space there, including creating a collective calendar and resource sharing space. This space, while inadequate, will be maintained until a more effective space can be found. The students' use of this space has meant that faculty and staff now lack any nearby space to hold meetings or meet with each other outside of their offices.

These efforts are ad hoc, limited by financial and human resources, and by physical space.

Section 4: Fulfillment of WWU's Strategic Plan's Core Themes and Goals

Please explain how your proposal and the anticipated outcomes described will advance the Core Themes and Goals of [WWU's 2018-2025 Strategic Plan](#) and the strategic priorities set for this budget cycle. How does this allocation or withdrawal of funding advance or hinder access to Western, academic excellence, and/or inclusive achievement?

Themes:

1) Advancing Inclusive Success

This proposal's core is aimed at removing barriers to success for students who enter Western with interest in the environment, especially focusing on supporting, mentoring, and connecting with first-generation, Pell-Grant eligible, and racial and ethnic-minority identifies students who are underrepresented at Western and in the College.

2) Increasing Washington Impact

Through our analysis of institutional barriers to diversity, equity and inclusion at our College, and review of evidence-based solutions, we understand that enhancing our engagement with students through:

- formal mentoring programs;
- math, science, and critical reading and writing skills support;
- and inclusive, student-centered field courses

directly increases our ability to recruit and retain both student groups that have experienced barriers to accessing post-secondary education and those for whom post-secondary education is a given. Furthermore, by intentionally working to advance inclusivity, our graduates will be better prepared to engage with diverse stakeholders to address the range of complex environmental problems our State faces.

3) Enhancing Academic Excellence

The core focus of the RISE proposal is to enhance academic excellence, with special attention paid to the needs historically marginalized students. It further enhances the learning of all

students when they learn in diverse classrooms and have access to spaces and resources that build social connection, well-being, and a sense of belonging.

Goals:

- 1) Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.

Through this RISE proposal, we will transform the way we support students' growth as environmental scholars. In the past, students primarily engaged with the College of the Environment in their third and fourth year, leaving little time for students to develop professional identities or engagement in innovative scholarship and research with faculty. The activities and programs coordinated through the RISE Office will engage with students earlier and systematically support their growth even before they enter the College. Because the RISE proposal directly targets groups who have been underserved in the past and because the proposal increases faculty cultural competency to support a broader diversity of students, it helps foster more inclusive access to transformational education.

- 2) Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place.

At the College of the Environment, our curriculum is centered on understanding the complex socio-ecological systems in which we are embedded and upon which we depend. The proposed FIG, Viking Launch, and inclusive field-based course clusters deepen that learning by taking students out of the classroom to directly engage with environmental research and meet with leaders, organizations, and communities grappling with how to live sustainably, justly, and equitably within a particular place and particular natural system.

- 3) Western will foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.

A core component of the proposal is peer-to-peer mentoring, sustained and inclusive faculty-student mentoring, and the development of a supportive physical space where students can build community, grow a sense of belonging, and cultivate their identity as scholars, individuals, and collectives. The proposal draws on student visions for a supportive environment to learn and grow, as well as student feedback to climate surveys that show what they need to feel respected and treated with fairness.

- 4) Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts.

The proposal seeks to enhance support of underrepresented students and it does so in pursuit of a more just and equitable education experience that can support their growth as future environmental leaders and problem-solvers.

Section 5: Space Planning, Capital, and Maintenance Considerations

If the proposal includes new major equipment or software (>\$25K), please indicate its anticipated useful life, and associated operating costs such as service contracts or annual licenses.

[Click here to enter text](#)

Do you believe new space, space modifications, or infrastructure upgrades will be required? If so, please provide the following as best you can:

Capital Planning and Development will review and evaluate the request after the proposal is submitted to determine options.

- **Scope:** As part of this proposal, the College seeks a space modification to create a hearth for College of Environment students that invites social interaction and collaboration among students interested in the environment, whether curious, pre-major, or declared majors. The space will support meeting spaces for students and staff from the Office of Inclusive Excellence and college advising. It will also provide access to resources for students in mentoring initiatives to receive academic support. As a hearth to College of the Environment, the space will welcome all students, especially for pre-majors, early majors, and transfer student, to the College and encourage exchanges among them. Additionally, the space will provide furniture conducive to student collaboration and study and support meeting areas for clubs or community outreach events. Student research, affinity-based activities, and information about upcoming College activities would be visible and accessible, even for students who had not yet declared their major. Two potential spaces close to the College and department and that may be appropriate are the atrium in Artzen Hall or the atrium space in Environmental Studies. Space Administration may identify other options. Utilizing biophilic design and enhanced daylighting design, we envision the development of a hearth for College of the Environment students that engages students with core principles of sustainability and justice through its design and physical resources, in addition to being a space that provides social space, meetings rooms, and direct access to academic services. We will utilize post-occupancy evaluation to develop metrics for the success of the space renovation to demonstrate the impacts of this improvement project on student success.

- **Square Footage:** ~1000-3000 square feet
- **Cost for capital component:** Currently unknown, cost being estimated by Space Administration

If existing space is being repurposed, explain how the proposed activities will be accommodated within existing space. For how long? Who will need to approve the proposed new use of this space?

Per conversations with Space Administration, a renovation of the Artzen Hall Atrium may require modifications to the Dining Services Contract to require roll-down shutters for existing food service stations. Existing eating and studying activities in the Atrium would be in line with the collaborative meeting space concept proposed and would not be displaced.

A renovation of the Environmental Studies Atrium would improve a currently under-utilized space. Currently some students use the space for study and meeting, activities that would be in line with the proposed Environmental Student Union space development. Students in geology and others that use the space currently would be welcome and invited to adapt the space for their needs as well. However, sound attenuation in this atrium space is poor and providing gradients of privacy would be important.

Space Administration may find more appropriate options.

For proposals that include capital development or IT infrastructure, please explain how physical accessibility and cultural inclusion (beyond statutory requirements) will be resourced as foundational elements of project development.

The proposed renovation of existing space to create an Environmental Student Union is driven by the College's current awareness of physical accessibility barriers. Currently all students, and especially those with mobility limitations, have difficulty accessing college advising staff and the Diversity and Recruitment Specialist, both of whom are housed on the 5th floor of Environmental Studies. The small elevators, narrow halls, and offset floors make getting to the College main office for these advising and support services difficult. Our proposal of an Environmental Student Union on a concourse floor will increase visibility, accessibility, and inclusiveness for all students, staff, and faculty.

Section 6: Additional Information Required for New State Funding

If the proposal is an expansion of existing program or service, please provide five years of detailed financial information, including FTE and other relevant information.

NA

Describe how this package affects the [Governor's Results Washington](#) goal areas and statewide priorities.

This proposal directly addresses two of the Governor's Results Washington goal areas.

It addresses Goal 3 Sustainable Energy and Clean Environment, which specifically focuses on implementation of climate change legislation. The College of the Environment is squarely at the center, as its mission states, of educating the next generation of environmental leaders and problem solvers. This proposal's aim to transform College of the Environment education through evidence-based strategies for increasing the diversity and excellence of our graduates. The College teaches courses in climatology, hazards mitigation, energy transitions, climate change policy tools and governance, and sustainable community development. These courses, including a new minor in climate change, directly train students to not only participate in and support, but to be the future leaders of the Governor's Goal 3.

The proposal also directly addresses Goal 5 Efficient, Effective and Accountable Government, both sub goal 5.1 and 5.2. College of the Environment graduates go on to work in local, state, and tribal agencies and directly engage with stakeholders in understanding and managing complex environmental issues. Through this proposal we aim to directly increase our ability to reach, retain, and equitably support diverse students from across the state. We seek to deepen and transform our ability to mentor and train diverse students in ways that build both their technical skills, but also their capacity to work with diverse stakeholders and to center engagement, equity, and justice in their work of environmental science, policy, and planning.

Is this proposal in response to litigation, an audit finding, executive order or task force recommendation?

No.

If proposal includes new IT investments, please complete and attach the state's [IT Addendum form](#).

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Proposal Title: Reimagining Inclusive Student Excellence (RISE)

Division: Academic Affairs

Department: College of the Environment

Department Contact: Rebekah Paci-Green

	Description	Fiscal Year 2024					Fiscal Year 2025						
		FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total	FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total		
Salary and Benefits													
Faculty Positions		-	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	\$15,000	0.55	39,600	18,613	\$15,000	73,213		
Professional/Exempt Positions		1.00	\$70,000	\$24,665	\$5,000	\$99,665	1.00	70,000	24,665	\$0	94,665		
Classified Positions		0.50	\$22,752	\$15,975	\$5,000	\$43,727	0.50	22,752	15,975	\$0	38,727		
Student Salaries (Graduate Assistants, Hourly Student, etc)		10.00	\$39,200	\$8,268	\$0	\$47,468	10.00	39,200	8,268	\$0	47,468		
Total Salaries and Benefits		11.50	\$131,952	\$48,908	\$25,000	\$205,860	12.05	171,552	67,521	\$15,000	254,073		
	Description	Units	Price per Unit	Recurring		One-Time Costs	Total	Units	Price per Unit	Recurring		One-Time Costs	Total
				Costs	Costs					Costs	Costs		
Non-Personnel Expenses													
Supplies and Materials				\$2,500	\$25,000	\$27,500				\$2,500		\$2,500	
Professional Service Contracts						\$0						\$0	
Other Goods and Services, Memberships, etc.						\$0						\$0	
Travel	training, workshops			\$14,000	\$5,000	\$19,000				\$14,000		\$14,000	
Other	field course delivery			\$36,000		\$36,000				\$36,000		\$36,000	
Capital Facility Expenses (New Space or Space Modifications)						\$0						\$0	
Total Non-Personnel Expenses				\$52,500	\$30,000	\$82,500				\$52,500	\$0	\$52,500	
	Description	Include?		Recurring		One-Time Costs	Total			Recurring		One-Time Costs	Total
				Costs	Costs					Costs	Costs		
University Indirect Costs													
Libraries** (Estimated at \$10k per faculty member)	\$10,000 per new faculty member	NO		\$0	\$0	\$0				\$0	\$0	\$0	
Academic Support Services/Student Support Services	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES		\$7,001	\$0	\$7,001				\$8,747	\$0	\$8,747	
Institutional Support	2% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES		\$4,667	\$0	\$4,667				\$5,831	\$0	\$5,831	
Plant Operation and Maintenance	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES		\$7,001	\$0	\$7,001				\$8,747	\$0	\$8,747	
Graduate TA Waiver	input amounts for new TA Positions	NO		\$0	\$0	\$0				\$0	\$0	\$0	
Total Indirect Costs				\$18,669	\$0	\$18,669				\$23,326	\$0	\$23,326	
		FTE	Head Count	Recurring Costs	One-Time Costs	Fiscal Year Total			FTE	Head Count	Recurring Costs	One-Time Costs	Fiscal Year Total
Total Proposal, All Direct and Indirect Costs		11.50	13.00	\$252,029	\$55,000	\$307,029			12.05	14.00	\$314,899	\$15,000	\$329,899