



FY21 Budget Planning Principles

June 3, 2020

The FY21 budget process is occurring amidst new challenges at Western, with impacts of the coronavirus causing new expenditures to safely operate, and potential reductions to our primary sources of operating revenue. Western faces significant reductions to both state appropriations and tuition revenue; on the state side, we have been tasked by the state with planning for a 15 percent reduction in FY21, with an awareness that reductions will continue into the next biennium. Enrollment impacts due to the coronavirus are expected, with a better understanding coming as the summer progresses. As we consider which approaches best serve our University, we are guided by the following principles:

- Our first priorities are protecting the people of Western and fulfilling our mission as a public university, to the greatest extent possible.
- Decisions and process will be guided by [Western's values](#):
 - Commitment to student success, critical thought, creativity, and sustainability
 - Commitment to equity and justice, and respect for the rights and dignity of others
 - Pursuit of excellence, in an environment characterized by principles of shared governance, academic freedom, and effective engagement
 - Integrity, responsibility and accountability in all our work
- Western remains committed to advancing our [strategic plan](#), and budget decisions will reflect that commitment.
 - Within the strategic plan, we would highlight the three themes of:
 - Academic Excellence
 - Inclusive Success
 - Washington Impact
 - It's also important to note the four goals within the plan itself:
 - Academic Excellence, which includes infrastructure to ensure that success;
 - Place, which includes community connections, sustainability, and internationalization;
 - A Caring Environment;
 - Equity and Justice.
 - Finally, we need to remember the [overall metrics](#) within the strategic plan and strategies outlined during the [resource modeling](#) process to achieve those metrics.
- Our ability to fulfill Western's mission depends on maintaining the long term financial sustainability of the university.

Our budget planning **process** will be guided by Western's values and the strategic plan as follows:

- Student, staff, and faculty leadership representatives on the consultation group, with compensation provided for off-contract faculty and student representatives, if applicable
- Engagement plan integrated with process
- Regular University updates
 - Budget messages
 - Budget and Financial Planning [webpage](#)
 - University forums in Spring and Fall
- Recognition that the planning team is accountable to its members and to the Western community included in the President's charge
- Updates to students, faculty, staff, executive leadership, trustees
- Budget options will be evaluated using clearly defined and communicated criteria, to include impact on Western's mission and strategic plan and alignment with our established values. As we operationalize this evaluation and ultimately the decisions that will come from it, we need to be sure that at the University level the decisions are made with the principle of advancing our strategic plan (which guarantees alignment with the values therein) firmly in mind. Therefore, we offer the following guidelines for budget leaders to use in making recommendations:
 - Any recommended reductions will be justified by showing how the advancement of the strategic plan is not harmed by the reduction, or at the least how the harm is comparatively minimized by this reduction.
 - Investments of internal resources can be recommended provided they:
 - Advance the strategic plan; and
 - Either are unavoidable to make at this time to advance the strategic plan or are made to take advantage of an opportunity that may be fleeting; and
 - Are accompanied by recommended reductions of comparable size and deeper than necessary to meet budget targets.
 - Divisions will use these principles in examining their own budgets for reductions and possible investments, in conjunction with their own strategic plans that show how their divisions contribute to advancing the University's strategic plan and fulfilling the University's mission.
 - Colleges will do the same after discussions at the Academic Affairs level.
- Planning for FY21 is important in and of itself as the University adjusts to new operating and budgetary realities, and a FY21 budget draft will be presented for University consideration in September.
 - However, in planning for FY21, budget leaders must consider not only the immediate year but also future years, at least regarding the major reductions and investments that might need to be phased in over several years.