

# **2021-2023 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.

### **Title: Support for Operations Capacity to Meet Enrollment Growth and the Establishment of a New Department in the Huxley College of the Environment**

#### **Statement of Purpose:**

Since 2011-12, the number of majors (undergraduate and graduate) in Huxley has nearly doubled from 550 to 1,074. SCH production increased by over 83% to 37,968, and the number of degrees granted increased from 181 to 387 (+114%). While some of this demand was met with additional state-funded tenure-track faculty positions, no such support has been provided for administrative and IT support or increased operational costs. The college has used self-sustaining reserves to provide this support. By the end of FY21, the college will have exhausted these reserves and will be unable to fund this critical administrative support.

In response to this growth, Huxley recently split the Department of Environmental Studies into two departments, scheduled to commence fall quarter of 2021. The new Department of Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy (UEPP) will house Western's nationally accredited BA in Urban Planning and Sustainable Development (UPSD), a new BA in Urban Sustainability, the Minor in Sustainable Design, and an emphasis in urban planning in the MA in Environmental Studies. Future plans include a Masters of Urban Planning, the most common degree held by planners in the U.S.

The split has also enabled the Future ENVS department faculty to re-envision its curriculum to more directly address the increased demand and interest in social justice. The new curriculum includes emphases in Education & Eco-Social Justice, and in Justice & Community Resilience. The department also houses a new and growing minor in Environmental Justice, in addition to its continued minor in Disaster Risk Reduction. The department has also created a degree emphasis in Geographic Information Science, building on the high-demand GIS minor and certificate programs in order to broaden and provide more depth for students pursuing GIS careers.

The Department of Environmental Sciences has also grown significantly during this time, and is now one of the three largest STEM degree programs on campus with respect to majors graduated per year. With this growth in student enrollment and faculty, the administrative workload in has also increased significantly. For instance, over just the last 4 years ESCI faculty have brought in 88 grants (45 external, 43 internal) totaling \$3.2 million. Similarly, the department now conducts over 100 field programs every year, resulting in a tremendous administrative burden related to transportation fee collection, scheduling, vehicle lease contracting, travel arrangements, safety training compliance, arranging maintenance and upkeep, etc. The result is that the workload far exceeds what 1.5 FTE can handle.

While the university administration approved the department split, we are now requesting funding support through this internal budget proposal process. Specifically, support is requested for the following:

- *Department Administrative Support Needs:* We request support for converting funding for two half-time administrative support positions from college self-supporting funds to state base funding.
- *Department Operating Support:* We request support for the increased operational costs of the three departments incurred as a result of increased enrollment and the number of faculty.
- *Information Technology:* The IT needs of the college have expanded far beyond our capacity. The college has one full-time IT staff person, the same as 20 years ago when the IT needs were significantly lower. In addition, we support the IT needs of our TT and NTT faculty in the Peninsula programs in Poulsbo, Everett, and Port Angeles.

## Anticipated Outcome(s):

Currently these essential support services are funded with college reserves and self-sustaining funds. These funds are exhausted, and the college is running a deficit in order to provide these required services. Funding enables us to maintain the quality of service delivery to students and faculty and to maintain staff morale.

Huxley's new UEPP department emphasizes professional programs in the fields of urban and environmental planning and policy and sustainability. Maintaining PAB accreditation for the BA in Urban Planning means that students and the public can expect that we will live up to our promises for a program that meets national standards. It means that a student can have confidence in our degree value. Accreditation signals that the public can have confidence in the value of Western's program and the quality of our students. For students, accreditation provides value related to not only assuring quality, but also obtaining employment, qualifying for higher salaries, and becoming eligible to receive scholarship financial aid.

The new degree emphasis in ENVS will also enable us to better serve underrepresented and underserved populations, thereby increasing the diversity of our student enrollment.

**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.)*

The metrics for measuring this outcome are:

- College and department budget balances.
- Quality of service to students.
- Quality of service to faculty.
- Faculty and staff workload.
- Major applications.
- Percentage of underrepresented students.
- Graduation rate and time to graduation.
- Job placement.

**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.)*

1. Goal I, Objective 1: Improve regional and national recruitment of undergraduate students, with attention to the WWU mission statement and goals regarding changing student demographics and financial need (WWU Strategic Plan Objectives 4.C., 4.E.). Support would enable us to continue to provide access and increase the diversity and inclusivity of our programs.
2. Goal II, Objective 1: Continue to review, revise, and develop academic programs to ensure relevance and expand opportunities (WWU Strategic Plan Objectives 1.B, 1.D., 1.E., 1.G., 2.C., 2.F., 2.G., 2.H). Increasing the diversity and inclusivity of our programs requires that we continually look for ways to expand the range of our programs to meet the environmental interests of all students and all Washington State communities.
3. Goal II, Objective 5: Continue to grow and improve Huxley programs on the Peninsulas (WWU Strategic Plan Objective 1.A., 4.E.). Our Peninsula programs include our most diverse student population but receive the least administrative and IT support.

**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.)*

Support for Huxley's current level of administrative services benefits the people of the State of Washington, the nation, and the world by educating students to become environmental professionals and environmentally literate citizens. Specifically, the project addresses Western's strategic goals as follows:

Goal #1: Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity. Western will prepare students to be successful and engaged members of society and will provide the tools to work in and across disciplines to identify and creatively solve key societal problems, both local and global.

- Support would enable us to continue to provide high quality administrative support services to our students and faculty.
- Support would enable us to continue to attract diverse, excellent students and faculty. Our graduates are leaders in state and local planning agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations.
- Support would enable us to provide access to students from across the university that promote environmental literacy of future citizens and community leaders.

Goal #2: Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place. Place calls us to recognize debts and obligations to indigenous and Native nations, to the environment and sustainability, and to diverse and rich cultures within and across borders.

- We accomplish this through the delivery of hands-on, experiential learning methods such as field courses, field trips, laboratories, and studio experiences. Providing such experiences requires administrative support.
- We accomplish this through involvement of our students and faculty in community engagement and service aimed at solving the most challenging problems in the Salish Sea Bioregion.

Goal #4. Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts. Western seeks equity, justice, inclusion, and diversity as fundamental principles calling for authentic engagement.

- Huxley adopted its diversity and inclusion policy and plan in 2016, one of the first programs at WWU to address this important university priority.
- The college invested in hiring a full-time diversity recruitment and retention specialist position to advance its DEI goals.
- Support would enable us to continue our commitment to these efforts. In particular, the new social justice programs in the Future ENVIS Department will enable us to attract and retain an increasingly diverse student body interested in pursuing justice and equity in social and environmental policies and practices.

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

The college does not have the funds to continue to cover these essential functions. Without the administrative support, we will be limited in our ability to provide the current level of service to students and faculty. The college's IT capacity will continue to lag behind burgeoning need, particularly in the area of ITV delivery and distance education technology.

## **What alternatives were explored?**

We would explore several alternatives if these needs are not funded, including: 1) reduced capacity to deliver these functions; 2) deficit spending, and 3) use of temporary employees and graduate student TAs.

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

The units directly impacted include:

- Huxley College of the Environment
- Department of Environmental Studies
- Department of Urban and Environmental Planning and Policy

- Department of Environmental Sciences

The support would also positively impact several of our shared programs, including the Institute for Energy Studies, Marine and Coastal Studies, and Business & Sustainability.

**Equipment needed:**

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

**Purpose:** NA

**Cost:** NA

**Human Resources:** NA

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:** NA

**Anticipated Useful Life:** NA

**Replacement Cost if any:** NA

**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>
Admin. Services Manager B (reclass current sec senior position and increase from .5 to 1.0 FTE)	.5	.5	\$41,159	\$41,159
Admin. Assistant 2 (reclass current sec senior position and increase from .5 to 1.0 FTE)	.5	.5	\$29,801	\$29,801
IT Classified Staff Position (.65 FTE)	.65	.65	\$46,205	\$46,205

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

Department Operating Budgets - increase from combined total of \$28K to 40K (\$20K for ESCI, \$10K for both ENVS and UEPP)	\$12,000
Annual ACSP University Membership Dues (required by accreditation)	\$850
Annual PAB Accreditation fee (required by accreditation)	\$2,160

**Space Requirements:**

**What type of space is needed?** NA – ENVS and UEPP will share the same department office.

**What features must this space have?** NA

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

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

Submitted by Steve Hollenhorst - [hollens@wwu.edu](mailto:hollens@wwu.edu)  
On behalf of the Huxley College of the Environment