

2021-2023 Biennium Internal Budget Proposal Narrative

Division: Academic Affairs - Information Technology Services (ITS)

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.

ITS Staffing Alignment and Growth

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

[Click here to enter text](#)

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

This proposal addresses ITS staffing needs derived from a decade-long absence of new positions being base funded for ITS. Campus’ technology needs have placed a strain on ITS’ ability to accommodate the timelines and growth expected in our service delivery. Campus wants more of our services given their priorities and adherence to the University’s Strategic Plan and impacts to learning/working remotely due to COVID. Departments need new systems and integrations to meet their goals.

This proposal is comprised of two (2) priorities, 1) an urgent need to permanently/base fund existing positions to maintain current levels of service, and 2) an important need to permanently/base fund new positions to meet campus’ growing expectations. At a minimum, we need priority 1 to receive full funding consideration.

Priority #1 – Base Fund Existing Positions (3.8 FTE)

Project Management Office (PMO) – ITS’ PMO was established in 2018 to ensure the smooth transition to Banner 9 (B9). The B9 project was temporarily allocated project funds and these funds deplete this summer 2021. While the most urgent aspect of the project were completed on time, less urgent transitions continue, for instance the transition of Banner Self Service (Web4U) to B9. The PMO consists of three (3) fulltime Project Managers.

Data Network Engineer – Our data network support team is smaller today than it was 20 years ago (6 vs 7 FTE). As the team was made smaller, the size of the network has grown in size and complexity with the addition of new buildings and the proliferation of, and dependency on, wireless networking. Retaining our staff is important and the ITS networking team would like to address a pay equity issue with one of our network

engineers who has worked hard through a planned professional development program to enhance their skillset and value to the networking team (0.3 FTE details below).

Learning Management System (Canvas) Support – Historically the single FTE providing LMS technical was split funded 50/50 between ITS and URM under VP Steve Swan. A MOU outlining the responsibilities and funding expired shortly after VP Swan retired and the MOU and associated funding were not renewed. ITS has been covering the 0.5 FTE with carry forward monies which is not sustainable. Given the institutional importance of this position on core university instruction, we seek 50% base funding for the salary and benefits of this specific FTE.

Priority #2 – New Positions (4.0 FTE)

Where Priority #1 is a stabilization request to maintain current operations, Priority # 2 is a modest growth request.

The purpose of Priority #2 is to address immediate IT staffing needs, prepare the ITS for impending retirements, and help transition the university away from legacy technology infrastructure to more modern platforms and services. This transition is already happening. ITS is experiencing a large number of all types of technology requests from new software desires, to growing infrastructure needs which all create additional customer support needs once new technologies are implemented.

- There are 15 ITS employees on the team that supports voice, data networks, servers, the cloud, and other critical IT infrastructure. Six of those 15 employees are likely to retire in the next 6 years. As the university grows, changes, and adds new technologies to its portfolio, we need to add new staff with new skillsets, both to manage these new technologies and to cross-train with those employees who are nearing the end of their careers.
- Increased demand for new services has stretched our infrastructure/application/support teams beyond capacity in these critical areas:
 1. Our automation and cloud engineering needs have outstripped staff capacity on our systems team:
 - a. The staffing level is the same as it was 10 years ago, despite a 4x increase in servers administered and the addition of hundreds of new cloud-based applications purchased by departments and colleges that require our integration, maintenance, and support.
 - b. Investment in staffing for Automation and Cloud engineering can save the university from having to invest in more IT staffing at the department level by building our collective capacity to leverage common platforms and scalable, automated processes.
 2. Our networking and communications staffing level has failed to keep pace with the growth of campus, or with changes in technologies:
 - a. The team that manages the physical infrastructure and technologies for voice and data networking is smaller today than it was twenty years ago (we have gone from 7 to 6 FTE in that time).

- b. While our team has shrunk in the last 20 years, the university has grown. We have built 10 new buildings (405,000 sq ft) and remodeled at least 4 existing buildings in that time. This has increased the number of lines of data and voice service we support by 20% and 18% respectively.
 - c. In addition, three new buildings are coming online in the next two years (two science buildings and a large residence hall), with a high density of new data services to support.
- 3. In addition to the infrastructure growth mentioned above, the application and software support of ITS are growing as well.
 - a. The application needs require implementation of large, campus-wide use applications that also typically require integration with other applications or databases.
 - b. It is an EAS Senior Programming Analyst's job to work with departments and vendors on implementations and integrations.
- 4. Once new infrastructure and applications/software are implemented, these services require ongoing user support.
 - a. An IT System Support position resides in ATUS and provides the needed support to ensure users remain effective in their use of new systems.

We request the permanent, ongoing funding necessary to address the gaps outlined above. This includes base funding for four (4) new positions, 1) System Automation Engineer, 2) Network/Communications Technician, 3) Senior Programmer Analyst, and 4) IT System Support. These new positions will then allow for some strategic planning to provide internal reassignments/opportunities within ITS, to maximize the potential contributions of our existing staff.

Anticipated Outcome(s):

With Priority #1 consideration, ITS will maintain current operations while able to retain knowledge staff. Priority #2 will provide needed backup in a couple critical areas in ITS. It will also allow for some increased bandwidth across ITS for some innovation-style thinking/action by seasoned staff.

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 Project Management Office tracks ITS project progress. We are currently at capacity for 2021 and are having to push projects into 2022. We will measure outcomes by shortening project duration which will provide more time for ongoing maintenance and support.

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.)*

ITS' primary focus is stabilization, both organizationally and operationally. These requests support this focus.

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.)*

Retaining and adding staffing to address the demand for new technologies Goal 1.G of the Strategic Plan: **Provide technological and other academic infrastructure to support curricular innovation, research, scholarship, and creative activity, civic engagement and social justice.** If just ITS was working to meet this Goal, the position need may not exist to the degree brought forth in this proposal. The fact is, several University departments are exploring how they can provide technology and infrastructure to support the Goal and thankfully many of these departments are collaborating with ITS to accomplish the needed work. Technology demands resulting from COVID-19 impacts are also increasing ITS' work.

Creating internal pathways for development and advancement within ITS supports Goal 3.E of the Strategic Plan: **Provide competitive compensation and professional development for student employees, staff, and faculty.**

What are the consequences of not funding this proposal?

Lack of sufficient staffing in IT Services will slow the implementation of new technologies to support students, faculty, and staff. It will increase the maintenance burden of legacy technologies, resulting in more service outages and higher costs. This maintenance burden will lead to stress and burnout among IT employees; with the increase in remote work opportunities across the country, the lack of competitive compensation for IT professionals in the public sector, Western will be challenged to retain their most productive/highest potential IT employees, or to recruit effective replacements.

What alternatives were explored?

Historically, one-time project funding has been used to accomplish a specific project. Because projects can last a year, or often more, IT grow takes place at the same time as the project. By the end of the project when we could/should dissolve the project resources, we now have developed knowledgeable staff that can be utilized to address the growth.

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

ITS

Equipment needed:

N/A

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

Item:

Click here to enter text

Purpose:

Click here to enter text

Cost:

Click here to enter text

Anticipated Useful Life:

Click here to enter text

Replacement Cost if any:

Click here to enter text

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

<i>Position Title</i>	<i>Total Headcount</i>	<i>Total FTE</i>	<i>Salary / ~Benefits per FTE</i>	<i>Total Cost</i>
<i>Priority 1 – Existing Positions</i>				
<i>Project Manager 1</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$93,634 / \$28,904</i>	<i>\$122,538</i>
<i>Project Manager 2</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$89,175 / \$28,083</i>	<i>\$117,258</i>
<i>Project Manager 3</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$87,780 / \$27,826</i>	<i>\$115,606</i>
<i>Network Engineer – sal increase</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>\$20,675 / \$3,926</i>	<i>\$ 24,601</i>
<i>Canvas Support Tech</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>0.5</i>	<i>\$41,122 / \$14,580</i>	<i><u>\$ 55,702</u></i>
<i>Priority 1 Total</i>				<i>\$435,703</i>
<i>Priority 2 – New Positions</i>				
<i>System Automation Engineer</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$95,000 / \$29,155</i>	<i>\$124,155</i>
<i>Network/Comm Journey</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$82,000 / \$26,762</i>	<i>\$108,762</i>
<i>Senior Programmer Analyst</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$90,000 / \$28,235</i>	<i>\$118,235</i>
<i>IT System Admin Journey</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>1.0</i>	<i>\$77,000 / \$25,842</i>	<i><u>\$102,842</u></i>
<i>Priority 2 Total</i>				<i>\$453,994</i>

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

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

N/A

Space Requirements:

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

Priority 1 positions are existing filled positions with current workspace already assigned.

Priority 2 positions are new and will require some level of space logistics. Preferred would be coordinated flexible work environment for ITS staff with a combination of in-office days and work from home days. If approached correctly, no new space needs are anticipated.

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

N/A

What needs can be accommodated within your existing space?

Click here to enter text

How much new space will be required?

Click here to enter text