<h1 style="text-align:center">2019-2021 Biennium Internal Budget Proposal Narrative
Division: Academic Affairs</h1>

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.

Sustainable Communities Partnership for Equity

☐ 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.

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

Western's Sustainable Communities Partnership (SCP) connects student energy and faculty expertise with regional community needs. In the program's three years in operation, we have partnered, or are partnering with, six communities, including: City of Edmonds, Skagit County, City of Stanwood, City of Monroe, City of Ferndale, and City of Bellingham. Through these partnerships, we have completed, or are working on, thirty-one unique projects that have engaged twenty faculty members and 450 students. The student time invested totals approximately 20,000 hours. Historically, communities with which Western partners to complete sustainability projects have paid for the costs associated with the partnership, including the direct costs of completing the projects (transportation to and from site, office materials, editing and printing of final reports, etc.) as well as a modest faculty-stipend and a portion of staff hours to coordinate the program.

While this "pay-to-play" model has worked for some communities (e.g. City of Edmonds, City of Bellingham), the program is not accessible to some of the smaller, less-resourced towns in northwest Washington (e.g. Town of Darrington, Town of Hamilton, Town of Concrete). The current financial model dictates that Western engages primarily with at least moderately-resourced communities. We seek to lower the financial bar faced by smaller, less-resourced communities, provide a diversity of educational experiences for Western students, and meet Western's mission to serve *all* communities in Washington State. SCP staff have worked with the mayors of the towns of Concrete, Darrington, and Hamilton to identify a robust project-list (over twenty projects) that would be well-aligned with expertise of faculty across Western's campus and provide students an excellent introduction to the types of challenges faced by our smaller, regional towns (please see the attached Cascades Project List for project descriptions). These projects range a wide gamut, including: Economic impact assessments of the recreation economy in Darrington, and how that money might support the Darrington school district; developing strategies for reviving Concrete's downtown center in a way that supports

community health; and with sustainability and equity in mind, helping Hamilton imagine and plan for moving their downtown to a less flood-prone area across the highway from the current location. Note that the Darrington projects will include youth collaboration through partnership work with the Glacier Peak Institute, a nonprofit in Darrington that "empowers youth, community and ecosystems to prosper and cultivate a shared resilient future through action-based education" (http://www.glacierpeakinstitute.org/).

Given current staffing (0.85 FTE, 10.5 mo./yr. cyclic), SCP is able to engage in approximately 12 projects per year. The partnering communities pay approximately $7,500 per project. We are proposing that Western covers staff coordination and faculty stipend costs for 6 of the 12 projects per year, reserved for communities with a population of 5,000 residents or less. This is the number that many state agencies use as a cutoff for financial assistance to municipalities. These communities would still pay direct-costs as a form of commitment, but the access point would be significantly lowered to $2,000 per project from the current $7,500 cost. Our total budget request per year is $34,706. These projects will be selected through an application process very similar to the existing process (please see SCP website for more details on the application process: https://sustain.wwu.edu/scp/apply-now/), but with a stronger attention to supporting communities who could most benefit from an infusion of Western faculty expertise and student energy.

In benchmarking programs similar to SCP, it is evident that other institutions have made adjustments to serve under-resourced communities. Based on informal survey work done by the Education Partnerships for Innovation in Communities, a network for programs built out of the same model as SCP, institutions of higher education cover, on average, over 50% of costs associated with running these programs. Data was drawn from 31 "Community-University Partnership" programs from around the country. Thus, to more equitably be in service to the state, to provide more diverse learning experiences for Western students, and to develop long-term, reciprocal relationships with our neighboring communities, we request funding to support the Sustainable Communities Partnership in our neighboring small communities.

Anticipated Outcome(s):

Through this partnership work, Western will be in service to the state in a more equitable way. Further, our engagement in smaller and less-resourced Washington communities has the potential to 1) inspire young people to pursue higher education, 2) bridge some of the perceived gaps between urban and rural communities and citizens, 3) improve student learning outcomes via engaging students in a diversity of communities, 4) build genuine, reciprocal, and trusting relationships in communities that have not always felt included by higher education institutions, and 5) support a more sustainable Pacific Northwest region.

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 Sustainable Communities Partnership surveys both students engaged in SCP projects and staff in the communities we serve, who interact with faculty and students within the program.

We expect this to continue for all SCP projects, including those which would be funded by this proposal. Last year, a subset of students who participated in Sustainable Communities Partnership projects were surveyed (sent to 73 students, 22 responded) at the end of their experience regarding their motivation to learn, satisfaction with the experience, and learning outcomes. Numeric data was assessed using a Likert scale, where 1 = strongly disagree & 5 = strongly agree.

Question: "Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements. 'In this course, the project…'

Question	Mean
…made the course objectives easier to learn.	3.82
…made this course more engaging.	4.09
…provided opportunities for me to use my learning to relate to community issues.	4.64
…increased my ability to analyze complex problems.	4.05
…increased my ability to analyze complex problems more than in other courses.	3.91
…increased my ability to apply what I learned.	4.27
…improved my ability to apply what I learned more than other courses.	4.14
…was valuable to my learning in college.	4.05
…increased my confidence.	4.00
…made me want to recommend this course to other students.	4.05

SCP will continue this survey work, with special attention to any differences in responses for the small community projects with which we engage.

In addition to statistical evidence, students who have participated in SCP projects expressed that they were more motivated and engaged as a result of the experiential and real-world nature of these experiences. Please see excerpts from student evaluations below:

"Working with the community outside of Western (and academia) was very important to me. It made it seem more real and applicable."

"This was one of my favorite classes I have taken at Western so far. For the first time I was given the opportunity to work on a project that would actually make a difference within a community. My hard work and the hard work from others landed me an internship with Skagit County. I am very grateful for the opportunities that the partnership has offered and I am looking forward to work on more connected projects in the future."

"I think that the SCP program is an extremely valuable program at WWU. It deserves more resources and more faculty and staff participation. SCP provides an incredible learning at work experience that I have not heard of at WWU that compares. It would be incredible to see it grow to work within more of the colleges, connecting students across disciplines. I would also like to see more classes incorporate a project into a quarter or multi-quarter curriculum. Many

students I have spoken with … expressed frustration with a lack of opportunity to work in their field with guidance (but not too much hand holding) so as to gain experience and confidence. The more holistic incorporation of SCP projects into curriculum could bridge that need."

There is reason to believe that this type of supportive feedback will remain consistent through the projects funded by this proposal. This engagement and motivation to learn likely has implications for graduation rates for the students who participate. This metric will be tracked, if possible.

In addition to student surveys, all staff involved on the community side of these projects are surveyed regarding impact of project, quality of work, and satisfaction with the partnership. Please see excerpts from staff evaluations below:

Stacie Pratschner, Senior Planner at Skagit County: *This program helps us "complete projects that we, at this point, don't necessarily have the time or capacity to complete, but we know these projects are important to our community members because they have told us that these projects are important."*

Rob Chave, City Administrator at Edmonds: *"For us it got all of the departments energized. It also got the community interested. In a lot of cases these were projects that the city wanted to do, but we just didn't have the resources to do them. So, it moved some things forward, or got some things jump started."*

Ryan Walters, Assistant Director Planning and Development Services Department, Skagit County*: "These students have been able to accomplish things that are better than we are able to accomplish and probably better than any professional contractor could accomplish. Where else are you going to have 10 students working on a setback project? "*

Carrie Hite, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services, City of Edmonds*: "This Sustainable Communities Partnership was incredibly valuable for the City of Edmonds. From mapping the cemetery, to completing an Environmental Assessment of a local marsh, to adding education and expertise to many areas of our city government, the influence of student learning has been immeasurable. Thank you for the opportunity to benefit from this inaugural program. It was well received from elected officials, city staff, and citizens!"*

Responses from staff connected with small community projects will be compared to our more traditional partners.

We are also developing a faculty survey that asks about faculty experience, value in terms of scholarship, and perceived value for students and communities.

Other metrics that we will quantify include: Number of students engaged in each project; number of students who go on to get internships/jobs in the communities in which SCP works; and, in comparison to past years, the number of youth from those communities in which we work who apply to attend Western.

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.)*

Office of Sustainability efforts are guided by Western's Sustainability Action Plan, the OS annual work plan, and the principles of sustainability.

The Sustainability Action Plan outlines this vision for Campus and Community Engagement at Western: *Western is poised to expand and more fully formalize its efforts to engage the people on our campuses and our in communities to create a more sustainable world. For many decades, Western has played an important role in preparing students and conducting research to address local, regional, and global environmental challenges.* Other relevant goals and objectives from the Campus and Community Engagement chapter include:

- Goal 2: Western's culture and community engagement efforts reflect a strong commitment to sustainability.
- Goal 3: Western's sustainability resources are easily accessed by the public.

This proposal aims to help Western engage local communities in a just fashion and contribute to the overall success of Western.

The Office of Sustainability's work plan for FY2019 includes two relevant goals, including helping Western implement the Sustainability Action Plan, and integrating social issues visibly into the work of the OS.

Finally, the concept of sustainability, the OS's guiding principle, has always included the three pillars of social, economic, and environmental good. The OS works to meet Western's needs in such a way that we can advance all three of these areas on and off campus.

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

This proposal supports the University Mission and Strategic Objectives in several ways:

1. This proposal will help Western fulfill its mission to *serve the people of the state of Washington* by working directly with local communities to advance solutions to the problems they face.
2. This proposal is a reflection of Western's value of *equity* by serving under-resourced communities.
3. This proposal meets several strategic objectives. Putting students in direct contact with under-resourced communities provides *high quality educational experiences beyond the classroom*, supports *experiences inside and beyond the classroom that help develop an understanding of the region and its communities in all their natural and cultural richness and complexity,* and *supports and strengthen curricula and other programming that engage issues of access, equity, power, and privilege in and across disciplines.*

What are the consequences of not funding this proposal?

The Sustainable Communities Partnership will continue to focus work in the communities who have enough money to partner with Western. This will limit student and faculty exposure to a diversity of communities and prevent the program from serving less-resourced areas of Washington State.

What alternatives were explored?

SCP has been engaged in an ongoing effort to co-author grants with communities who have identified project needs, but do not have the resources to pay. We will continue to pursue this avenue, but have not yet been successful (partly due to limited staff time to support this kind of effort). Also, developing/aligning projects with WWU courses and grant cycles is challenging because of the different timescales we all work within (WWU quarter system vs. city/county budget cycle vs. grant deadlines).

We are also exploring a model in which a whole host of organizations with vested interests in improved communities (libraries, social service organizations, etc.) contribute to the funding of these kinds of projects. Again, the limitation has been staff time to pursue this opportunity.

Finally, we have engaged the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) to identify pathways to funding projects of this nature. AWC recognizes that Washington's small cities have significant unmet needs and may be interested in supporting a pilot initiative of this type.

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

Depending on the nature of the project, SCP projects can be completed within any course across Western's campus. We have most frequently worked with Huxley College of the Environment, but other colleges, departments, and courses have also been involved. A complete list of the colleges and departments we have worked with to date is below:

Colleges	Departments	Courses / Internships
Huxley College of the Environment	Environmental Sciences	ESCI 470: Ecological Restoration; ESCI 454: Science, Management, and Outreach of Contaminated Sites; ESCI 453: Science and Management of Contaminated Sites
Huxley College of the Environment	Environmental Studies	ENVS 374: Land Use Regulations & Writing; ENVS 588: Assessment, Evaluation, and Research in Environmental Education; ENVS 471: Campus Sustainability Planning Studio; ENVS 472: Planning Studio II: Plan Development; ENVS 473: Planning Studio III: Plan Implementation; ENVS 372: Natural Hazards Planning; ENVS 472: Disaster Reduction & Emergency Planning Studio; ENVS 422: Advanced Spatial Analysis
College of Science & Engineering	Computer Science	CSCI 491: Senior Project

College of Science & Engineering	Geology	Internship with Dr. Bob Mitchell for Rainwater Catchment Template project
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	Anthropology	ANTH 454: Participatory Action Research
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	Health & Human Development	RECR 373: Recreation Programming; RECR 372: Management of Recreation & Leisure Services
College of Humanities & Social Sciences	Journalism	JOUR 440: Public Relations Research and Campaigns
College of Business & Economics	Management	MGMT 466: Green Business Applications
College of Business & Economics	Center for Economics & Business Research	CEBR-created financial report flood proofing options in West Stanwood

Equipment needed:

No equipment beyond what is already required within Sustainable Communities Partnership.

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)***:**

Position Title	Total Headcount	Total FTE	Salary and Benefits per FTE	Total Cost
Program Specialist 2	*1*	*0.37*	*$28,126*	*$28,126*
Faculty Stipend ($500 x 6 projects)	*6*	*NA*	*$4,080*	*$4,080*

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.):

Recurring operating budget $2,500.

Space Requirements:

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

No additional space is needed for this proposal.

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?

All needs can be accommodated within existing space.

How much new space will be required?

None

Addendum: DRAFT Cascades Project List

Hamilton

<u>Flood Book:</u> Currently, not all Hamilton residents are familiar with how to respond when their home or neighborhood floods. This project would create an informational booklet to be distributed to Hamilton residents. This book would provide procedures for what to do at different points during a flood emergency. It would also include measures a household could perform to mitigate impacts of flooding.

<u>Website Development:</u> Currently, Hamilton does not have the staff capacity to create a user-friendly online presence beyond Facebook. A team of students would develop a website for the town using best practices in web design.

<u>Digitizing Hamilton History:</u> The town hall currently houses a number of historical documents. Some of these documents have been digitized. This project would compile historical information available, and make available online in an aesthetically pleasing and informative manner.

<u>Assessor Data Improvement:</u> Currently, Hamilton residents struggle to understand the different land use regulations associated with their properties. It has been identified that if there was one place for a resident to go to learn about shoreline, critical areas, etc. associated with their properties, that awareness of these topics would increase, and compliance might improve. The students would work to understand all of the elements that would be helpful to add, would assess feasibility of doing so, and then would work to input data. This work would first have to approved by Skagit County, then done in collaboration with the county.

<u>Parkour Course:</u> Youth in Hamilton have expressed an interest in having an American Ninja like course in their community. A team of students studying recreation at WWU would do feasibility, development, and design work for this course. Through this process, they would engage local youth and other community members in order to understand the needs and dreams for an installation like this. They would also identify potential funding avenues for paying for an installation of this nature.

<u>Moving the Town</u>**:** The Town of Hamilton has struggled with significant town flooding for a number of years. Thus, when an opportunity to acquire property further north, and away from most commonly flooded areas, arose, a planning process was engaged. As the process of moving the town is a large and long-term endeavor, there would be a number of projects within this one. The proposed projects, all with a lens for moving the town in an equitable and sustainable way, are listed below:

- <u>Community Engagement</u>: This project would engage current Hamilton residents in a design process to understand the needs and ideas for what they would like to see in their community. The project team would work to understand: 1) what would the new development need to include in order for residents on the river side of the highway to want to move, 2) how can the small town character be maintained through a move, and 3) how can the natural amenities that residents appreciate be maintained through the process.
- <u>Sewage Planning:</u> A project team would support in determining how to manage sewage in an environmentally safe way in the new development.

- Economic Development Plan: This project team would integrate best practices in creating economic vitality in similar communities around the country to make some development recommendations as pertain to business type and location.
- Mapping of New Development: A team of GIS students could create a map with a number of different relevant elements (slope, critical areas, vegetation, etc.) that would help Hamilton determine where to build.
- Environmental Impact Assessment: a team of students would take a close look at environmental impacts of proposed development at new town site. This assessment work might inform how, and exactly where, development should occur within the new development space.
- Art and Beautification: A team of students would design art installations for the new community. These installations would be designed in collaboration with local residents.
- Sustainable Design: A team of students would do site assessments that would allow them to make recommendations regarding different sustainable building elements that could be incorporated into the new site (e.g. solar energy, sustainable building materials, compost options, etc.)

Darrington

Through a partnership with Glacier Peak Institute, all projects completed in Darrington would include a youth engagement element. This collaboration serves both WWU students and Darrington youth. WWU students will learn content in greater depth as they work to teach Darrington youth. Darrington youth will have exposure to positive role models and will also provide local knowledge for the college students.

Recreation and Economic Impact Project: The mountains around Darrington are a recreational destination, and becoming more and more so. Some studies lump the money people spend on their gear in urban centers before they go to the mountains with economic support of rural communities, for example. In reality, unless people are staying in homes or hotels within the rural community, not much money actually goes to that community. Darrington is not interested in adopting a culture that is not authentic to their community, but is interested in how to increase economic impact of recreationalists. Specifically, Darrington would like to see economic impact in the form of increased dollars within the school district. This project would assess economic impact from recreation in Darrington, specifically, and make a set of recommendations for how the community might plan for increased recreational use around Darrington in the ways that align with community needs and values. The project would include significant survey/community engagement work in order to understand both what citizens actually want and need on this topic as well as what would be appealing to recreationalists.

River Erosion Project: The Sauk River follows the east side of town. To the northeast of town, the river follows a steep gradient, but when it gets to town, it flattens out. In time, the course of the river has slowly moved. If left alone, it will threaten the mill and other built areas in town. This project would complete an assessment of the current state of the river, then make some management recommendations that weigh environmental, economic, and social concerns.

Park Education Project: There is a location in town along the Sauk River that has the potential to be a park destination in town. This project would develop a plan for this park that incorporates educational materials (e.g. signage or pamphlets). The students would engage visitors and

community members in a planning process to determine what the community would like to see there.

Cross-laminated Timber (CLT) Project: This project would help the Town of Darrington consider transitioning the mill to CLT. The team of students would conduct both policy and economic assessment analysis. They would engage in questions on: 1) what are the barriers to transitioning, now, 2) how might Darrington advocate for policy change to support their transition, and 3) what are the next steps for making this option financially viable. They would pursue working with the individuals within the Forest Service who are working with CLT development, as well as local users of CLT.

Tourism/Traffic Flow Project: Currently, many people driving through Darrington bypass the downtown area by staying on SR530. A team of transportation planning students would take a close look at how individuals are routed through town. They would make a set of recommendations on traffic flow alternatives based on use patterns they've seen, and comparisons to other similar communities.

Trail or Campground Planning or Assessment Project: This project would work on increasing visibility/use of campground and other lodging opportunities as an economic driver for the town.

Natural Disaster Planning Project: Darrington is located in a region that is particularly susceptible to the impacts of natural disasters. This project would utilize the Resilience Institute to support Darrington in identifying ways in which the town could be more prepared.

Concrete

Mapping of Underground Infrastructure within town (Sewers & Pipes)
The public works director currently has the underground map of sewers/pipes in his head, not on paper. He will be retiring soon, so this project is of the greatest urgency. Concrete would like to have a GIS map created that shows this underground infrastructure (imperative for future development).

Reviving Town Center
This is another big focus. Concrete has worked to improve signs coming in and out of town, which direct people to turn off of highway 20. The town has also done some tree trimming work, so that passersby can see to main street area better. Further, the community is interested in continued work to incentivize more business owners to utilize spaces on Main Street. This project would work on a set of strategies for revitalizing the downtown in an equitable way.

Recreational Attractions for Community Health
Concrete is interested in developing recreation/wellness focused tourist attractions within their town. There have been ideas connected to climbing walls and zip lines, but nothing has come to fruition yet. This project would do a market analysis to understand what recreational tourist attractions might be most compelling in Concrete.