

May 3, 2018

Colleagues:

After a year-long process, it is now time to share the recommendation from the Provost, Vice Presidents and Deans to the President on which proposals should be sent to Olympia for consideration by the Governor and the Legislature for funding in the 2019-21 biennium. This is the final opportunity for the campus to provide feedback to the President before making his recommendation to the Board of Trustees at their August meeting.

We'd first like to thank the faculty, staff and students who have brought us to this recommendation. Through the engagement of the campus community and the [Decision Package Proposal Criteria](#), we started with 17 pre-decision package proposals made to the University Planning and Resources Council (UPRC) back in the spring of 2017. These 17 pre-proposals, the UPRC meetings where they were presented and discussed were posted on the budget office website, and the budget forum was utilized last spring to illicit feedback from the campus to help narrow down the pre-proposals to a more manageable number for further development and consideration during this academic year's planning cycle.

In the fall of 2017, the Provost, Vice Presidents and Deans utilized the feedback from last year to evaluate those pre-proposals, and refined six proposals for deliberation again at the UPRC meetings in February and March of 2018. As many of you know, throughout these two planning cycles the campus was in the midst of writing a new strategic plan. Most of the pre-decision package proposals reviewed in 2017 were drafted under the old strategic plan. When the proposals were refined and presented again earlier this spring, the new strategic plan was in its near-final form, which also informed the refinement of the six proposals.

One of the six proposals, the Development of an Integrated Coastal and Marine Sciences Undergraduate Degree Program, was funded in the 2018 supplemental legislative session, which was occurring at the same time as Western's 2018 planning process, effectively reducing the number of proposals to five. Utilizing a process similar to that described in the preceding paragraph, the campus was once again asked to provide feedback on the remaining five proposals. The five proposals were also discussed at the April 2018 Board of Trustees meeting to obtain the perspective of the board members.

With the excellent advisement of the UPRC through their rankings and comments on the five proposals, and the feedback from the campus and the Board, the Provost, Vice Presidents and Deans met on April 19, 2018, to finalize a recommendation. These deliberations are always guided by several considerations: which proposals are most critically central to advancing our mission and values and which proposals have some reasonable possibility of garnering the requisite legislative support. With that background, the Provost, Vice Presidents and Deans unanimously recommend the following:

## Competitive Compensation

Protecting the quality of our faculty and staff must remain our top legislative priority. This decision package will be informed by the negotiations with the United Faculty of Western Washington University (UFWW), conversations with the executive committee of the Professional Staff Organization (PSO) and the PSO compensation guidelines, and through negotiations with the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) and the Public School Employees (PSE).

## Programmatic Decision Packages:

**Expanding Capacity for Prehealthcare at WWU:** This proposal would allow WWU to increase enrollment in Biology and Chemistry courses that are currently limiting Western's capacity to produce graduates ready to pursue careers in healthcare, and to provide a new streamlined degree path (Biochemistry BA) through which transfer students can meet pre-medicine and pre-pharmacy requirements. New faculty, new technical and advising staff, and new graduate TA lines are requested in each department. This proposal is paired with a phased capital project that would provide the space required to accommodate these new hires and the instructional labs needed to increase course access and reduce time to degree.

**BS Degree in Energy Science and Technology:** The WWU Institute for Energy Studies (IES) requests funding for six full-time faculty positions to complete the in-demand BS degree in Energy Science and Technology, enable future graduate degrees in energy, and expand energy research and outreach. Like all IES faculty hired to date, each position will be 50% in IES and 50% in a "home" department, namely *engineering, physics, geology, environmental science, environmental studies and management*. These faculty will help cover prerequisite STEM courses and ease access issues in STEM majors. Funding this proposal will add interdisciplinary faculty expertise in building science, energy efficiency, electric power and utility planning. It will help feed the workforce for Washington's clean energy economy, relieve STEM bottlenecks, and support place-bound students on the Peninsulas and transfers from regional 2-year colleges.

**Electrical Engineering Expansion:** This proposal addresses the need to expand Western's Electrical Engineering (EE) program by increasing access to meet student demand and the needs of the state while supporting the program's on-going efforts to improve equity and inclusion. It is the first of two phases in the long-range plan that will more than double the number of EE graduates. This proposal provides faculty and staff support to increase student access over 30% per year by introducing a new computer engineering concentration. On-going strategic partnerships with local industry combined with linked state capital projects will be leveraged to meet space needs for this expansion.

**Supporting Career-Connected Learning:** The proposed initiative – submitted jointly by Academic Affairs and Enrollment and Student Services – will allow Western to implement a new and enhanced model for providing Career Services that embeds more services directly within the colleges and with capacity to provide individualized support for every student from admissions to graduation and beyond. The proposed program will provide a multitude of benefits to stakeholders, including: (1) providing all students with specialized career planning and support services to increase internship placements and improve employment outcomes, (2)

increasing engagement with employers to meet critical workforce needs in our region and further contribute to the state economy, and (3) benefitting the university as alumni advance in their careers and give back to the institution.

**Increasing the Number of Teachers in Washington State:** Washington is facing a critical shortage of new teachers, specifically, in four high needs/shortage areas: special education, mathematics, science, and English language learning. School principals, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the Washington Association for the Council of Teacher Education, and state legislators are focused on increasing the number of teachers. Western Washington University, supported and encouraged by these entities, proposes to bring 200 additional teachers into high needs/critical shortage areas every year. As a public institution approved to certify teachers, we are mandated to help alleviate the K-12 teacher shortage.

It is important to understand that the legislative process is fluid. Western has been extremely successful in responding to state needs as they emerge throughout the legislative process by developing proposals in direct response to a specific legislative desire. Additionally, we will have an opportunity in early May to meet with representatives from the Governor's staff where we hope to get guidance on two other important issues for our campus: short-term space constraints while awaiting capital projects to be finalized and our aging information technology and telecommunications infrastructure.

The current full version of the five decision package proposals above can be found in the [Budget Forum](#) on the budget office web site. All campus feedback will be considered as the recommendations continue to be developed prior to submission to the Board of Trustees for approval in August. Please engage in the campus conversation using one of the following avenues:

- Provide feedback to your representative on President's Cabinet for inclusion in the discussion at the May 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Provide feedback through your UPRC representative for inclusion in the discussion at the May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- The [Budget Forum](#) is open through May 18<sup>th</sup> and will be monitored to receive feedback and answer any questions. It requires you to select the Log in button at the bottom of the page, and utilizes your universal WWU account for security validation.