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Emergent Budget Proposal Narrative
Division: Human Services Program

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Title: Writing Support for Retention and Success in the Human Services Program

Please check the appropriate category for this proposal and provide a brief (1-2 sentences) explaining the selection:

This project addresses an emergent need in the Human Services Program for writing instruction that helps students at *all* levels of writing to be better skilled at writing for the complexities of the Human Services profession—including at the sentence and paragraph level as well as at the level of the whole essay. We are in the midst of some proverbial shifting sands within the foundation of human services practice. Our graduates are increasingly being expected/required to be able to produce written material specific to the field for reasons of policy, grant writing, and production of position papers. The Human Services field is broad and includes areas in both governmental and non-governmental non-profit-organizations as well as for-private service providers. The breadth of expectations of our graduates is increasingly challenging, and current political stratifications and implications for increased challenges placed on non-profit organizations is an emergent issue that must be tended to. While the project outlined in this proposal is not going to resolve all of the emergent needs in our field, it is expected to be very supportive in our pursuits to support the development and retention of highly capable practitioners. The project, which addresses several goals mentioned in the most recent version (January, 2018) of WWU's Strategic Plan, is currently (Winter Quarter, 2018) being piloted, but does not have a secure future without additional permanent funding.

☒Urgent unforeseeable items that have arisen since the FY17-19 budget build process
☐Items calling for prompt action that are so critical they cannot wait until the FY20-21 biennial budget build process
☐Items that have arisen as a consequence of changed conditions, such as, but not limited to:
   a) additional enrollments,
   b) a change in leadership at planning unit level, and/or
   c) State or federal policy changes
☒Time-sensitive strategic opportunities that advance the university toward strategic plan fulfillment and are of the highest priority

Statement of Purpose: *(What is the problem or opportunity being addressed? How will you address this problem or opportunity?)*

The Human Services Program has a long tradition of recruiting and retaining diverse students. It is a program that generally attracts and supports among the most diverse student body of any Endorsements or Majors in Woodring College of Education, and across the university as a whole. Diversity here is broadly defined, inclusive of first-generation college goers and students from low income backgrounds, as well as racial/ethnic diversity. Faculty in the Human Service

Program (HSP) have noticed that, on the basis of submitted written work, a significant portion of students have a demonstrated need to improve their writing skills (at the sentence and paragraph levels as well as at the level of the entire essay composition, and advanced-level scholarship) to succeed in academia and in the profession. In Fall quarter 2017, the HSP commissioned two NTT faculty members with expertise in teaching writing to investigate resources for writing instruction at WWU and to develop a pilot project that would address this need. It was found that, as will be explained in more detail later in this proposal, there is a need and opportunity at WWU for a writing service that is available online as well as face to face and that helps students use specific techniques and grammar structures to craft effective sentences and paragraphs. In the writing service that has been developed and is being piloted this winter quarter (2018), NTT faculty with expertise in writing instruction provide information about specific techniques and structures that are applicable to all levels of writing but with special emphasis on the sentence and paragraph level. This has been done through the development and delivery of a series of video-recorded modules for online (Distance) students, and in face to face workshops for those who attend courses on campus. After reviewing the provided information and tutorials, students complete worksheets and submit writing samples, and the instructors give feedback. Students then apply what they have learned to writing assignments in their HSP courses. The service has been piloted both online and face to face, and is showing promise. Students are reporting a greater sense of confidence and comfort in their writing, and faculty have noticed improvements. For instance, one student in the Distance Learning program noted,

> Having this on line writing help is a huge gift. I haven't written a formal academic paper in 20 years, making the process seem daunting. Being able to dissect and manipulate my sentence structure to add greater meaning, is incredibly helpful. My two main learning styles are visual and auditory, which tend to make on-line classes a challenge for me. Seeing [the instructor] show the rough and final drafts helps me to retain and develop the necessary writing skills to be successful. In the past, I've received feedback about using a passive voice but I couldn't remember how to adjust the wording to formulate an active voice. On the second video, [the instructor] demonstrated the adjustment from a passive to an active voice as if it was second nature. This is a great tool!!

Another student had this to say about the pilot program,

> I am currently on the third lesson in the writing module, and though it is extra work it is time well spent. The lessons are very insightful, easy to follow and the feedback is extremely helpful in becoming a better writer. For someone like myself, I am grateful to have the extra help to brush up on long-forgotten grammar principles that facilitates writing a better essay. I sent [the instructor] a writing sample and he has given me great tips for improving my sentence structure. I think that this was a wonderful addition to this writing class, getting those extra pointers, helping one to become a better writer.

Additional students have made similar appreciative comments in our assessments of this pilot project's usefulness at the user-level. The reality that students are willing to take on additional work to better their writing skills is not surprising given the high caliber of students we attract at Western. It is all too often assumed that students will not engage in supports when offered to them. One challenge with that assumption here is that the vast majority of our off-campus students simply don't even have the choice. Support services are lacking for off-campus students, and this proposal intends to address that inequity head-on.

This foundational support is important in our retention efforts as well as in fulfilling our commitment to 'produce'/support highly capable professionals. We often inadvertently engage in a deflating practice of essentially penalizing otherwise highly capable students for not showing up already having mastered writing practices. Through a social justice lens, we are attempting here to level the playing field – to support students early on in the major to enhance writing proficiency and therefore support their future advancement in each of their remaining courses.

Anticipated Outcome(s):

- Students will improve editing skills with respect to paragraph organization and development during the revision process
- Students will improve proofreading skills by identifying and correcting common grammar and mechanical errors
- Increased writing skills will support students in showcasing their true capability through well-articulated writing assignments
- Increased ability to meet the writing needs specific to the human services field

Metrics: *(How will outcomes be measured?)*

The outcomes of this effort will be measured in a number of ways. We will of course track the usage of the writing support program, to monitor how many students utilize the service, and how frequently, as well as demographic information about each user including if they are students from campus or off-campus, their current GPA, and their student status (Junior, or Senior, etc.). We will monitor by geographic location in part to determine if it is feasible to offer on-sight in-person training or if we are best served maintaining a canvas-based platform for our off-campus students. We will assess the demonstrated skills of students to write sentences that are grammatically correct and contain a variety of structures, and paragraphs that are clearly developed and contain a smooth flow from sentence to sentence. We will do so in part by assessing the materials produced in their writing support program, as well as through assessing their grades on written assignments in their classes, as well as their final grades in those courses. Students are graded on both content and quality of their writing. As the analysis of the content presented is intended to remain the same, or minimally improved, the quality of articulation is expected to improve. This can be monitored/assessed through assessments from instructors throughout each quarter, as assignments are graded, and at the end of each quarter, as final grades are assessed.

How does this project support the University Mission and Strategic Objectives?

This project addresses the following goals, which are stated in the most recent version of the WWU Strategic Plan (January, 2018):

1) Two themes guiding the vision behind the strategic plan are "to advance inclusive achievement" and "to enhance academic excellence" (p.3); this project would address the writing needs of students who have demonstrated a need to improve their writing skills at the sentence

and paragraph level – to more closely align with their scholarly capability. This instruction would help these students succeed academically at Western. Because it would be made available online, this writing support would support students in online classes or at locations other than Western's Bellingham campus, as well as Bellingham students. Our off-campus students in particular tend to be marginalized in the sense that as reality has it, there simply are not as many resources for them off campus. This is a reality, despite the fact that our Distance-based students actually pay more for tuition, and tend to be non-traditional, returning students with lower socio-economic status than our campus students. In other words, our students who are most in need, and who pay the most for their education, have access to fewer support resources. This proposal will address that inequity.

2) The mission statement specifies a "focus on the skills and capacities to . . . communicate clearly, and connect ideas creatively" (p. 4); the whole focus of this project is to help students clearly communicate and connect their ideas in the form of writing by helping them explore a variety of ways to construct sentences and to link sentences together into coherent and meaningful statements.

3) Goal 1, item G, mentions the need to "provide technological and other academic infrastructure to support curricular innovation" (p. 5); this project is designed to be delivered online through Canvas (though face-to-face delivery is also possible), and in this way utilizes technological infrastructure available at Western. Technology is instrumental here in developing and disseminating multi-media modes of instruction including video/audio and interactive instruction.

4) Goal 4, item B, is to "enroll and retain more under-represented and first generation resident, non-resident domestic, and international students at the undergraduate and graduate levels" (p. 8); by helping students in these groups improve their writing skills at the sentence and paragraph level, this project would help WWU's retention efforts. The materials address the writing needs of both domestic and international students.

5) Goal 4, item D, addresses the need to "increase affordability and access of high quality undergraduate . . . education at all Western's locations." As noted above, this writing support would be available online, which would make it available to students in online classes or at locations other than Western's Bellingham campus, as well as to Bellingham students. In addition, students would be able to access it without paying any additional fee because it would be packaged as a service that is offered in conjunction with already existing HSP classes. As it already stands, our off campus students general are required to pay more for tuition than their campus-based counterparts despite having fewer support options and access to campus resources available to them. Additionally, our Distance Learning students are often place-based, working their way through college, older-returning (non-traditional) students who do not have the financial privilege of living on or near campus.

What are the consequences of not funding this package?

Some otherwise well-qualified students will likely not advance through matriculation, while others will graduate from the HSP (and WWU) without being able to produce written materials at a level required and necessary in the Human Services Field.

What alternatives were explored and why was this alternative chosen?

Western's library offers writing help through the Hacherl Writing Studio, but it is based on a peer mentor model—students helping students—whereas this project would be delivered by NTT faculty with expertise and experience in writing instruction. In addition, the writing help offered through the library focuses on writing issues mainly related to essay organization and content rather than on sentence- and paragraph-level issues. The journalism department offers Journalism 106, a two-credit course that covers material similar to that which would be covered by this project, but this project would allow students to access the writing support without having to enroll in a separate class. Finally, unlike Journalism 106, this service would be available online, which would make it easy for students to access.

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

The Human Service Program, which is in the Department of Health and Community Studies [Woodring].

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

N/A

Human Resources :

- .67 compensation for one NTT instructor (or .33 compensation for two instructors)
  - Compensation is $31,169
  - Benefits are $16,603
  - Total Personnel cost is $47,771 per Academic Year
- In the event of partial funding, **off campus instruction would be the first priority**.

Operating & Maintenance Costs: N/A

Space Requirements:

How much new space will be required? N/A

Is appropriate space available on campus? ☒Yes   ☐No

If no, what space is needed and what features must the space have (e.g., fume hoods, plumbing, 3-phase power, etc.)?

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
Writing Support for Retention and Success in the Human Services Program

	FY19				Future Years Recurring (if different than FY19)			
	Employee FTE	One Time Costs	Recurring Costs	Total Costs	Employee FTE	One Time Costs	Recurring Costs	Total Costs
Faculty Salaries	0.67		$ 31,169	$ 31,169	0.00		$ -	$ -
Professional Salaries	0.00		$ -	$ -	0.00		$ -	$ -
Classified Salaries	0.00		$ -	$ -	0.00		$ -	$ -
Student Salaries (Graduate Assistants, Hourly Student, etc)	0.00		$ -	$ -	0.00		$ -	$ -
Benefits			$ 16,603	$ 16,603			$ -	$ -
Total Salaries & Benefits		$ -	$ 47,771	$ 47,771		$ -	$ -	$ -
Supplies and Materials				$ -				$ -
Professional Service Contracts (please detail below)				$ -				$ -
Equipment and Personal Technology - including new faculty set-up costs				$ -				$ -
Other Goods and Services (includes memberships, supplies, materials)				$ -				$ -
Total Goods and Services		$ -	$ -	$ -		$ -	$ -	$ -
Lodging				$ -				$ -
Automobile Rental				$ -				$ -
Air Travel				$ -				A$ -
Ground Transportation				$ -				$ -
Other travel costs				$ -				$ -
Total Travel		$ -	$ -	$ -		$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Expenditures		$0	$47,771	$47,771		$0	$0	$0

POSITION TITLE	FY19						Future Years Recurring (if different than FY19)					
	Proposed Annual Salary	Headcount	FTE	Budgeted Salary	Benefits	TOTAL	Proposed Annual Salary	Headcount	FTE	Budgeted Salary	Benefits	TOTAL
Faculty Salaries												
Total Professors	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Associate Professors	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Assistant Professors	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -
Non Tenure Track	$ 46,800	1	0.67	$ 31,169	$ 16,603	$ 47,771						
Total Non Tenure-Track	$ 46,800	1	0.67	$ 31,169	$ 16,603	$ 47,771	$ -	0	0.00	$ -	$ -	$ -
Faculty Salary and Benefit Total	**$ 46,800**	**1**	**0.67**	**$ 31,169**	**$ 16,603**	**$ 47,771**	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
Professional Salaries												
Exempt Staff Salary and Benefit Total	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
Classified Salaries												
Classified Staff Salary and Benefit Total	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
Student Salaries												
Student Salary and Benefit Total	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**
Total Salary and Benefits - All Positions	**$ 46,800**	**1**	**0.67**	**$ 31,169**	**$ 16,603**	**$ 47,771**	**$ -**	**0**	**0.00**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ -**