



**Business & Financial Affairs**  
***Preliminary Planning 2011-2013***

## **Business and Financial Affairs Initiatives at a Glance**

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### **Support of Faculty, Staff and Students**

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Enhance Diversity Outreach and Recruitment  
Expand Employee Recognition Program  
Third-Party Review and Funding of University Retirement Plan  
Funding for Criminal Background Checks

# Business & Financial Affairs

## Preliminary Planning 2011-2013

### Planning the Campus Infrastructure

#### ➤ Capital Planning with a Data-Driven Strategic Vision

Over the course of the last year as the University developed and implemented a new capital planning process, it became apparent that additional support is needed in the areas of facilities planning (space, architectural and engineering), data collection and analysis, and information technology. Pursue funding for acquisition of state-of-the-art space management software and equipment, along with the additional technical staff are needed to update the University's significantly outdated information on space to support data-driven strategic analysis. Additional planning staff to support Space Administration, Capital Planning and Development, and Facilities Management needed to bridge the gap to assist decision makers with transforming the academic visioning into physical planning opportunities suitable for consideration in future capital planning processes.

The University's Internal "Challenges" states: *"In July 2009, the Office of Capital Planning and Development was established to improve efficiencies and enhance transparency of the capital planning process for major capital projects and minor works projects."*

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

#### ➤ Adding Efficiency and Transparency to Capital Project Delivery

Building on the successful launch of the new capital planning process, this initiative examines the entire capital project delivery system with an eye to increasing efficiencies and transparency. Over the course of this year and next, Capital Planning and Development, in conjunction with Facilities Management, Capital Budget, Contracts Administration, Risk Management and Legal Counsel will be using best practices to examine capital project management and delivery in the areas of:

- Consultant Selection, Negotiation and Management Processes
- Consultant and Contractor Change Order Processes
- Contract Approval Processes
- Procurement Processes

This will lead to recommendations for University administration regarding system efficiencies and resource reallocation to improve the quality and satisfaction related to project delivery and building commissioning for capital projects.

The University's Internal "Challenges" states: *"In July 2009, the Office of Capital Planning and Development was established to improve efficiencies and enhance transparency of the capital planning process for major capital projects and minor works projects."*

**Proposed Funding:** No additional funding is being sought. Recommendations may lead to resource reallocations.

## Stewardship of University Resources

### ➤ Sustainability Initiatives

This initiative would provide funding for three sustainability programs at Western: the Climate Action Plan; the 10x10 Conservation Plan; and the Improved Waste Handling program. Together these programs will re-establish Western as an innovative leader in Campus Sustainability.

- **Climate Action Plan** – Look at partnership options for purchase of carbon offsets to achieve climate neutrality.
- **10x10 Plan, Energy Conservation Program** – Sustain an ongoing program of cooperatively working with building occupants and maintenance personnel to achieve energy reduction targets through behavioral and infrastructure changes.
- **Improved Waste Handling** – Reduce expense of waste disposal (through Sanitary Service Company) by in-house pick-up of dumpsters and transfer to central compactor.

The approval of the Student Funded Green Fee in 2005 vaulted the University into the leadership of the Sustainability Movement and national prominence. Since that time many other institutions have followed our lead. As a result Western can now only be considered 'middle of the pack' with regard to sustainability. These programs would put Western back into a national leadership role for Campus Sustainability.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ Biomass Feasibility Study

Conduct study to determine feasibility of converting the Steam Plant from natural gas to a biomass facility to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as established by WWU Climate Commitment and State mandated targets.

President's Climate Commitment and Leadership in Sustainability – Currently the steam plant produces 40% of the Greenhouse Gas emissions at WWU. Conversion of the steam plant to a Biomass unit will not only help the University meet the Presidents' Climate Commitment but it will provide a valuable working facility to study the emissions associated with the use of Biomass technology, as well as clearly establish WWU as the preeminent location for Sustainability Education in Washington State.

**Proposed Funding:** Supplemental operating or capital request to Olympia FY 2010-11 (\$150,000).

## Enhanced Delivery of Financial Information and Business Services

### ➤ Acquire and Implement Finance Data Warehouse Software and Implement Banner Budget Development

We currently do not have the ability to create effective management reports consolidating data from the budget, finance and human resources Banner systems. Current SCT/Banner software is inflexible, data is somewhat difficult to retrieve, and reports are useable but not always self-evident without budget/ finance expertise. Critical management decisions hinge on the ability

for management and others to easily access complete and accurate financial, human resources and budget information. Finance data warehouse software allows user-friendly and comprehensive data access to all campus users.

While the budget is centrally loaded and tracked within Banner Finance, Budget Development at Western is highly manual, requiring duplicate data entry and maintenance of shadow systems centrally and across campus. In order to implement Banner Budget Development, programming changes were necessary (and this has been accomplished) and changes must now be made to Western's Chart of Accounts. If possible, position control should also be incorporated into the Banner Budget Development and/or improved in the Human Resources module to achieve maximum efficiencies.

The President's Initiatives include a focus on Resource Allocation and BFA's Mission and Values statement include: a) commitment to continuous improvement and b) sound management of the University's resources.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

#### ➤ **Administrative Efficiencies**

Review and reallocate existing resources in Accounting Services, Treasury Services and Student Accounting to improve efficiencies. The review will include examining current tasks performed and clarifying how the tasks serve the University's mission. We plan to analyze how the tasks may be shifted and/or combined with other tasks within or across the units to improve productivity, incorporating cross-training across financial system modules (Banner Student and Finance) and implement best practices. We will evaluate and document internal controls at every level and fully document the tasks and processes involved in these areas from beginning to end. The outcomes from this initiative include mitigating the risk of losing institutional history and improving the quantity and quality of analytical output for decision-makers. The President's Initiatives include a focus on Resource Allocation, and BFA's Core Purpose and Values Statement include: a) commitment to continuous improvement and b) sound management of the University's resources.

**Proposed Funding:** None. It is unknown at this time whether net savings might result from this review and reallocation of existing resources.

#### ➤ **Explore Space and Service Efficiencies**

Evaluate central student and business services with a view towards implementing best practice services that maximize space. Explore opportunities to provide more virtual, on-line services that are not space-dependent.

The university cashier office has occupied a "temporary" space for over nine years. This space is not ADA compliant and lacks the necessary space/layout to modify it to ADA standards. Inadequacy of the cashier office space is a long-standing unresolved issue; however, we see the potential of re-engineering operations, potentially in concert with other student services on campus, to improve service delivery and achieve significant space efficiencies.

Western's Mission Statement aspires to create a "student-centered environment". BFA's Mission Statement is, "The Business and Financial Affairs Division supports the mission of WWU by delivering quality services, products and programs which meet or exceed customer expectations. We do this through goal setting, teamwork, transparency, professionalism and creative problem solving". We consider "students" to be our customers and the consolidation of student services would demonstrate both teamwork and creative problem solving.

**Proposed Funding:** Unknown at this time.

## Enhanced Campus Safety

### ➤ Enhance Capacity of University Police Dispatch Center

Increase capacity in the University Police Dispatch Center to meet demand and code requirements. Providing adequate resource to answering/dispatch services to University on a 24-hour basis helps fulfill Western's Mission to "provide a high quality environment that complements the learning community on a sustainable and attractive campus intentionally designed to support student learning...".

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ Promote Building Access Control Policy and Implement on Campus

Public Safety, Facilities Management, and the Capital Planning Office will work with ATUS and the Western Card Office to promote access control policy/implementation throughout campus. Key control policies have been loosely enforced, resulting in compromised security in many academic facilities. In order to re-establish better control, enhance the University's ability to effectively respond to threats and emergencies, and to provide better access to campus facilities "keyless access" is vital.

Providing a safe campus for our students and employees is key to Western's Mission Statement which states, in part: "Western provides a high quality environment that complements the learning community on a sustainable and attractive campus intentionally designed to support student learning...".

**Proposed Funding:** Unknown at this time.

### ➤ Confined Space Rescue Team

The City of Bellingham's Fire Department no longer provides confined space rescue to the University campus. A challenge involves formation of a 16-person confined space rescue team to provide emergency rescue services supporting on-going campus maintenance and repair. BFA has currently identified 225 permit-required spaces for which federal and state safety regulations mandate that a rescue team be available whenever critical utility and infrastructure work is performed.

Annual operating expenses will include the requirement for 48 hours of training per year for each rescue team member. The team will need to replace or upgrade equipment such as

harnesses, radios, air bottles, ropes and medical equipment. A number of team members identified in October 2009 are on self-sustaining budgets.

**Proposed Funding:** Ongoing costs of operating a confined space rescue team are still being determined.

### ➤ Explore Property Insurance for University Building and Contents

Consider funding catastrophic property insurance for one academic building during the biennium. The University does not carry property insurance for our state-funded buildings, which is common for state higher education, but not necessarily a best practice. This request to provide funding for one building's coverage would begin a long-term program to eventually provide catastrophic insurance for all our academic and administrative facilities. One possibility to consider is to begin by insuring Wilson Library and its contents.

Western's Mission includes *"providing a high quality environment that complements the learning community on a sustainable and attractive campus intentionally designed to support student learning and environmental stewardship"*. A BFA challenge is having sufficient resources for emergency preparedness, including the replacement of a building in event of catastrophic loss.

**Funding and Proposed Source:** Building and contents insurance are estimated at \$100,000 per year, depending on the amount of deductible.

### ➤ Replace Public Safety Radios

Replace or update all Public Safety, Environmental Health and Safety, and Facilities Maintenance radios that are not narrow-band compatible to comply with mandate by the Federal Communications Commission requiring all radios to be narrow-band by 2013.

**Proposed Funding:** Division funding may be sufficient to fund over several fiscal years.

## Support of Faculty, Staff and Students

### ➤ Provide a Permanent Wellness Program

Provide a permanent wellness program to positively impact employee health, decrease absenteeism, reduce worker's compensation rates, increase morale and productivity, support retention, and give the University a competitive edge in recruiting top talent. Employee Wellness Program creates excellent relations with University employees and governance groups.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ Enhance Diversity Outreach and Recruitment

In support of the University's diversity initiatives, Human Resources has dedicated a full-time position to provide outreach and recruitment services. To recruit diverse top talent, active and direct outreach and utilization of diversity recruiting resources such as conferences and professional networks associations and publications is essential. Developing and implementing

an aggressive employee outreach/retention program can improve diversity among faculty and staff and enhance professional development programs. In addition, we will develop benchmark data to aid administration in identifying strengths and weaknesses for problem solving and managing change.

Western's Mission states; "*Western brings together an increasingly diverse and talented student body, faculty and staff to form a learning community that, along with community partners, involves its members in active learning, scholarly discourse and reflection*". The University level SCOT analysis includes a challenge to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ **Expand Employee Recognition Program**

Human Resources has been asked to expand the current formal program to recognize that employees need and deserve recognition more than 1-2 times per year and only a handful are recognized through the formal program. Human Resources will design and coordinate a spring ceremony agenda, partner with the Provost's office in coordinating fall convocation, and develop an ongoing informal recognition program. Funding would cover the costs of years of service and individual recognition awards, food, programs and certificates. Western's Core Value statements include, "*Western attains and recognizes excellence in all facets of operations.*"

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ **Third-Party Review and Funding of University Retirement Plan**

The University Retirement Plan (URP) requires periodic reviews of the investment funds offered. Additionally, the state mandates that the University calculate unfunded supplementation liability for the URP, which is included on our financial statements. This is a plan level calculation that estimates the value of supplemental benefits that may be payable from the URP; not an individual participant calculation. Lastly, the URP requires that the University research options for independent supplemental calculations. These calculations are for individual participants who are retiring from the URP and determine if they are eligible to receive a supplemental benefit.

WWU would partner with other State higher education institutions to contract with a third party to complete the review and conduct the calculations.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.

### ➤ **Fund Criminal Background Check Initiative**

Current policy requires a criminal conviction verification of all permanent and temporary new hires and certain student employee in security sensitive positions. In July 2009, financial responsibility shifted from the individual hiring departments to Human Resources, without corresponding funding.

**Proposed Funding:** Operations funding request will be submitted for FY 2010-11.