WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
2017 Legislative Priorities

As a publicly purposed university, Western’s mission is to serve the people of the state of Washington. Western, along with Washington’s other colleges and universities, strongly supports “Washington Competes,” a proposal to maintain the state’s competitive edge by bolstering degree production, student success and educational quality.

**Support the Success of All Western Students ($5.8 million)**

Western requests funding to strengthen core support programs that help ensure student success and provide an equitable, inclusive learning environment.

**Student Success and Achievement ($3.4 million)**

Significant increases in student demand have limited Western’s ability to offer key support services such as academic advising, tutoring, mental health services and support for students with disabilities. Specifically, Western will invest in:

- Proactive Advising, Tutoring and Peer Mentoring
- Mental Health Support
- Support Services for Students with Disabilities
- Destination Graduation: College Completion for Returning Adults
- Targeted Support for Entry-Level Math Courses

**Enhancing Equity, Inclusion and Diversity ($2.4 million)**

Western also requests funding to increase support staff for the Multicultural and Ethnic Student Center and to increase the number of student peer mentors for underrepresented students, following WWU’s successful Compass 2 Campus program.

**Reduce Bottlenecks in STEM Degree Programs ($2.7 million)**

Western requests $2.7 million per biennium to address bottlenecks in STEM degree programs. This plan will increase capacity in entry-level courses in Math, Physics and Chemistry that are required for STEM majors, and accommodate an additional 100 STEM students per year. This investment will reduce time to degree by an average of two academic quarters—saving students and families thousands in tuition costs.

**Address the State’s Teacher Shortage ($6.4 million)**

Western requests $6.4 million per biennium to address the state’s teacher shortage by preparing an additional 225 teachers each year in the areas of greatest of need: STEM Secondary Education, Special Education, Early Childhood Education and Elementary Education. These new enrollments would be distributed across Western’s existing locations in Bellingham, Everett and Seattle. Western’s proposal also includes a retention plan for beginning teachers in the region, as well as a “second-chance” option to reintroduce and support teachers who are returning to the profession.

**Marine, Coastal and Watershed Sciences Degree Program ($2.9 million and $1.2 million in one-time costs)**

Western requests funding to establish a new interdisciplinary STEM degree program designed to meet student and employer demand and help address Washington’s emerging challenges associated with climate change, resource management, and the growing fields of coastal science and policy. The focus of the Marine, Coastal, and Watershed Sciences program would be unique in its coastal sea-and-land emphasis, which requires a multidisciplinary approach to solving problems arising in coastal and estuary pollution, such as erosion, flooding, sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, ocean acidification, sustainable energy, and changing hydrologic cycles. The new degree program would leverage Western’s existing areas of expertise in oceanographic, aquatic, and environmental sciences, and expand student access to Western’s existing Shannon Point Marine Center in Anacortes.

WWU by the numbers

- 1,674 students
- 95 percent undergrads
- 88 percent residents of Washington
- 25 percent students of color
- 33 percent first generation students
- 82 percent freshman retention rate
- 99 percent of classes taught by faculty, not graduate assistants
- 71.5 percent graduation rate
Priority #1: Sciences Building Pre-design/Design ($7.24 million)
This project will address the growing interest in STEM degrees at Western, which have more than doubled since 2005, and help accommodate space limitations across a broad range of science disciplines. The university can no longer continue to perform at current levels without new space devoted to science instruction. With funding, Western will revisit the current Sciences Building pre-design report and proceed with the design phase of the project in order to ensure that the project is "shovel ready" for a construction phase in the 2019-21 biennium. These studies will allow Western to measure the feasibility of a new interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary STEM facility instead of an addition to Western's existing structures and to assess how to best serve the growth in STEM demand and the evolving needs of students to become career-ready. This request includes $500 thousand in pre-design costs and $6.74 million in design costs.

Priority #2: Classroom and Lab Upgrades ($6.65 million) Renovate 27 classrooms and labs in 7 university buildings to meet current program needs and address Western’s surge in STEM and other high-demand course enrollments.

Priority #3: Access Control/Security Upgrades ($7.2 million) Provide centralized lock-down capability, expand electronic control to all exterior doors of major academic buildings and enable full functionality of Western’s fire alarm system.

Priority #4: Disability Resource Services at Haggard Hall ($2.7 million) Move the Disability Resource Services office from the Old Main administrative building to Western’s library, located at the center of campus.

Other Capital Priorities:
- Support Services Facility – Phase 1 ($9.95 million): Create new space for administrative functions that do not require being located on campus, where space is extremely limited.
- Elevator Preservation Safety/ADA Upgrades ($6.7 million): Bring 29 of Western’s oldest and least safe elevators up to code and meet ADA requirements.
- Waterfront Land Acquisition ($4.5 million): Purchase six acres to address campus capacity constraints and enable community partnerships.
- Southcentral Campus Roadway Revisions ($2 million): Create a safer area for pedestrians and bicyclists coming to campus from the south.
- Heating System, Carbon Reduction and Energy Efficiency Improvements Pre-design ($415,000): Explore the feasibility of adopting a hot water distribution system for central campus heat, a project that may save costs and reduce energy consumption.