

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
FY2021 Annual Review Narrative Survey

Unit Name: Student Life

Programmatic & Academic Vitality Narratives

- 1)** Have you made any changes to your unit's annual budget development process from the response provided last year? If yes, please briefly describe the changes you've made to your unit's annual internal budget development process. If no, please answer with a simple, "no changes." *Word Limit: 500*

Housing and Food Services (HFS) begins budget development in October, culminating with a presentation to the Board of Regents in March that seeks approval for rental and dining rates for the following fiscal year. Because the rates are based on the cost to operate the program, the expense budget is developed through a complex process of analysis, looking at trends, anticipated or stated increases from service providers, wage and salary changes, and programmatic adjustments. The Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) of students reviews HFS operations and expenses in detail in order to serve as informed advisors to other students who serve in the Residential Communities Student Association (RCSA) and are asked to endorse any rate changes.

Units within Student Life's Care POD (Counseling Center, Disability Resources for Students, LiveWell, Community Standards & Student Conduct, and Career & Internship Center) are funded primarily via state funding. Given the tight constraints of state budgets, units are expected to spend entirely within the allocations for staffing and creatively find additional sources of funding for any operations, programmatic creativity, or emerging needs. As such, budget management is undertaken continuously. Additionally, two Care units which receive Services and Activities Fees (SAF) funding align their budget planning with the SAF Committee's (SAFC) annual allocation process (Jan-March).

Due to the distinct variance in budget size/scope for units within Student Life's Engagement POD (Ceremonies, Recreation, Student Veteran Life, Q Center, HUB, Student Publications, and Fraternity & Sorority Life), budget development is conducted independently by each unit. Most budgets are synched with the University and SAFC annual allocation processes. Units utilize either a zero-based budgeting process or an incremental budget process that includes mandatory/merit/minimum wage increases and potential programmatic initiatives. Engagement units are strategic in considering new initiatives but due to relatively flat revenue/budget increases from the University, SAF, and self-generated sources, new programs and services are oftentimes unable to be funded and programmatic adjustments are made.

The UWPD is taking a more business oriented approach towards its budget. The department is actively renewing MOUs and creating new opportunities for partnership and collaboration across campus to assess safety and security needs and then addressing those needs with a multi-faceted, scalable solutions-oriented process utilizing technology and other assets. In addition to actively seeking new opportunities to increase fiscal stability, UWPD's leadership team will meet frequently during January-March to assess progress and ensure the department is on-track to meet Deficit Resolution Plan financial targets.

- 2)** Have you made any changes to your unit's strategic plan in the past year? If yes, what are 3-5 key elements of your unit's new/revised strategic plan? If no, please comment on the progress you've made in 3-5 key areas of your strategic plan. *Word Limit: 500*

The strategic plan remains the same since it encompasses three years of initiatives. Key elements include:

- Providing tailored and data-driven support/resources for current and emerging populations. We have already started to identify some of these populations, including neurodivergent students, students experiencing homelessness, undocumented students, rural students, and non cisgendered students, just to name a few.

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- Rethinking ways in which we engage with and support international students. Primary efforts on this initiative are being led by the new office for international students--C.I.R.C.L.E (Center for International Relations and Cultural Leadership Exchange).
- Finding creative ways to attract and retain the best professionals in the country. This includes enhanced onboarding activities, purposeful connections with Division colleagues, cross training to allow others to assist departments experiencing high volume, and new professional development activities.

- 3) What major obstacles or institutional barriers currently do, or will, hinder execution of your strategic plan? What are you doing to address these challenges? If no changes from your response to either component of this question from last year, please answer “no changes”: *Word Limit: 250*

Lack of information systems integration is a major barrier to accomplishing the Student Life strategic plan. The need for easy-to-access, accurate data in an environment available to all units would be ideal for eliminating duplicative work and better serving students. Ironically, systems modernization projects which provide better access to data, such as HR/P and finance transformation, also add operating cost to units, many of which are already fiscally strained.

As the UW strives to enroll a diverse student population, the demands on Student Life staff in serving these students – in particular, unique or new populations – grows in complexity. Responding to emerging needs requires flexibility, resources, and capacity for planning and strategizing new programs and service models. Staff limitations and high demands make this scenario challenging.

The impact and challenge of advising, counseling, and being present for students in various stages of crisis and trauma takes its toll on staff. The emotional labor has been highlighted over the years and is felt by all staff levels. Allowing more flexible work schedules and working remotely have been helpful alternatives but with limited staff size and fiscal resources, these strategies can be utilized only periodically.

Our Strategy Map, an outline of strategic priorities over the next several years with an eye toward continuous improvement in how we serve our students and institution, has been a tremendous guide and asset to Student Life; however, many, if not most, require involvement from staff to arrive at solutions. It can be a challenge for staff to undertake leadership and/or involvement with the respective team/committee built to address the various strategies slated for action each academic year.

- 4) Over the next year, could any of your planned strategic activities result in material changes to revenues or expenditures, faculty or staff workload, or the student experience within your unit/campus and/or another unit/campus? *Word Limit: 500*

Yes, there are some critical areas where staffing increases may be needed.

We are currently working on enhancing mental health and disability support for students. This analysis is ongoing, but in order to improve our services, it is anticipated that increased staffing support will be necessary.

Additionally, with the opening of the new light rail station, we anticipate greater numbers of UW affiliated individuals arriving and departing from the northwest quadrants of campus where we currently have limited police presence.

- 5) What is your unit doing to effectively use or redeploy resources in a way that benefits your unit/campus and/or other units/campuses? *Word Limit: 500*

Unit Name: Student Life

HFS' strong residential program supports recruitment of students to the UW. Prospective students and their families seek on-campus housing that is clean, considered safe, and supportive of students academically, socially, emotionally, and in times of personal difficulty. (Beginning this year, HFS allocated resources to further support students with the addition of a student care position.) In addition, HFS offers an on-campus residential experience that blurs the lines between academic pursuits and life outside the classroom. Unique living-learning communities are offered and – through staffing and activities – provide opportunities for learning and connections between individual students and between students and the UW. On-campus residential facilities offer spaces such as maker spaces, and meeting/group study rooms that directly and indirectly serve students' academic needs as well as social and community development.

Almost all of our Care units have combined efforts in a Finance and Administrative Process Improvement Pilot in partnership with Recreation. In this arrangement, units financially contribute according to headcount, and benefit from consolidated support in Workday, purchasing, projecting, and hiring. This effort has yielded enormous efficiencies and consistencies and the overall fiscal health of our organizations has improved. This pilot emerged from a critical review of shared services, a priority of the Student Life 2014-2017 Strategy Map. Other examples of redeployment of resources include: using salary savings to reinvest in staff through professional development or temporary hires; increasing total number of users on licensed software products and asking that schools and colleges share total cost; increasing cross-training (suicide, socio-emotional skill teaching, etc.); bringing together individuals who serve in similar roles (but different reporting lines) to ensure that services are consistent and aligned; more single session, drop-in, group, and virtual resources to expand reach and reduce wait times.

Engagement units remain fully committed to their roles and missions of serving the broader campus community. While the size and scope of budgets vary, the highest percentage of their budgets is for salaries and benefits for student employees (900+) and classified/professional staff (100+). These employees advise, counsel, program, repair, clean, maintain, and coordinate the diverse functions of their respective operations, programs, services, and capital facilities (2M square feet). Partnerships (i.e., UW Bookstore, UW-Bothell Student Life) are an essential component to help maximize resources, determine efficiencies, and proudly serve our communities.

The UWPD has multiple collaborative agreements across campus to provide dedicated safety and security services, partnering to ensure the safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors. The Training and Community Engagement Unit was combined into the new Education and Outreach Bureau. Officers assigned to this bureau are cross-trained to perform duties related to the department's training unit and perform community engagement functions such as conducting safety and security presentations, manage social media presence, and conduct student orientations. A new liaison position was created that collaborates with the HUB, UW Social Work, the LEAD program, SPD and Mobile Crisis Team to address community concerns that impact the campus and surrounding area. They actively address persons in crisis, chronic homelessness, and community safety.

- 6) For UW student facing units, what are you doing to improve the experience and outcomes of students on your campus or in your unit? What could the University do to support your efforts? *Word Limit: 500, Leave blank if N/A*

HFS goes well beyond providing basic accommodations and food options for students by offering robust learning opportunities centered in residential communities. The *Learn to Live* program supports students' success as scholars, and future professionals and members of local and global communities. The program focuses on the development of life skills (i.e. time and stress management; conflict resolution); defining personal values and lifestyle choices (i.e. nutrition; career interests; relationships), and leadership development (i.e. student government; employment; advocacy). The physical environment is a significant factor in the success of the *Learn to Live* program evidenced by the level of student use of makers' spaces, study/work group spaces, multi-use spaces, and residential classrooms. HFS routinely conducts assessment of the student residential experience and makes necessary changes to achieve desired outcomes.

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The work of the Mental Health Task Force has engaged many of the units in the Care POD, and units have moved towards widespread adoption of a model of continuum of care. Moreover, creative ideas that have emerged in the Task Force process have been adopted and measured in real time, rather than waiting for the final report submission. The co-morbid nature of health and mental health concerns has led LiveWell to adopt a brief screening and intervention model for all students seeking services. Changes in 2017 to the Student Conduct Code has surfaced some additional needs for change to policies regarding Hazing, Hardship Withdrawals, and Voluntary leave. Changing service delivery models has been a theme for the Counseling Center and Career & Internship Center (C&IC). In the Counseling Center, they are adopting single session and increased the number of Let's Talk groups/locations. In C&IC, they have launched career competency training, career interest communities, and online self-major-career exploration system so students can access resources 24/7. In summer 2019, Student Life launched [Husky Health and Well-Being](#), a centralized website that consolidates and helps students navigate the myriad resources at UW for wellness.

Engagement POD units remain committed to the success and retention of our students by helping students engage in co-curricular opportunities, student employment, and leadership development. By assessing the work, these units can determine how well students are fully immersing themselves in their Husky Experience, discovering a purpose, developing autonomy, enriching skills, talents, and gifts, and building lifelong affinities with the university.

The UWPD is working on a multi-faceted, social media centric campaign to educate and improve the safety and security of our international students on campus. Working with other stakeholders within the Division of Student Life such as HFS, IFC, the HUB and the Student Safety Advisory Board, the UWPD works to educate, prevent, reduce and address crime.