



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

FY2024 Operating Budget Development Narrative Prompts

School of Social Work

Section 1: Programmatic & Academic Vitality Narratives

*Text submitted within this section **will** be published to OPB's Annual Budget Development website*

Where possible, you are encouraged to leverage published materials already created

- 1) Please briefly summarize your unit's/campus's strategic plan and how your FY24 operating budget proposal (as submitted in Workday Adaptive Planning) connects to your campus/unit strategic plan. *Word Limit: 500*

The School of Social Work strategic plan/aspirational aims emphasize effective, culturally dignifying, and sustainable solutions that are rooted in the profession's social justice mission and are intimately linked to our commitment of equity and impact. Our strategic, aspirational goals include:

- Creation of a culture of equity and inclusion at the School of Social Work;
- Impact Science: strengthening the capacity of our faculty and doctoral students to engage in collaborative impact science by expanding opportunities for community engaged, collaborative, transdisciplinary research that are real-world, scalable, sustainable, and scientifically and culturally appropriate;
- Impact Education: co-creation and transformation of our curricula by providing our students with cutting-edge knowledge, skills, and mentored experiences within diverse settings that allow our students to take on new roles and leadership positions within the field;
- Inclusive Innovation: Identification of new funding streams and opportunities to fuel and accelerate innovation to impact pipelines;
- Social Compacts: expansion and exploration of current partnerships with the State of Washington

Our FY24 operating budget proposal in Adaptive aligns with a continuation of the aforementioned aspirational aims in all ways. The operating budget continues to emphasize recognition of access for students both by growing program enrollments to meet the needs of our community in the service of social work while providing enhanced funding to students to offset costs related to that education. Investment in infrastructure including our workforce, technology systems, and facilities is noted to meet current and ongoing operational needs so that our community feels supported to continue to thrive in mission centric efforts in teaching, research, and service. These investments will allow the School of Social Work to continue to attract world class faculty, excellent staff, and passionate students while creating efficiencies for reporting and transparency and engage all in the exploration of new scholarship and research for the field of social work. Investments include upgrades to major educational systems from admissions and field operations to administrative systems including Workday, our website, and internal business operational programs in human resources and finance. Review of salaries both to attract new talent while honoring the talent we have and want to retain is a high priority. Finally, investment in launching cutting edge pedagogy and curriculum that connects students and faculty with the field will propel the school to a new era of social work education that is aligned to the ever-changing needs of the communities we serve locally and regionally.

- 2) Building on the responses your campus/unit submitted during the FY23 annual review cycle ([posted here](#)), how has your unit/campus integrated the themes and goals of [the 2022 – 2026 UW Diversity Blueprint](#) into your campus's/unit's ongoing work to take actions towards access, inclusion, and equity? *Word Limit: 750*



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The School's current Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Master Plan was developed through an extensive, inclusive process involving SSW students, staff, and faculty. Initiated in FY2017 and completed in FY2019, the planning process was structured around the goals of the UW Blueprint, as applied to the SSW's unit-specific objectives, strategies, and activities. While the production of the "public" version of the plan (updated, final-edited, and formatted) has been delayed due to the pandemic, the School's activities have been guided by the "draft" plan, and many of the priority activities outlined in the SSW DEI Plan have already been achieved. In this section, we highlight a few significant achievements for FY2023.

GOAL 2: Attract, retain, and graduate a diverse and excellent student body: In the past year, SSW's undergraduate and graduate student bodies continued to be among UW's most diverse (and most excellent!), and our retention and on-time graduation rates for BIPOC, URM, and students overall remained among the University's highest. For the past several years including FY23, close to a majority of our students are from diverse communities. Currently over 48% of our student body is BIPOC with an overall URM student body rate of 27.3%. Our undergraduate student population is over 60% BIPOC with over 37% identifying under the definition of URM. This is over 78% more than the UW Seattle campus broadly. Finally, the School is particularly proud of a 95+% graduation rate among our bachelors and master's students.

In FY22 and continuing in FY23, the School succeeded in securing funding for three major initiatives that significantly advances our capacity to recruit, support, and graduate a highly diverse student body. In particular, these initiatives will allow the School to reduce the "debt-to-salary" ratio of our graduates—a fundamental educational equity goal to which the School has been committed for over a decade.

- SSW Behavioral Health Workforce Development Initiative: Funded by the Ballmer Group, this ambitious \$34.4 million initiative will provide over \$21.4 million in generous, two-year scholarship grants to approximately 415 behavioral health graduate students in Washington State broadly over the next five years. The initiative specifically aims to strengthen support to BIPOC students committed to serving the state's most in need of behavioral health services, and to eliminate or dramatically reduce student debt associated with graduate education. Since inception in FY22 over 120 students statewide have received close to \$4.2M. In FY23 alone over 40 UW Seattle students have received \$1M of conditional grants with additional funding of **\$3.4 million anticipated to UW-Seattle and over \$1.1 million** are anticipated to UW-Tacoma social work students.
- The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence: In FY2022, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families (DCYF) and the SSW renewed a historic agreement that created the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence, an innovative partnership led by the UW School of Social Work. The Alliance encompasses all three Master of Social Work (MSW) programs at public universities in the state—UW Seattle, UW Tacoma and Eastern Washington University. The Alliance through our Child Welfare Training Advancement Program provides specialized courses, field education placements, and generous educational grants, totally approximately \$3.8 million per year, for approximately 75 SSW MSW students on the Seattle campus and 47 for MSW students on the Tacoma campus.

GOAL 3: Attract and retain diverse academic personnel: From FY21-FY23, the School completed one of its most successful and diverse faculty hiring periods across all ranks in its recent history. From our tenure and teaching tracks to research faculty, the School welcomed 15 new faculty. Of those hires, 70% were BIPOC and seven were tenure track faculty. Both of our research hires were BIPOC and 83% of our six teaching track hires are BIPOC. Among this notable group of diverse hires, we welcomed two Indigenous, senior tenure-track



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professors, three African American tenure track assistant professors, and five African American assistant teaching professors.

GOAL 4: Attract and retain a diverse staff: The School of Social Work has made strides in hiring diverse staff. From enhanced training in implicit bias awareness in interviewing to more robust onboarding, the School of Social Work staff have experienced significant gains in meeting our goals of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Major units such as the Dean's office to SSWIT have seen as much as a 30% increase in diverse employment as staff retire or leave for different opportunities.



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Section 3: Tuition Based Program Rate Recommendations - Narrative Section

*Text submitted within this section **will** be published to OPB's Annual Budget Development website*

-- If applicable to your unit. If not applicable, simply leave this section blank --

Responses to the questions below are required for each tuition category that your unit/campus recommends adjusting (as submitted to OPB by 2/1/23). **Please note question #7 is required for any programs for which no tuition increase is requested.** If you are recommending changes for multiple tuition categories, please differentiate your responses within each question.

- 1) Please explain why each proposed change is needed and how your unit/campus will use new incremental tuition revenue increases or absorb incremental tuition revenue losses. *Word Limit: 500*

The School is recommending a 5% tuition increase in its MSW incoming tuition category only. This would apply both to resident and non-resident enrollments. The continuing MSW tuition category will not have any increases at all. This plan was part of a larger process implemented Fall 2019 to great student interest to tackle ever growing student debt in a field where pay is low and loans are higher.

For our Tier 2 tuition category for our PhD program we are recommending a 3% increase for residents and non-residents that is in alignment with the School of Medicine.

Planned increases for tuition support the entire school from the ability to add vital services from increased field faculty that impact students' experiential learning and support in student services to dedicated mental health counseling. Additionally, the increase supports necessary annual faculty, staff, and student employee salary increases required by the University of Washington and needed to maintain a competitive edge with hiring and maintaining the best faculty and staff. Annually, the School must come up with at least \$277,000 for a 2% raise or up to \$554,000 for a 4% raise to support salary increases. Combinations of tuition increases and other revenue generating activities provide this support.

- 2) Explain whether and how each proposed change will affect peer comparisons and/or whether a market analysis was conducted. *Word Limit: 500*

The School of Social Work performs annual market analysis to determine both the health and affordability of our program compared to our peers across all our programs. As a top ranked School of Social Work nationally, the University of Washington focuses analysis at the MSW ranks as the school recommends its own tuition that aligns with our values and fiscal sustainability. Currently SSW is in the 23rd percentile for resident tuition and 17th percentile for non-resident tuition for MSWs for comparison schools based on OFM, Top 15 and Global Challenge schools though we are 2nd nationally by program. Further, when compared to top 15 Schools of Social Work publicly, the University of Washington is in the 44th percentile for resident and non-resident tuition. For our PhD program we are in the 28th and 32nd percentile for resident/nonresident status respectively. Finally, in our BASW ranks, the School is at the 33rd and 60th percentile for resident and non-resident enrollments respectively. Given both our commitment to access and affordability continued incremental increases in both our MSW and PhD programs will not only keep us extremely competitive for tuition with our peers but allows the School to meet its financial obligations.



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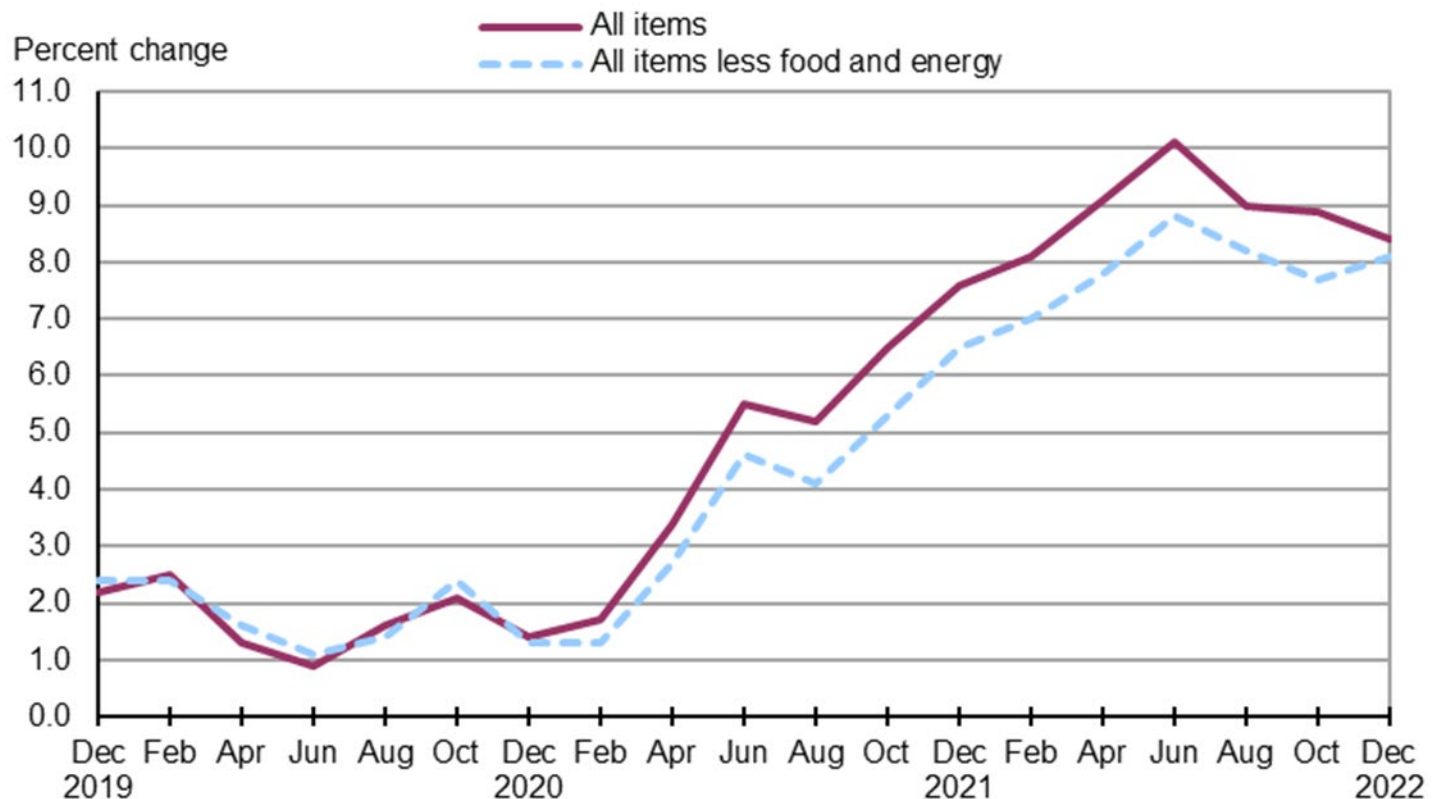
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- 3) Tuition and fee increases have a disproportionate impact on low-income students. Please comment on how each fee change will affect student debt loads, and specifically how the program will offset this impact. *Word Limit: 550*

Costs of education are not inexpensive nor is the cost of living in Seattle. As an industry, newly hired social workers make an average low-end starting salary of \$51,159 annually while the median salary is \$72,251⁴. Monthly debt from loans is difficult not only to pay off but to keep social workers in the field; therefore, affordability is key. Combinations of expenses that are in alignment or less than prevailing costs of living along with more support for students should help in allowing students to pursue the profession of social work.

Based on the City of Seattle Consumer Price Index, the CPI annually has increased 5-fold over the last 4 years and currently is at 8%. The effects of inflation have hit every aspect of life including the ability to maintain services and excellence within the UW School of Social Work for our students. While an anticipated tuition increase is 5% for only year 1 cohorts, when spread over 2 years it is 2.5% on average. This is much lower than CPI growth yet the increase is needed to keep pace with competitive hires to continue our core mission for teaching.

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA, December 2019–December 2022



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Due to the social justice issues of salary and indebtedness, the School has sought to ameliorate student debt both through low tuition increases and more importantly thru aggressive donor support. As shown in the chart



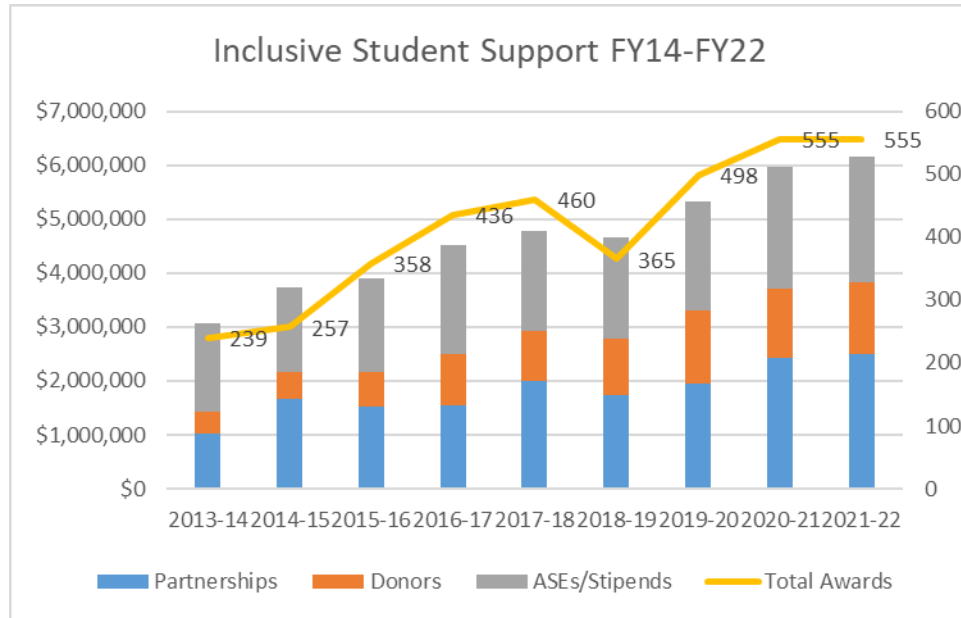
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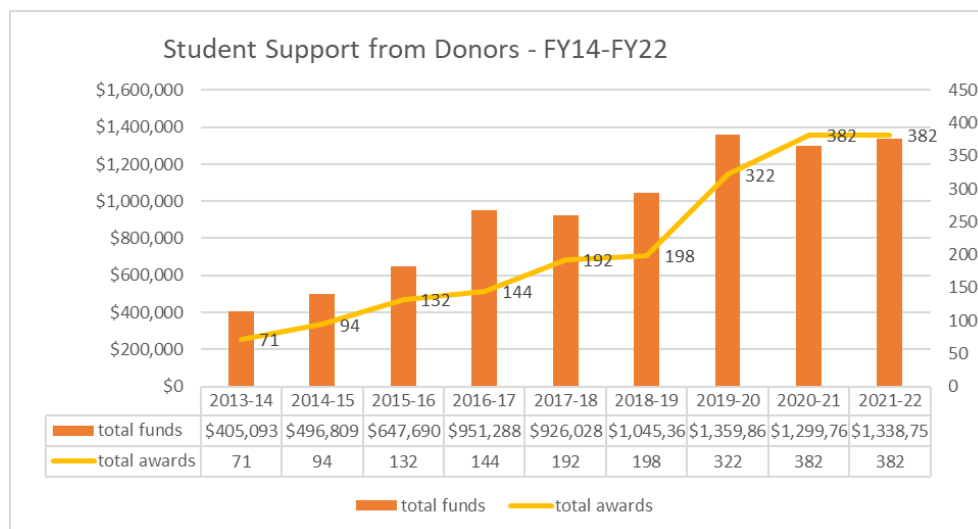
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below, the School's support for student scholarships and stipend supports rose dramatically over the course of the past several years:

- There has been over a 100% increase in the total number of awards distributed with each student averaging over \$9,845/MSW student among donor and program supported scholarships & stipends annually between FY14-FY22.



Private philanthropic support experienced the greatest increase since FY14, increasing over 129% from \$.4M to \$1.3M annually. This support was made possible in part our success in securing our largest single scholarship gift (\$10 million to establish an endowed fund), and private matching funds from UW (\$5 million).



Finally, the School of Social Work received a statewide award from private philanthropy to fund chronic shortfalls in behavioral mental health services in mid-2021. The statewide Behavioral Health Workforce



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Development Initiative will fund over \$21.7M of direct scholarship support to over 400+ students statewide over 5 years. To date in FY23 UW Seattle students have received \$1M in support. Support averages \$51,500 per student over two years which will have a tremendous impact on student debt load over the coming years.

Overall SSW provides quite a bit of support for all our student degree programs:

- In FY22 over \$6.1M of scholarships, fellowships and ASE appointments were allocated to student ranks of BASWs, MSWs, and PhDs
- MSW students received \$4.1M of funding from 424 unique awards:
 - Residents:
 - 171 awards averaging \$7,886/year – 72% of all resident students
 - Non-Residents:
 - 73 awards averaging \$10,642/year – 68% of all non-resident students
 - MSW EDP students:
 - 193 awards averaging \$10,057/year– over 89% of all EDP students

Net tuition resulting from student support for recipients:

- Based on the number of awards, average amount of awards and when factoring in average annual tuition & fees, the net tuition for recipients was affected as follows:

	Total yrs	Annual Tuition/Fees	Total Program Tuition/fees	Ave award	Total support	Net tuition
MSW day-Res	2	\$21,119	\$42,238	\$7,886	\$15,772	\$26,466
MSW EDP	3	\$21,724	\$65,172	\$10,057	\$30,171	\$35,001
MSW day-NR	2	\$35,591	\$71,182	\$10,642	\$21,284	\$49,898

While the push for increased support by scholarships, stipends, and other student centric opportunities never ceases, the School will always work diligently to provide as much support to all ranks of students so that they may choose social work as a profession without pause due to debt burden.

- 4) Describe whether you expect the proposed tuition rate(s) to result in any substantial changes to enrollment (including a change in the resident/nonresident composition) or to the volume of waivers awarded. *Word Limit: 250*

At this point we do not anticipate any resulting enrollment changes based on our tuition. We are competitive and with stable tuition for the duration of our core population of MSW students, we believe this predictability will better assist students in choosing the UW as their first choice for their MSW degrees. The advent of the newly created Behavioral Health Workforce Development Initiative may impact enrollments in the future. However, more information on capacity and student support is underway to determine whether funding further reduces student debt burden to our current population or increases overall enrollments to meet the ongoing need of behavioral health social workers.

Waivers at the School of Social Work have fluctuated over the years. The volume of waivers at SSW averaged about \$611,000 annually over the past 2 fiscal years. Waivers come from a variety of opportunities including ASE and stipend appointments to tuition exemption programs. SSW can only control waivers it assigns via



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stipends or positions it hires for centrally. Non-SSW waivers are currently beyond our control so while they support students, the ability to predict them is impossible under current circumstances.

The uptick has benefited students; yet, questions of how waivers can and should be assigned is one SSW wishes to pursue more thoughtfully at the UW so the waiver can impact student need while allowing SSW some measure of control to maintain solvency as waivers ultimately are forgone revenue that supports the entire school.

- 5) For each proposed change, please explain what would happen if the change were not implemented (e.g. deficit, loss of staff positions, etc.). If a proposed change is part of a plan to eliminate a current deficit, please indicate that. *Word Limit: 250*

In the event we were not allowed to increase tuition, we would go into a deficit situation within a year or two as we need to raise approximately \$277,000 annually to cover merit at a minimum of 2%. The increases in tuition are not meant to cover a current deficit but to avoid one. In addition, we have a robust fee-based program which is 40% of our current MSW student body. Since it is important to treat both our state and fee-based student equitably, it would not be feasible to raise fees on 40% of our students only. Further, we would not be able to hire any faculty or staff to support our increased enrollments until we became solvent. With merit and the advent of Workday finance, we need to increase our tuition in part to support our programs and provide enhanced supports to students.

- 6) For each tuition category that you have proposed changing, please discuss your unit/campus's overall tuition rate strategy for the next 3-5 years. In your response, please explain whether and how your long-term strategy connects to "market" rates (e.g. where do you want to be, rate wise, compared to peers?) *Word Limit: 250*

As stated above we have planned on 5% tuition increases 1 time for each new MSW class while PhD students have a 3% increase annually. The recommended rates will provide predictability for our students in planning yet allow the School to maintain solvency. With more recent changes in peer tuition, the School has actually moved downward slightly for tuition for both resident and non-resident ranks representing the 23rd and 17th percentile for all top 15 schools of social work nationally. Our PhD tuition market analysis shows that the UW is on the lower end of peer tuition dropping to the 28th percentile for resident and 32nd percentile for nonresident tuition. For a public university that is ranked 2nd in the country and 1st worldwide by the Center for University Rankings, the program is as competitive for tuition as it can be and that value is an important goal for the School. When compared with similarly ranked programs, the UW School of Social Work is affordable; however, understanding that tuition historically is high everywhere the goal is to fund raise and provide opportunities to continue to lower net costs for students as demonstrated above.

- 7) If you are not planning to increase tuition for any program, please respond to the following: Generally, small, inflationary increases (1-2% annually) are preferred over no increase or large increases every few years. Please answer the following questions for each program where no increase is requested. *Word Limit: 250*
- a) Please explain why this program's rate does not warrant an increase by describing the program's financial position, structure, peer comparisons, or other relevant information.
 - b) What do you currently anticipate annual rate change requests will be for the next two years? N/A



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Section 4: Communication with Faculty & Student Stakeholders

*Text submitted within this section **will** be published to OPB's Annual Budget Development website*

-- If applicable to your unit. If not applicable, simply leave this section blank --

Communication of your unit's/campus's annual review materials, including your proposed FY24 operating budget, narrative responses and tuition rate recommendations is an important and necessary component of the UW's budget development process. Your responses to the questions below will be documented and included as part of the FY24 operating budget development review materials provided to Executive Leadership of the UW. **It is expected that all unit/campus review and consultative processes are completed by the March 17, 2023 due date.**

- 1) Please indicate the date that FACULTY leadership within your unit/campus was consulted and provided the opportunity to provide input as part of this budget planning exercise

Currently faculty and staff have received a budget update back on January 10th 2023 to discuss the School's overall financial health and to begin strategic discussions of budget as it pertains to the School's strategic aims and priorities. A deeper dive will commence by the end of winter quarter as current recommendations are following approved planning from 2019. Due to the matriculation of a new Dean for summer 2023, planning will tackle immediate stability knowing that strategic planning will guide the School beyond FY24.

- 2) Please list a point of contact for your FACULTY leadership (name and UW email address).

Jennie Romich: romich@uw.edu + Kalei Kanuha: kanuha@uw.edu

- 3) Please indicate the date that STUDENT leadership within your unit/campus was consulted and provided the opportunity to provide input as part of this budget planning exercise.

Currently Student Advisory Council received an update on the budget back on February 27th 2023. This discussion will provide the background and continued plan for review of recommendations presented in the report.

- 4) Please list a point of contact for your STUDENT leadership (name and UW email address).

Our Student Advisory Council does not have an appointed contact as they act in unison. Lin Murdock is the staff lead that oversees activities of our Student Advisory Council. You can reach her at linm@uw.edu

- 5) Enrolled students affected by tuition rate increases should be consulted on proposed increases before proposals are finalized. Please describe when and how students were consulted and summarize the feedback they provided regarding EACH of your tuition recommendations.

Faculty, staff, and students have and will receive both a presentation about the overall fiscal health of the school via Budget 101 materials. Additionally, starting March 2023, the School will embark on sustainable academic



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business planning that aligns with the school's stated aspirational aims and will continue through the end of spring quarter to both educate our community while aligning our priorities to budget.