



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

FY2025 Operating Budget Development Narrative Prompts

College of the Environment

Programmatic & Academic Vitality Narrative

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 provide a web link to your campus/unit strategic framework and provide three to five bullet points outlining the relationship between your resource plan and your strategic framework. *Word Limit: 750*

<https://environment.uw.edu/about/strategic-planning/>

There are two primary goals within the College's new strategic plan:

Goal 1: Build a stronger, more connected community to enhance environmental knowledge and impact

Goal 2: Catalyze Understanding of and solutions to environmental challenges through a systems-based approach.

Within these goals are several strategies and activities that are intended to facilitate accomplishment of the goals. While the level of detail in the resource plan means that a specific strategy or activity can be linked to line item in the research plan, there are several examples where these direct ties can be made.

- *Strategy 1: We will develop an inclusive, supportive and collaborative culture as we leverage expertise across all four pillars, from deep disciplinary work to interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and systems-based approaches.* As part of this work we are striving to "advance just practices that realize the College's commitment to DEIJA principles to build, support and nurture a more diverse community of faculty, staff, students and postdoctoral scholars, including implementation of the recommendations of the College's DEI Task Force Report." Financial support for this work can be seen in the Dean's Office resource plan for the newly-established Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and related programming.
- *Strategy 2: We will strengthen and expand environmental literacy at UW and in society at large.* Not only do we believe that it is critical to build a more environmentally-literate population, this work is also key to our financial health. The College's resource plan includes additional support for teaching faculty who will help us "create tracks of existing and new courses, and appropriate credentials for professionals in the private, public and nonprofit sectors who wish to further their environmental literacy."
- *Strategy 3: We will develop a shared College identity and tell our story locally, nationally and globally to grow our visibility, recognition, reputation and public trust in the College and the University.* The College continues to invest in science communications and science communications training in both formal and informal learning environments. The investments in this work can be seen in the Dean's Office (both in the Academic Affairs and Marketing and Communications resource plans) as well as within individual department plans in the form of FTE that are working to "enhance our reputation as a widely known and trusted source of accurate, understandable and timely information about the environment for the public, policymakers and other key community partners and affected parties."
- *Strategy 4: We will engage the exceptional breadth and depth of expertise in the College community to continuously identify emerging systems-level themes as focal points for our work, and build frameworks to support them.* The College of the Environment is home to multiple nationally and internationally-ranked departments and programs where faculty and scientists work to understand the fundamental



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processes of our planet and environment; manage natural resources sustainably, equitably and ethically; devise mitigation and adaptation strategies in response to climate change; and build policy and other solutions in partnership with communities, government or business. While the College's resource plan does not call out individual grants, contracts or gifts, the continued success that we have in generating revenue to support this work relies on our ability to "identify projects that can focus on systems-level research and will be responsive to the needs of the public."

- *Strategy 5: We will nurture and sustain mutually enriching partnerships and interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations beyond the College, to develop new knowledge and tools that lead to just and equitable environmental solutions.* While this work is done across the college, one of the clearest ties to this work in the College's resource plan is the continued investment of gift, grant, and state funding in EarthLab. With decades of experience in the co-production of knowledge through long-standing programs like the Climate Impacts Group and the Washington Ocean Acidification Center, and newer programs, such as Nature and Health and the Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center, EarthLab serves as a university-wide model for how we can "enhance existing and foster new partnerships by strengthening the College's support for co-developing our work with external partners, and identify gaps to fill with new structures to serve our partners."

- 2) Please discuss your campus/unit's planned utilization of resources, as identified in your Adaptive entries (institutional initiative = UW Diversity Blueprint), in support of the [2022-2026 UW Diversity Blueprint](#) themes and goals. *Word Limit: 750*

It is critical to note that while the institutional initiative *UW Diversity Blueprint* worktag was used in the College of the Environment's FY25 resource plan, it was only used in the GOF funding as the Gift and Grant funding were not planned out to this level of detail for FY25. That being said, the Dean's Office, schools, departments, programs, and institutes within the College continue to put significant efforts into refining, rethinking and deepening their work in the diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility space,

Several college-wide and unit-level activities that are identified in the College of the Environment FY25 Adaptive entries as being in support of the UW's 2022-2026 Diversity Blueprint are shown below with the acknowledgment that much more work is being done and much more work is needed.

Goal 1: Cultivate an accessible, inclusive, and equitable climate

Many units within the College are implementing a variety of activities and policy revisions that aim to support the creation of a work and learning environment that is welcoming to individuals from all identities. As identified by the *UW Diversity Blueprint* worktag, the College's Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and their team are working closely with College leadership, faculty, postdocs, staff, students and other community members to integrate an equity and justice lens into the College's work, and advance our shared vision that excellent science, teaching and scholarship can only be achieved in a community which is inclusive and supportive of people of all backgrounds and identities.

Goal 2: Attract, retain, and graduate a diverse and excellent student body



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The Dean's Office Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs partner to offer a variety of student-focused programming in this space, including:

- Quarterly professional development panels and workshops on topics ranging from effective mentoring to postdoc career pathways.
- Graduate student orientation including information and connection to GSEE and other equity and inclusion programming across campus (SACNAS, oSTEM).

In addition, the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences supports a part-time position provides school-wide programming and connection to college- and campus-wide programs that support individuals with URM identities.

Goal 5: Develop place-based education and engagement to advance access, inclusion, and equity

Units across the College and the entire university have come to realize the intrinsic intersections of environmental sustainability and social justice. While there have been numerous individual efforts across multiple units, building a curricular infrastructure to embed the interplay of sustainability and environmental justice into the UW's identity as a whole is the obvious next step. The College has launched a two-stage process designed to foster undergraduate education and research in sustainability. We are in the process of establishing a "lead" minor, which will link concerns over sustainability and environmental justice, as the foundation step for building a network of sustainability education initiatives across all three UW campuses. This work is housed in the Program on the Environment.



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Required Budget Development Consultative Process Summary – Faculty, Staff and Students

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-- If specific questions are not applicable to your unit, simply indicate n/a --

Consultation with your elected faculty councils, student councils and unit/campus staff, regarding your unit's/campus's budget proposal materials, including your proposed FY25 operating budget, narrative responses, tuition rate recommendations and fee-based rate recommendations are 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 FY25 operating budget development review materials provided to Executive Leadership of the UW.

PLAN NOW to ensure that all unit/campus review and consultative processes are completed by the March 4, 2024 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

Stephanie Harrington met with the College Council on Thursday, February 29, 2024, and had the opportunity to show some of the preliminary Adaptive report numbers at the College-level (with the caveat that the final numbers would be changing up to the submission deadline) and have a very brief conversation on the overarching messages in the narrative submission.

The College Council is expecting to have multiple follow-up conversations over the course of the spring quarter to discuss the trade-offs in investing central college resources in merit increases, TA salaries, and/or unit adjustments in FY25 and FY26 as described above and it is anticipated that additional review of the Adaptive entries will be done in greater detail now that the numbers have been "finalized."

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

Ginger Armbrust, Professor of Oceanography, and Chair, College Council, armbrust@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.

Stephanie Harrington met with the Student Advisory Council on Thursday, November 9, 2023, to go over College Governance and Budgets 101, on Thursday, November 30, 2023, to go over tuition recommendations, and again on Wednesday, January 17, 2024, to discuss the overall budget outlook for the College. All of these conversations were done without any actual budget details for FY24 or FY25 due to the status of Workday reporting and the timing of data entry and clean-up in Adaptive.

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

Zachary Bengtsson, zbengt@uw.edu, Student Advisory Council Co-Chair

Aisha Rashid, aishar2@uw.edu, Student Advisory Council Co-Chair



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- 5) Please discuss how you involved campus or unit staff in the consultative process.

The departmental administrators and financial teams have been actively involved in the creation of the FY25 Adaptive entries and have built this year's submission from the ground up.

In addition, Stephanie Harrington met with the college-wide Student Services team (the other group of staff in the College who is primarily supported on core funds) on Thursday, January 11, 2024, to discuss the College Budgets 101 and overall budget outlook for the College. This conversation was done without any actual budget details for FY24 or FY25 due to the status of Workday reporting and the timing of data entry and clean-up in Adaptive.

- 6) Since submission of your tuition and/or fee-based rate recommendations on February 1, 2024, has your campus or unit received any additional feedback from students? If so, please summarize here.

No.

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Tuition-based Program Rate Recommendation Narrative

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Responses to the questions below are required for each tuition category that your unit/campus recommends adjusting (as submitted to OPB by 2/1/24). **Please note question #4 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 how the proposed rate increase will enhance student experience and promote student success?

Word Limit: 500

For the College of the Environment Graduate Program tuition category, we expect to continue to match the rates proposed for the University-wide Graduate Tier tuition rates. Final recommendations for these tuition levels have not yet been made, but we would support a 2-4% increase in graduate tuition rates, and are projecting a 3% increase, as this is within the range of projected cost escalation for the external awards and endowed fellowships that support the vast majority of our students.

Because tuition revenue makes up a significant fraction of our total revenue, an annual increase in tuition is needed to help cover our expenses as they rise due to inflation and merit increases.

- 2) 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*

The vast majority of the students in the College of the Environment Graduate Programs are supported by fellowships, research assistantships and teaching assistantships. Most of the MMA students in the School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, however, are not guaranteed support during their two-year professional degree program (although ~35-45% of them are supported by RAs, TAs or fellowships each quarter). We are actively working to increase the amount of direct support for students in this program and have seen a corresponding increase in enrollment.

- 3) Please discuss your unit/campus's overall tuition strategy for the next 3-5 years. Describe if you expect the proposed change to result in changes to enrollment (including changes to resident/nonresident composition) or the volume of tuition waivers awarded. *Word Limit: 250*

Because the majority of students in the College of the Environment are supported by external awards, endowed fellowships, and teaching assistantships, we try to keep the growth in tuition in line with the growth of potential revenue. In general this has meant that we have kept the tuition for the College of the Environment Graduate Programs tied to the Graduate Tier II tuition rate. We do not anticipate any substantial changes to enrollment due to the anticipated 3% tuition increase in the College of the Environment Graduate Programs.

The Applied Geosciences Masters Degree in Earth and Space Sciences (MESSAGE) is on pause and we anticipate restarting this program in AY25-26.

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4) 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.

N/A

b) What do you currently anticipate annual rate change requests will be for the next two years?

N/A

5) Enrolled students affected by rate increases must 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 rate recommendations. *Word Limit: 500*

The student leadership of the college, the Student Advisory Council, was provided a background briefing on the College's overall governance and budgets as well as the proposed AY24-25 tuition rate increases at their November 30, 2023, meeting. This was followed up by a briefing on the approximate FY25 budgets at their January 17th meeting. They were asked to discuss the proposed rates with their unit-specific constituencies and forward any questions or feedback they received.

The graduate student representative from the School of Environmental and Forest Sciences followed up with feedback solicited from other students in this degree program. In general, these expressed concern over the potential burden associated with the increasing tuition for students who have to pay for their tuition. They noted the rising tuition rates compounding the effects of the rising costs of living in the City of Seattle. Some students expressed frustration over seeing the department and college invest in other areas rather than alleviating graduate student financial conditions. Other feedback supported the tuition increase with the trust that the College is doing what is needed for support the College and its units. Finally, this group of graduate students requested more transparency and easy-to-understand learning material about the budget flow for the College and the School. They also requested to know what the College is doing to diversify funding streams other than tuition.

There are no current students in the Applied Geosciences Masters Degree in Earth and Space Sciences (MESSAGE) program.