



UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

FY2026 Operating Budget Development Narrative Prompts

[College of Engineering]

OPERATING BUDGET PROPOSAL NARRATIVE PROMPTS DUE 2/24/2025

Programmatic & Academic Vitality Narrative

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

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

- 1) Please list your operating budget priorities for the upcoming period (bullet format) and how your campus/unit is aligning available resources with strategic programmatic goals and university initiatives (e.g., Diversity Blueprint, Population Health, etc.). *Word Limit: 500*

- **Improving the Student Experience, Program Fee (Engineering Education Excellence & Access Initiative)**

The College of Engineering's (CoE) highest priority remains ensuring that all students – undergraduate, graduate, and professional – are prepared for an impactful career through access to state-of-the-art resources, facilities, equipment, and tools vital to an excellent engineering education. The CoE seeks University approval to institute an engineering program fee with aid for students with need, to invest in our students' educational success and to advance our shared mission of training outstanding engineers. To allow time for our students, families, faculty and staff to plan, implementation with students incurring fees would not begin until FY27.

We are committed to ensuring that the fee does not increase hardship for students with financial need. To address this concern, we intend to increase scholarship and fellowship fundraising to assist students in need and to allocate a portion of fee revenue for student aid through the university financial aid process. Areas of investment include: 1) enhancing engineering experiential learning, 2) improving instruction labs and makerspaces, and 3) specialized software and technology. Please note that for planning purposes, we have not assumed any program fee revenue.

- **Navigating Uncertain Financial Landscape – State and Federal Level**

Given continued uncertainty at the state and federal level, the CoE continues to prioritize work with local units to implement cost containment tactics (i.e., reducing faculty and staff hiring, limiting discretionary spending, and restricting PhD admissions), while maintaining our instructional and research mission. The CoE has also begun internal reduction scenario planning for GOF and is preparing similar scenario work for DOF funds.

CoE is also building out its shared structures in the college, charging a committee in January to explore and recommend actionable initiatives that foster additional shared service opportunities across the college.

- **Faculty Hiring & Retention** - Beyond salary, average faculty startup increased from \$600K in 2019 to \$700K in 2024. Bioengineering and chemical engineering assistant professor startup is routinely \$1-\$1.5M and startup for quantum assistant professor can be >\$2M. While we strive to balance needs with available resources in the college, we struggle to have resources with sufficient flexibility to meet all needs, particularly the need for tenant improvements to support faculty research portfolios.
- **Improving Our Spaces** - Our engineering facilities and the research and educational infrastructure remain in a sub-standard state with a few notable exceptions (Allen School buildings, Interdisciplinary Engineering Building and MoES/NanoES). Over half of our buildings are more than 50 years old with significant deferred maintenance backlogs. Seven of the 30 engineering buildings are flagged as replacement in the UW ISES Building Condition Summaries (2020-2023). Many engineering buildings have no temperature control and upper floors can reach over 100°F in the summer. The CoE has fully leveraged existing campus programs such as Program Renewal, but many of the facility issues identified are beyond the program scope (i.e., instructional labs, collaborative student spaces, HVAC and other systems replacement, etc.). Last year, the CoE partnered with Capital Architecture & Planning to update the CoE Facilities



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Strategic Plan. This year, the CoE is continuing to collaborate with CAP to develop a 10-Year Feasibility Plan for the college.

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 FY26 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 FY26 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 February 24, 2025 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

February 21, 2025

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

Elected Faculty Council Chair, Professor Guozhong Cao <gzcaao@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.

February 7, 2025

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

Engineering Student Council Chair, Yeeshouw Wang <ywang219@uw.edu>

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

As a departmentalized college, unit administrators are key to the college's annual review work. Dean's Office staff meet regularly with the collective of unit administrators throughout the fiscal year, and the development of the annual plan is discussed throughout the planning cycle. In turn, administrators liaise with additional staff in their units.

The Dean's Office works with administrators to achieve a cross-college understanding of planning efforts in key areas including expected staff changes, and faculty hiring needs and plans. Administrators work with chairs,



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academic advisors, and program directors in the process of making tuition and fee recommendations and soliciting student input in addition to course planning and graduate student admission.

The entry of information into Adaptive is the result of collaboration between the Dean's Office staff and unit administrators and their lead finance staff.

- 6) Since submission of your tuition and/or fee-based rate recommendations on January 24, 2025, has your campus or unit received any additional feedback from students? If so, please summarize here.

We have checked in with all programs, and only one program, the Master of Material Science and Engineering (Applied) received additional feedback following the January submission. Six students provided additional feedback, with some concern expressed that raising tuition for students who are currently enrolled is not fair and, given that tuition and the cost of living in Seattle is already so high, any increase will put a burden on them. Several expressed their concern that students are bearing the brunt of increases when they believe the institution has so much money.