

Central Washington University 2016 Supplemental Operating Budget Request

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1) Real-Time Wildfire Management—\$666,200

New technology can map wildfire behavior as it happens. Last summer, chaotic winds and tinder-dry fuels created unpredictable infernos that obliterated communities and killed three firefighters.

CWU proposes to bring real-time wildfire mapping to the fire-ravaged Pacific Northwest in order to promote training, education and research in this critical area. The approach combines geographic information systems (GIS) with data about terrain, weather, history and other factors, to produce moment-by-moment predictions of which way a fire will run. This technology will enable fire managers to focus fire-fighting where it is most needed. Perhaps more important, it will help keep people and animals out of harm's way by telling them when to run and which way.

CWU will provide education and training required to apply and develop this technology: certificate programs for practitioners and a Bachelor of Science in Wildfire Behavior Forecasting for a new generation of wildfire professionals. Graduates will be able to understand and model wildfire behavior and employ new methods for fuels mapping and wildfire risk assessment. They'll also be able to use current and develop new custom web and mobile applications that will inform and track the first responders on the ground and in the air.

Certificate and degree programs that develop and apply this revolutionary new approach will help save lives and preserve property. The program will protect millions of acres of forest and rangeland, saving millions of dollars in firefighting costs.

2) Bachelor's Degree Efficiency—\$575,000

This initiative will help students finish degrees in four years and support significant efficiencies in higher education management. CWU proposes to purchase software and hire staff to manage a long-term academic planning system that maps out a student's entire career from start to finish. This knowledge helps students choose courses that apply directly to their degree and alerts advisors when students are behind or have selected courses that do not apply.

Four years advance notice of program demand also allows CWU to plan more efficiently costs associated with teaching and advising, energy utilization, maintenance, software licensing, and nearly every other factor associated with running a university.

This investment will increase four-year graduation rates and degree efficiency. By reducing the time needed to finish a degree, the program saves students money. The program also will increase student retention by engaging them in a degree program sooner.

3) Institute for Integrated Energy Studies (I2ES)—\$400,000

CWU has launched one of the nation's first energy institutes dedicated to more than just green energy. More important, it prepares energy managers for and researches strategies for transitioning from old energy sources to new ones. CWU seeks funding to hire two high-demand faculty to conduct research and to teach within the Institute's new degree program, the BS Integrated Energy Management. Demand for the program is high; enrollment in the program's first year is double what was anticipated.

This high-demand program responds to the needs of employers representing all sectors of the energy industry, including government local, state, and federal agencies. A top concern is supplying the workforce, which will lose thousands of employees to retirement by 2020: 30,000 at Puget Sound Energy; 60,000 at Bonneville Power Administration. The BS Integrated Energy Management includes an industry apprenticeship that allows students to get hands-on knowledge and experience in the workplace, something business said was a very high priority.

Program graduates will take high paying in the field of energy management. Washington ranks among the highest in the nation for diversity in energy generation and the industry will need programs like the I2ES in order to find managers prepared to advance clean energy technologies.

4) Alternate Online Credit Model—\$2.5 million

This innovative program will increase degree production by creating credit-earning opportunities through online education, prior learning, and competency-based programs. The WSAC has determined that more than 700,000 Washington residents have some college credits but no way to

January 2016

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complete a degree through traditional pathways. Furthermore, many people have rich career and life experiences that could be measured and credited toward a degree.

CWU proposes to launch an online credit-granting system that serves working adults and reduces the time and cost required to earn a degree through the following strategies:

- Grant credit for knowledge and skills accumulated in non-academic settings
- Allow individuals to learn at their own pace
- Expand degree-completion online

CWU's alternate online credit model would create a new route to a college degree for people whose work or life commitments keep them from a traditional college experience.

CWU By the Numbers

10,900

Fall 2015 total enrollment

\$3,000

Average annual tuition cost for resident undergraduates

30

Percent of CWU students who are people of color

21

Percent increase in freshman enrollment for fall 2015

2

Rank in Washington for affordable online college
(OnlineColleges.net)

1

Rank in Washington for higher education return on investment
(*The Economist* magazine)



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