

WSU 2016 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Established in 1890 as the state's land grant research university, Washington State University supports the state's economy by expanding the workforce through education and research. Today, the university delivers on that mission by producing degrees at campuses in Pullman, Vancouver, the Tri-Cities and Spokane, at WSU North Puget Sound at Everett, at satellite programs in Walla Walla, Yakima and Bremerton and across the world through the Global Campus. In addition, WSU is a Tier I research institution ranking in the top 11 percent of public universities in research activity. Its research agenda is organized through Grand Challenges around sustaining health, sustaining resources, advancing opportunity and equity, improving quality of life through smart systems, and national security.

2016 Legislative Priorities

SUPPORTING WESTERN WASHINGTON AGRICULTURE

WSU is requesting \$832,000 in the 2016 supplemental operating budget to build a food systems program that at full build out will include four agriculture degrees and associated research to support the unique needs of the agriculture industry in Western Washington.

Initial programming would include Organic Agriculture Systems and Agriculture and Food Security. As enrollment builds, new majors in Sustainable Food Systems and Urban Horticulture would be developed. Faculty and graduate students hired to support the program also would develop research or extension programs that address the agricultural challenges in the region.

This request supports WSU's Sustainable Resources grand challenge, enhancing food production systems and products.

BOLSTERING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH PUBLIC SERVICE

WSU operates 25 Small Business Development Centers statewide in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, providing tailored and confidential advising to small business owners and nascent entrepreneurs at no cost. The university requests \$1 million in the 2016 supplemental operating budget to expand service in five regions

where demands are highest — Vancouver, Olympia, Southeast Seattle, the Bellevue/Redmond/Issaquah area and the Klickitat/Skamania County region.

In addition, it would fund new business specialists focusing on food systems in the Puget Sound, the needs of Latino business owners in the Tri-Cities and Mount Vernon, agri-tourism in Wenatchee and export assistance in Spokane.

PRESERVE AFFORDABILITY FOR STUDENTS

The Legislature has made great strides to promote college affordability over the past two biennia with new investments in the State Need Grant and tuition reduction. As the Legislature wrestles with a myriad of fiscal challenges in 2016, WSU requests that funding for these investments be preserved in hopes of making future progress toward reducing the backlog of 27,000 low-income students who are eligible but unserved by the State Need Grant.

PROMOTING EFFICIENCY

With the help of the Legislature, higher education institutions in Washington have been able to streamline business practices to achieve new operational efficiencies. New legislation in 2016 will further the cause by eliminating outdated and duplicative reporting requirements and facilitating other regulatory relief allowing resources to be put to better use.

WSU BY THE NUMBERS

- Enrollment: 27,062 full time equivalents
- Tuition and fees: \$11,967 for resident undergraduate
- Average undergraduate debt for those with debt: \$25,809
- 60.3 percent of undergraduates graduate with debt
- 21.4 percent of undergraduates pay no tuition
- 42.9 percent of undergraduates pay full tuition
- 85.5 percent of undergraduates are Washington residents
- 27.8 percent are students of color including 35.7 percent of freshmen
- 35 percent of undergraduates are Pell Grant eligible
- 41.1 percent of freshmen are first generation students
- 75.6 percent of transfer applicants are offered admission
- Average time to degree: 4.19 years for first-time full-time freshmen
- One of 108 preeminent universities ranked as a Tier 1 Research University by the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement Teaching
- Ranked in the top 11 percent of public universities for research activity in FY14
- Delivered \$3.4 billion in economic impact to the state of Washington in FY14
- Created 13 private sector start-up companies and 192 cumulative invention disclosures in FY14