

# UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

ASUW Student Government  
Dept. 3625, Room 020, Wyoming Union  
1000 E. University Ave.  
Laramie, WY 82071

To: UW Provost and Vice President Myron Allen  
From: Kelsey Day  
Constituent Group: Associated Students of the University of Wyoming  
Subject: Budget Planning  
Date: 13 March 2009

The University of Wyoming has been asked to identify the core institutional operations after examining the budget in light of the new economic conditions. The growth UW has seen over the past ten years has been incredible; however, this exercise can serve as our opportunity to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the University. While UW's growth has been funded by the Legislature in the past, we must now be more thoughtful and creative when determining the sources for the future goals.

While this process is complicated, ASUW appreciates that the University will not take the administratively convenient road of across-the-board budget cuts. The student leaders of the ASUW, representing our constituents, understand our responsibility during this process. We hope to bring forward the student perspective to help identify our University's priorities while still focusing on the mission statement, vision, and strategic plan.

ASUW has begun this exercise by becoming more informed on the specific elements of the University budget. We have analyzed the section one fund composition and its constraints, and the overall assets and expenditures. Student leaders have used ASUW meetings and committees for venues to discuss and debate our views on the University's priorities.

## **Section one: Briefly define each tier in a three-tier framework for thinking about UW's expenditures; core, high priority, and enhancements.**

### University of Wyoming mission statement

*The University of Wyoming aspires to be one of the Nation's finest public land-grant research universities. We serve as a statewide resource for accessible and affordable higher education of the highest quality; rigorous scholarship; technology transfer; economic and community development; and responsible stewardship of our cultural, historical, and natural resources.*

A three-tier framework will group the importance of UW's expenditures into the core elements of UW's mission, high-priority activities that support the core elements, and enhancements. The UW mission statement, along with the University's stated vision of the future, should provide the framework for defining the core, high-priority and enhancing projects at the University.

A mission statement can serve as big-picture framework that highlights the main goals. The mission statement emphasizes eight core goals. While being one of the Nation's finest

public land-grant institutions, UW also provides an accessible and affordable higher education, rigorous scholarship, technology transfer, economic and community development, responsible stewardship of cultural, historical and natural resources, academic and co curricular opportunities and outreach and service. Beyond UW's current mission it is important to look to the University's vision for its future.

The first vision framework consists of three defining words: **access, excellence, and leadership**. The next vision aspect is portrayed by the planning motifs in the Creation of the Future 3 document. These elements include building depth, reinforcing and refining areas of distinction, **access** to higher education, fostering **excellence** and cultivating **leadership**.

The Creation of the Future 3 also defines the University vision with two institutional hallmarks. The first is the mission to explore, create, and share knowledge in areas that are meaningful to our constituencies and at a level of accomplishment that garners international recognition. The second is to create a culture that advances the intellectual and ethical capacities of students and employees, with a degree of effectiveness that is exemplary among public universities. UW also counts on remarkable geographic settings, a statewide presence, and strong public support to maintain a distinctive character.

All things considered, the planning motifs outlined in the Creation of the Future 3 should serve as the guiding outline as it includes aspects of the mission as well as access, excellence, and leadership. The core operations are those that, if cut, would eliminate a planning motif all together. The high-priority operations should help support each planning motif in some manner. Finally, the enhancements serve to improve the goals of the motifs, but excising enhancements will still leave the motifs intact.

## **Section two: Which major elements of UW's current overall operations belong to each of these three tiers?**

### **Core:**

#### **Planning motif 1: Building depth**

- Strengthening current areas of excellence and importance while **eliminating academic programs that are no longer viable**, or no longer hold a high priority for the University. Depth in quality is greater than depth in quantity.

#### **Planning motif 2: Reinforcing and refining areas of distinction**

- The areas of distinction include critical areas of science and technology, cultural assets, arts and humanities, environment and natural resources, history and culture of the Rocky Mountain region, life sciences, and professions critical to the state and region. Supporting these areas of distinction is core to the University mission. These areas will be discussed in more detail in Planning motif 4: Fostering Excellence.

#### **Planning motif 3: Promoting access to higher education**

- Cost of attendance: Success of the Hathaway scholarship program ensures an accessible and affordable education, while also making UW distinctive from other institutions.
- Education throughout Wyoming: Because UW is the only university in Wyoming, outreach to students around the state is incredibly important. These outreach efforts include shared programs.

- Enhancing students' preparation: Access to education without a reasonable chance to succeed is not acceptable. The P-16 council has helped increase Wyoming students' chances for success in pursuing a higher education.
- Enhancing students' success: Excellence can be achieved through enhancing UW's learning environment through: interdisciplinary degrees, the honors program, and internships. Research collections of national caliber are also critical to sustaining UW as a research university.
- Internationalization: Maintaining study abroad opportunities and partnerships with institutions around the world.
- Diversity: Supporting diversity is core to UW's mission of becoming one of the finest institutions. In dealing with these issues, it is imperative to broaden the mission of the PACMWA and extend benefits to domestic partners of UW faculty and staff.
- Transportation planning is also vital to providing access to higher education, because a university must be both fiscally *and physically* accessible.

**Planning motif 4: Fostering Excellence**

- Institution-level research support for areas of distinction.

**Planning motif 5: Cultivating leadership**

- Support highly successful deans and departments in the Colleges of Health Sciences, Education, Business, and Law to assist these colleges in preparing students in professions critical to the region's future.
- Foster student leadership as an area of distinction. This should be pursued both in the co-curricular AND the curricular offerings at UW.

**High- Priority:**

**Planning motif 3: Promoting access to higher education**

- Cost of attendance: Support for the non-tuition costs of attending the University such as the cost of living, books, etc. can be very expensive.
- Education throughout Wyoming: The outreach students benefit from off-campus delivery of engineering and technology-related curricula and expansion of the Wyoming library database. Increase Post Secondary Education in Wyoming.
- Enhancing students' preparation: A focus on writing and foreign language is essential to student success at the university level. Cooperative exchange with secondary schools. Transitions program for incoming freshmen.
- Enhancing students' success: Enhancing UW's learning environment through effective communication skills, ethics, and effective learning in technical scientific fields. Preparation for graduate school. An assessment of the University Studies Program could lead to a more efficient and streamlined process. Student safety is incredibly important and we support the sexual assault and sexual harassment prevention. Mental Health Collaboration.
- Internationalization: Seeking endowed gifts to support study abroad. Staffing ESL instruction and Asian language instruction.
- Diversity: Partnerships with HBCUs and retaining women and people of color on the faculty. Access for students and employees with disabilities. Minority student programs. Recruiting diverse students.

**Planning motif 4: Fostering Excellence**

- Critical areas of science and technology: Form a coherent plan and support the computing infrastructure for the NCAR-UW supercomputer facility. Support graduate curriculum in computational sciences. Expand energy-related teaching and research.
- Cultural assets: Undergraduate involvement in the Art Museum, the American Heritage Center, and the UW Libraries.
- Environment and natural resources: Address community issues associated with energy conservation, energy development, and sustainable energy use. Implement a doctoral program in sustainable business practices. Create a Director for Sustainability to coordinate efforts in this area.
- Life sciences and professions critical to the state and region: It is important to incorporate the Berry Center into UW's research mission.
- Building excellence in human capital is important to the quality of this university. Faculty salaries need to be at or above the fiftieth percentile of other institutions.

**Planning motif 5: Cultivating leadership**

- Student leadership as an area of distinction, outdoor experiences, Greek life, programs for cultivation leadership skills, and career pathways among faculty, professionals, and staff.
- ASUW is essential because the students must have a voice.

**Enhancements:****Planning motif 2: Reinforcing and refining areas of distinction**

- The individual areas of distinction are discussed in relation to other motifs.

**Planning motif 3: Promoting access to higher education**

- Cost of attendance: University housing plan
- Education throughout Wyoming: Staffing plan in Criminal Justice.
- Enhancing students' preparation: Articulation agreements with Colorado and Nebraska community colleges. SYNERGY program.
- Enhancing students' success: Teaching internships. Catalog of lifelong learning programs. Hosting a symposium on the best practices in the assessing student learning. Enrollment goals. Scholarship enhancements in strategic fields. Student retention strategy.
- Internationalization: Coordination of language study with international education opportunities.
- Diversity: Staffing plan for the ethnic studies programs.

**Planning motif 4: Fostering Excellence**

- Critical areas of science and technology: Energy related outreach. Center for Quaternary Studies.
- Cultural assets: Maintenance and repair of the Centennial Complex. Links with the Buffalo Bill Historical Center.
- Environment and natural resources: Haub School teacher force.

- History and culture of the Rocky Mountain region: Establishment of degree programs for Religious studies and American Indian studies.
- Life sciences and professions critical to the state and region: Plant biology. Doctoral program in biomedical sciences.
- Increasing graduate education could be seen as an enhancement during economic restrictions.
- Building excellence in capital facilities and infrastructure is an enhancement.

**Planning motif 5: Cultivating leadership**

- Leadership Wyoming
- Club and intramural sports

**Other:**

- While speaking with students about the budget, the topic of athletics came up frequently. We understand that athletic programs are funded through different sources, and collect some revenue but students believe athletics as a whole is an enhancement and it was almost always the first topic of conversation when it came to programs we could relegate.

**Section 3: Which major elements of the constituency group’s bailiwick belong to each of these three tiers?**

Preamble of the ASUW Constitution

*In the belief that students have the right, as well as the obligation, to play a significant role in guiding their University, we, the student body of the University of Wyoming, seeking to provide an effective organization to promote the general welfare of all students at the University, to represent the concerns for the student body, and to provide for and regulate such other matters as are hereinafter set forth, do ordain and establish this Constitution.*

Every fee-paying student is a member of the Associated Students of the University of Wyoming (ASUW). ASUW is composed of the basic three-branch governing system: executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

Section two budgets are collected through grants, contracts, revenue from auxiliary operations, and student fees. The ASUW funds primarily come from revenue generated by student fees. While the main concern of the present analysis is the University’s section one budget, the ASUW programs and services are examined below.

**Core:**

1. Executive, Legislative and Judicial: ASUW requires the three basic branches of government. Each branch serves as a check and provides the necessary structure needed to effectively represent students. Without a budget to support these three branches the ASUW could not exist. The Judicial Council members are not paid and the Senate members are not paid. However, ASUW is extremely accountable because the Executive staff is compensated for their work. The President, Vice President, and six Executive staff members (all students) receive salaries as compensation for the large amount of time they contribute to keep the organization functioning.

This small paid staff is necessary to maintain the progress of ASUW programs and Student Senate initiatives, the professionalism of ASUW and its interactions with students, and responsible and accountable leadership.

2. Support Staff: ASUW would not be successful without the professional office, who are funded from both section I and Section II budgets. The core staff for ASUW includes the ASUW Advisor and Business Manager (Section I from DOS), and the Office Associate (Section II).

3. Elections: Elected representation is essential to form a viable student voice. This is a fairly small budget item, but it is core to the democratic process.

4. RSO Funding Board: Individual Recognized Student Organizations (RSOs) cannot collect student fees. Therefore, a core part of the operations for ASUW is to distribute student fee support to RSO via ASUW's RSO Funding Board. This allocation process, lead by students, helps to financially support RSO cultural and educational programs. The ability of RSOs to fund events is critical to maintaining a healthy campus community where enthusiastic students can explore their interests outside of the classroom, and then share those passions with the rest of campus. ASUW helps to support RSOs, who in turn help to create a "free marketplace" for ideas to be exchanged, debated, and discussed among the student body.

The RSO Funding Board is indispensable in helping to contribute to the campus dialogue. This program also provides an avenue for student leaders to learn budgets, allocations of funds, and decision making strategies.

5. SafeRide: This free public transportation system serves all University of Wyoming students and members of the Laramie community. The program currently uses five mini-vans to provide transportation around Laramie during weekend evenings, when other UW transportation does not operate. The system operates on a fixed route during the evening before switching to an on-call service for the rest of the night. The full-time ASUW Transportation Coordinator runs SafeRide along with a staff of paid student dispatchers and drivers. SafeRide contributes to the safety of all Laramie residents, an achievement that has been recognized through a Wyoming Highway Department grant.

### **High Priority:**

1. Associated Student Technical Services (ASTECH) primarily provides sound and technical support for student organizations and events sponsored by ASUW. However, ASTECH has evolved into the primary provider of sound reinforcement and audio technical services for UW colleges and departments.

2. UW Student Radio Station: While just beginning operations, the student run radio station will be essential to the campus communication and information system. The station will help

students become more politically active, civically engaged, and informed, while also serving as an important venue for student leadership and involvement.

3. United Multicultural Council (UMC) and the Student Sustainability Council (SSC): The UMC and the SSC provide leadership opportunities to student members and improve the campus climate by inspiring involvement in environmental, social justice, and multicultural issues. These councils bring the multicultural and environment student organizations together from around campus.

4. Freshman Senate: ASUW cultivates some of the most highly motivated students on this campus. When freshmen seek leadership opportunities Freshman Senate is a stable and consistent organization that helps guide students to take on other leadership and involvement opportunities.

5. Non-traditional Student Council: Non-traditional students represent 40% of the UW student population. The Non-traditional Student Council is a small portion of the ASUW budget, but provides an opportunity for these students to come together in leadership roles.

6. Greek Life: ASUW helps fund a portion of the Greek Life budget. Students involved in Greek Life are more likely to stay in college, succeed in their classes, participate more often in co-curricular campus and community activities, and give back to the university.

### **Enhancement:**

1. Staff: In addition to the ASUW “core” staff, ASUW also supports three full-time staff members who support various ASUW programs. While we see both SafeRide and ASTEC as essential programs, having full-time staff running these programs is an enhancement. Both programs could be run using student staff, if needed. However, the level of service and professionalism (and possibly safety) could be sacrificed if the full-time staff were not employed by UW. ASUW also views the ASUW Students’ Attorney Program as an enhancement (please see below #7).

2. Accounting Associate, Sr.: ASUW also supports an Accounting Associate, Sr. position funded with Section II. This position has unfortunately been unfilled for most of the past school year. While the search for a new associate has continued, ASUW has been able to adequately manage operations with a part-time graduate assistant. This position is still very needed, but could be reduced to a part-time or three-quarter-time position instead of a full-time position.

3. Readership Program: Through an agreement with USA Today, ASUW provides free copies of the Casper Star Tribune and the USA Today papers every day to our academic community. This program has been incredibly popular with students, but the unacceptable management on part of USA Today has compromised the program’s success and future potential. The ASUW Readership Program is an enhancement to the education of students on this campus.

4. DIA Shuttle: The **DIA Shuttle** provides rides between Denver International Airport and the University of Wyoming. The ASUW Transportation Coordinator is in charge of this service. Currently, there is no transportation service available to students who need to travel to and from DIA. This program is important, especially to UW's international student population, but would classify as an enhancement to the student experience.

5. Homecoming: Past, current, and future students benefit from a sense of pride and belonging. Homecoming encourages former students to return and give back to their alma mater. This event helps current students feel a sense of belonging which can lead to higher retention rates. Homecoming also helps recruit future students and support from cities around the state.

6. Student Activities Council (SAC) and the Concerts & Convocations Committee (C&C): Both of these organizations bring in diverse student programs including, speakers, musicians, comedians, and other performers. SAC strives to provide quality student programming each week, while C&C brings in larger-name entertainers several times a year. These two groups provide essential opportunities for student leadership, while also enriching campus life with programming and entertainment that small community of Laramie could not otherwise provide.

7. Legal Services: The ASUW Students' Attorney Program (SAP) provides free legal advice (but not legal representation) to fee-paying UW students. The SAP's unique services to students are not available through other local, state, or federal programs. The SAP fulfills an educational mission by providing students with legal information that they would not otherwise obtain through appointments and seminars, and by offering externship opportunities to UW College of Law students, although these opportunities may often be underutilized. Most importantly, the SAP provides access to the justice system for an underserved population of Wyoming residents; a need which was the focus of a recent article in *Wyoming Lawyer* magazine.

The SAP is an enhancement to ASUW and provides only very limited logistical support to the rest of the ASUW student government. However, the important and unique attributes already mentioned demonstrate that, under a larger framework, the SAP could fall under a high-priority activity that supports the core educational mission of the University.

8. Student Travel: ASUW provides funding to send numerous students to national conferences and other events each year. These conferences allow students to learn from others around the country and ultimately strengthen our university. Students from each branch of ASUW attend conferences every year as an enhancement to their leadership experience at UW.

#### **ASUW Budget Recommendations: (Considering a 5% cut)**

Many of the ASUW programs are considered enhancements, but should not be cut all together. **The only program that could be cut without losing valuable student involvement opportunities is the USA Today Readership program.** This would cut about \$17,000.00 from the student fee. We would also suggest that while travel is important, in tight budget years, it is understandable to not fund student travel.



USA Today Readership: \$17,025.00

Student Travel: \$25,675.00

Reduce Business Associate position to part time: \$5,000

Total Budget savings: \$42,700.00

**Section four: Propose other approaches to create budget flexibility and relieve persistent budget pressures.**

1. Decrease number of computer labs as well as the ratio of computers to students. This option has evolved as more and more students bring their own computers, particularly laptops, to campus, and no longer rely as heavily on access to public computers in labs.
2. Reduce campus energy consumption through technological upgrades and campus policies and practices that conserve energy.
3. Examine full-time support staff and consider increasing number of part-time employees around campus.
4. Examine summer staff and consider reducing the number of employees or reducing their time, as well.
5. Consider using more part-time, non-benefited students rather than full-time staff.
6. Reduce travel across the University.
7. Host Board of Trustee meetings exclusively in Laramie until economic conditions improve.
8. Increase use of video or audio conferencing for meetings with people and institutions outside of Laramie.
9. Examine the efficiency of campus utilities, which represent over six million dollars of the Physical Plant budget.
10. Examine courses with low enrollments and cut unpopular and unnecessary courses.
11. Decrease or consolidate the requirements in the University Studies Program.
12. Increase class size in first year courses.
13. Reevaluate the cost/benefit of the Wellness Center.
14. Ross hall dining does not attract enough business to be an effective service.
15. Examine UW catering and consider outsourcing meals.
16. Decrease award/celebration banquets across the University.
17. Review UW residency policies adopted by the Board of Trustees.
18. Review the high cost to having a Division I Football and Basketball program
19. Reduce trips to Jackson (etc.) with the University plane.
20. Implement incentive programs to encourage behavioral change in sustainability practices, such as turning off computers, lights, keeping buildings cooler.