

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Student Publications

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Due Date: 11/11/2022

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Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Elizabeth Hansen

Requested Amount: **\$22,148**

Departmental Information

SPECIAL ALLOCATIONS - CRITERIA

This proposal addresses unanticipated expenses related to storage, printing, vendor invoicing, and an impending increase to the minimum wage.

Storage: In 2021, Student Affairs administration asked Tahoma West to move out of its office space into the Ledger's existing office space in MAT 151. This posed storage problems for Tahoma West, which moved in with unique office supplies, as well as an inventory of books that had inflated substantially due to the COVID years reducing the journal's ability to give away books in spring 2020 and spring 2021. Late in the 2021-2022 school year, we were able to obtain a surplus storage cabinet from Facilities, but we needed an additional cabinet for adequate storage. We obtained a new cabinet from Facilities at a cost of \$1,289 at the beginning of the current budget year.

Printing: In the area of printing, a global paper shortage has caused vendor costs to increase 20-25% over projections in our proposal. Printing for Tahoma West's 26th Volume cost \$10,355, more than \$2,300 over the previous year's cost. Meanwhile, the cost of a single week's print run of the Ledger rose by nearly \$130 *after* our printing company applied a substantial discount for customer loyalty. Our printing vendor, Pacific Publishing Company, has historically been good about giving us consistent pricing over the course of an academic year. But the serious state of paper price inflation makes it possible prices will rise further. Combined, these expense increases impose limitations even more severe than projected during annual proposals, with confounding effects on our potential to generate advertising revenue.

Invoicing: Pacific Publishing sent an invoice from Spring Quarter late, which required us to use 2022-2023 budget money to pay for a previous budget year's expenses.

Wages: A \$1.25 increase will be applied to the minimum wage on Jan. 1, 2023. We would like to apply the increase proportionally across all student employees' tiers of pay.

STUDENT UTILIZATION

These funds will allow the Ledger and Tahoma West to maintain the level of service they have provided students for years.

Tahoma West literary arts journal is the only program of its kind available to UW Tacoma students, and one of a bare few available extracurricular activities in the arts. The journal is a place where students can submit their literature and visual art and be considered for publication in a book. Though books are featured in the Library Digital Commons, and I have added additional ebook and website viewing options, printed books are our bread and butter. New students are excited when they stop by Tahoma West's booth at orientation or Involvement Fair and see that the university prints books. The same effect cannot be achieved with an ebook.

Considering the state of pricing in the paper and printing industries, and trends in news consumption, online-only operation may be in the Ledger's future. Our website, newsletter, and e-book readership numbers have all risen dramatically over the past half-decade, with the sharpest spike naturally occurring in the two years UW Tacoma operated remotely. But in a time when we're transitioning back into life on a physical campus, there's something to be said for racks of physical newspapers contributing to the cultural experience of attending school in-person. We would like those papers to be color so that they're as eye-catching as possible, and can better facilitate the experience of reading an issue between classes.

SPECIAL ALLOCATIONS - STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

Part of this request goes to emergency costs that already occurred—storage and late invoicing. The portion of the request going to printing costs and wages simply addresses price increases to core expenses of Student Publications. The funds will thus restore some expenditures that have already been implemented to benefit students, ongoing expenditures that are part of regular business, and future expenditures that are part of regular business.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

Student Publications provides multiple broad benefits to students. The Ledger provides two: student job development, and news/information for the campus readership. Tahoma West provides three: job development, literary entertainment for readers, and training in the traditional publishing process for student writers and artists.

We have tracking systems for job development at both publications. First, I meet weekly with all student staff with an editor/manager level role on the publication. This translates to 7 Ledger staff and all 5 Tahoma West staff. When we meet, we discuss developments that occurred over the course of the week, how well the editor is balancing work and school, advice on student writer/designer management, and craft advice on any projects for the week, such as a difficult article. These meetings allow me to qualitatively assess the efficiency and morale of the publishing programs.

In addition to the above, this year I'm developing a series of rubrics to better track the quality of work in the Ledger in a given week and over time. The rubrics developed so far cover the areas of Writing, Research, and Art/Design, with each rubric having multiple dimensions rated on a four-level scale. It may be possible in the future to add rubrics for more complex skillsets, such as interpersonal skills or editing.

We know our work is of service to readers by our readership numbers. We printed 900 copies of Volume 26 of Tahoma West in late May 2022, and more than two-thirds have been taken by students since then. The Ledger's email newsletter is the newspaper's means of readership that is most popular and most reliably comprised of UWT students, staff, and faculty. We update our subscription list each quarter to deliver to all enrolled students, as well as a few select staff and the UWTLIne staff and faculty listserv. Our open rate this year has ranged between 36% and 40%, which is high for email newsletters. Our clickthrough rate per unique open rose dramatically this year, to a baseline of 20%-- but our most recent clickthrough rate was more than 36% in less than 24 hours. Readers most popularly click through to the Ledger's homepage link at the top of emails, followed by the download links to our ebook editions--which used to be rather unpopular but are now downloaded hundreds of times each week. My best guess as to why is that now that we're returning from the pandemic, people are stepping away from devices and endless "newsfeed" style content consumption. They want their reading experience to have a built-in hard stop.

Tahoma West continues to receive dozens of submissions each year. Student creators know us as the first stop for their work. While Writing Studies and Communication are the most popular programs of contributors, we receive submissions from students in areas as diverse as biomedical sciences, social welfare, business, and environmental studies.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	Funding to cover the +\$1.25 minimum wage increase proportionally across all student staff. E001	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$7,540
	Fringe @ 21.5%:	\$1,621
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		\$9,161

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Other Services	Increases to printing expense for Ledger student newspaper and Tahoma West book. S001	\$10,600
	Cost of FY 2022 printing invoices for the Ledger, sent late and paid during current fiscal year. S002	\$1,098
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Covers purchase from facilities of storage cabinet for Tahoma West supplies following the program's relocation into shared office space with the Ledger. S003	\$1,289
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:		\$12,987

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$9,161
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$12,987
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$22,148

Supplemental Documents
