



Request for 2026 Funding Services and Activities Fee Committee

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name: Center for Student Involvement

Create Date: 02/02/2026

Due Date: 02/06/2026

Submitter Name: Conor Leary

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Department Head Approval:

Department Head: Dr. Bernard Anderson

Requested Amount: **\$103,000**

Departmental Information

STUDENT UTILIZATION

These funds will go to the operations of two student-operated publications, the weekly news publication The Ledger and the annual literary arts journal, Tahoma West. The work commitment made by the current Ledger team is working on evolving the offerings of the Student Publications area to include diverse forms of media, including the launch of the "Off-the-Record" Video Podcast, on the Ledger's YouTube page. Homegrown with a limited budget, the team has directed energy and made use of on-campus services and resources to bring more opportunities for students to learn more about the various perspectives to be found at UW Tacoma.

The Ledger has provided news to the campus and Tahoma West has provided student writers and artists with a creative outlet for 30+ years. The employees of both publications receive firsthand education in the skills required to see a multimedia creative project to completion. The Ledger produces 30+ digital editions annually, while Tahoma West completes on large project in the form of its book.

If approved in full, the SAF Primary Funding request will pay for:

- Student personnel wages
- Weekly digital editions of the Ledger
- Occasional printed editions of the Ledger (300+ copies per print; 3 per year)
- Workday Cost allocation (unavoidable when employing students)
- 345 copy print of Tahoma West
- Office Supplies
- Adobe Creative Cloud
- UW Telephone Services
- Professional journalism membership and contest entry fees
- Copy and postage fees
- Food for the Ledger Staff Training in September and the Tahoma West Launch Party in May

CORE VALUES/MISSION ALIGNMENT

Students

Our current strategic plan advises UW Tacoma programmers to “ensure every student has opportunities to engage in high-impact practices”

The American Association of Colleges and Universities identifies collaborative projects and writing-intensive courses as two practices with a high impact on student learning. The Ledger and Tahoma West are both intensely collaborative environments and the Ledger is certainly writing intensive if not a course per se. Reporters who work for an entire academic year will write 24-30 articles on top of their coursework. Section editors produce the same amount of work, an additionally edit the writing of the reporters they supervise

In terms of collaboration, the students of the Ledger rely on each other to bring the newspaper to print each week, whether writers or editors polishing an article, writers and illustrator brainstorming artwork for a topic, or editors and designers deciding how the week’s newspaper will look. Meanwhile, the editors of Tahoma West must work together to select and edit contributions to the journal before collaboratively designing a 120-page book on a tight deadline for spring launch.

Scholarship

Goal 7 advises programs to “Foster a climate of creativity, entrepreneurship, and innovation.” In recent years, the Ledger staff rapidly innovated in the areas of email newsletters by cutting costs, ditching Mail Chimp for an on-campus service through DubNET to ensure mass distribution of content. The editorial team has also had to assume a greater role in hiring students as staff members.

Vitality

Goal 10 advises us to “create spaces, programs, and activities that encourage engagement” with UWT. Ledger reporters must engage with news and unfamiliar areas of campus to produce interesting work and perform their jobs. Readers are engaged when they read about topics relevant to their campus experience, such as available childcare services, the Husky 100 program, and the opening of Milgard. Tahoma West provides engagement opportunities offered nowhere else on campus—the opportunity to go through a creative editing process and have their story, poem, artwork, song, video, or 3-D Creation accessible through the book (and beyond).

SAF-FUNDED PROGRAM OR SERVICES GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Tahoma West’s goal each year is to gather as many submissions as possible from UW Tacoma students, alumni, faculty, and staff. As of February 6, 2026, Tahoma West has received 19 submissions in advance of the March 29, 2026 deadline for the 2026 Volume. Delays in hiring have only motivated the team’s effort to meet and exceed the goal of 160 submissions submitted for the 2026 volume.

The Ledger’s service goals have been to expand and extend readership across campus and beyond. Continuing with a primarily digital format, the newspaper continues to promote news, opinion, and arts & entertainment articles online.

Web Traffic to thetacomaledger.com has remained steady, although reductions have affected the number of newspaper staff developing content articles each week. Currently, a maximum of 6 articles are written each week and that includes the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief balancing their editing and supervisory responsibilities with the production of their own articles. Reductions in budget have affected the ability for The Ledger to maintain the viewership numbers and the promotion of the publication to the UW Tacoma community. 2025 shows a recognizable dip, not in interest, as students are still seeking the news from the website, but 2025 marked the third year when reductions in financial support have affected viewership .

The Ledger has averaged a 47% open rate for the weekly newsletter and has reduced its reliance on a paid service. The team uses the DubNet system to disperse the online editions of the paper, which allows for the newspaper to be distributed to the most updated numbers of students as it receives daily feeds of students who enroll throughout the quarter and year. The structure for the Student Team that work for the Ledger changed dramatically when Section Editors needed to be eliminated, due to budget restrictions. Four reporters were given ten hours to produce content every week. Articles dropped to 4 articles each week, with 1 or 2 being added by the Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief when possible. With less content, the draw to the digital newspaper was affected, especially in viewership. Even in a year with a minimized team, the Ledger worked to concentrate on Tacoma-based topics, while maintaining a readership of nearly half the campus population.

The Ledger Student Newspaper also began producing a video podcast on their YouTube Channel. Episodes were released beginning in December 2025 and average 60 viewers across 8 videos that have been posted by 2/2/2026. While allowing students to gain more skills in media productions, UW Tacoma students are able to learn more about varying perspectives found on the Ledger team across a variety of topics that they may be interested in learning about. Although new, this program is trending and committed to the involvement of UW Tacoma students in the many ways they are able to seek information about campus and Tacoma.

STUDENT UTILIZATION (COMPARISON OVER PAST 2 YEARS)

The Ledger primarily tracks service use through distribution and readership, covered above in Question 3 and supported by supplementary attachments to this application.

Tahoma West tracks the total number of submissions received by the Spring Break Deadline for its annual volume:

- The 2025 Issue of Tahoma West saw 203 total submissions (67 visual art, 12 creative nonfiction, 81 poetry, 40 fiction, 3 Audio and Video art)
- The 2024 issue of Tahoma West saw 160 total submissions (52 visual art, 14 creative nonfiction, 64 poetry, 30 fiction)
- The 2023 issue of Tahoma West saw 63 total submissions (21 visual art, 10 creative nonfiction, 21 poetry, 11 fiction)
- The 2022 issue of Tahoma West saw 105 total submissions (21 visual art, 7 creative nonfiction, 73 poetry, 4 fiction)
- The 2021 issue of Tahoma West saw 86 total submissions (47 visual art, 10 creative nonfiction, 25 poetry, 4 fiction)

2025 saw another substantial increase in submissions and the goal is to keep the energy growing, especially with the inclusion of a category for Audio and Video Art submissions. As of February 2, 2026, the journal has received 19 early submissions, and this number has been directly affected by the 2 Co-Editor-in-Chief roles being funded only to start in the Winter Quarter (Jan 1, 2026). What has also affected the promotion schedule is the delay in hiring of the Student Media Specialist and the responsibility for the Tahoma West Literary Arts Journal falling to the Director of Student Involvement and Leadership. While lower than the previous, the team has officially been established and is off-to-work, promoting and advertising the book that has been provided to students at various events throughout the Autumn Quarter. Submissions will be due on March 29, 2026, at the end of Spring Break and the team plans on using every day until that deadline to make sure a variety of works are collected to support the publication.

COLLECTION OF FEEDBACK & IMPROVEMENTS

Tahoma West and the Ledger are both located in MAT 151. Both editorial staffs hold combined Student Publication office hours to take feedback and answer student questions. They have returned to in-person and work to connect with campus through engagement opportunities, surveys, and open office hours.

Tahoma West maintains three updated social media accounts to interact with UWT Students interested in submitting submission and attending events. We have a university-hosted website tacoma.uw.edu/Tahoma-west where users can find submission guidelines, contact information, and online editions of the past two years' journals. The editor-in-chief interacts with interested submitters and campus partners via tahomaw@uw.edu.

The Ledger maintains social media and a dedicated email address (ledger@uw.edu) to communicate with students, accept press releases, and otherwise conduct business. Email has been the most active source of qualitative feedback, with responses to DubNet surveys and polls on Instagram also providing feedback, story ideas, and content. If the feedback comes in the form of a correction of a story, the staff fact-check the point brought up and if they determine the story go the fact wrong, they run a correction online.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The most significant way the Ledger benefits students is that it gives them a chance to read about issues that impact the student body, in articles written by student like them. One tool we have to see this in action, and examine whether the paper is hitting the mark, is to review thetacomaledgers.com's story analytics on the day new stories are released. Stories about co-curricular programs, support resources, health services, or local business—in short, stories that directly affect students' daily lives—rise to the top of the "Most Viewed" List when they're published online. We believe that it is essential for universities to have an independent paper that reports and critiques topics that are relevant to students.

It's important to gauge the paper's impacts on its student employees as well. The Ledger's staff develop professional skills that carry over after college. The process of handling unfamiliar information, making quick sense of it, cooperating with peers, and transfiguring raw material into a narrative product that will make sense to causal readers—all on a deadline that repeat weeks to week—prepares students for managing the ambiguity and demanding schedule of a full-time workforce.

Tahoma West benefits students by providing them a manageable first step towards becoming a published author/artist. Students who submit to Tahoma West are exposed to the same publication process they would encounter at a professional publisher, but scaled down to the size of our campus. It leads along an introductory path towards pursuing authorship. Creative arts majors are far from the only group of contributors and the journal has been representative of many diverse majors from year to year. The goal of this year's team, and teams before, has been to involve anyone who demonstrates their creativity to find a place in the journal to show who they are, proving that creativity is for everyone, regardless of major.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	One Editor-in-Chief role to execute the day-to-day, editorial, and supervisory management of the Ledger Student Newspaper at \$17.66/hour and 18 hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) E001	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$12,079
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,957
Student Staff ³	One Managing Editor role to support the Editor-In-Chief of the Ledger through the management and editing of all submitted works by reporters at 17.36/hour and 17 hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) E002	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$11,215
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,817
Student Staff ³	Four (4) Reporter positions for the Ledger to report and create content for News, Opinion, and Arts & Entertainment sections at \$17.13/week and 10 hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) E003	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$26,038
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$4,218
Student Staff ³	One Art Team role to support photography and graphic design needs for the Ledger content at 17.13/hour and 7 hours/week for 38 (students would start on September 15, 2026) E004	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$4,557
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$738
Student Staff ³	One Content Assistant role to support the Production Manager with layout, the promotion of the Ledger, and editing needs for the Video Podcast for the Ledger content at 17.13/hour and 7 hours/week for 38 (students would start on September 15, 2026) E005	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$4,557
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$738
Student Staff ³	Two Co-Editor-in-Chief Role to lead the efforts of Tahoma West at \$17.36/hour and 14 hours/week for 24 weeks (employees would be hired and begin work in December 2026 for training so they are able to use the entirety of winter quarter to promote and advertise for Tahoma West submissions). The Student Media Specialist would support promotion and marketing efforts for Tahoma West throughout Autumn Quarter E006	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$11,666
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,890
Student Staff ³	One Content Manager to support the layout management for digital editions, promotion of the Ledger, and the production of the Video Podcast at \$17.13/hour and 17hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) E007	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$11,066
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,793
PERSONNEL TOTAL:		\$94,327

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Contracted Services	Four adobe creative cloud licenses for the Ledger and Tahoma West	S001 \$1,350
	Webhosting cost for The Ledger	S002 \$125
Other Services	Phone lines for the use of the Student Publications in their MAT 151 combined office space	S003 \$350
	Tahoma West: Estimated Cost of printing 345 issues of the 2026 Tahoma West Book	S004 \$4,500
	Professional memberships and contest entries to the Associated Collegiate Press and Association of Writers and Writing Programs	S005 \$155
	Postage fees for the mail center for mailing Tahoma West Books to contributors	S006 \$200
	Workday Cost allocation; unavoidable when hiring student employees	S007 \$650
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Office Supplies, including notebooks, pens, printer ink, paper, and other needs supplies throughout year)	S008 \$1,039
Food	Food for Ledger's Sept Training (\$100) Food for Tahoma West's Annual Launch Party in May 2025 (\$300)	S009 \$304
SUPPLIMENTAL TOTAL:		\$8,673

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$94,327
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$8,673
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$103,000

Supplemental Documents



BUDGET BREAKDOWN_PRIMARY FOR STUDENT PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA

Breakdown of Primary Budget request includes primary funding request for wages for student employees, fringe, production supplies and materials for the Ledger and Tahoma West (file is read-only)



POSITION DESCRIPTIONS FOR STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

The Ledger: Editor-In-Chief, Managing Editor, Reporters, Art Team, Content Assistant Tahoma West: Editor-in-Chief, Genre Editor



VIEWERSHIP REPORT FOR THE LEDGER

Data reported on viewership and website traffic for the tacomaledger.com for the 25-26 Academic Year. This file is read-only



POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR CONTENT MANAGER

Position contains added responsibilities to include time developing, editing, and promoting Student Media outlets, including the Video Podcast.