

BUDGET PROPOSAL CONTACT INFORMATION

Department Name:	Center for Student Involvement	Create Date:	02/03/2026
		Due Date:	02/06/2026
Submitter Name:	Conor Leary	UW Email Address:	cleary2@uw.edu
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Department Head Approval:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Department Head:	
		Requested Amount:	\$33,089

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.

Support for the development of this secondary proposal was built on the pressures and workloads that landed on student employee shoulders during a time when reductions limited staff size and staff hours, which reduced output of product. Certain position, especially those in leadership roles in both publications, were asked to diversify their responsibilities to handle all the priorities related to managing production (editing, proofing, layout management, advertising, promotion, and ad sales). While Ledger viewerships decrease due to less product able to be produced (smaller staff size), the Tahoma West Literary Arts Journal Co-Editors-in-Chief were unable to begin time in their positions until January. This has greatly shortened the window that they have to promote and advertise submissions for the arts journal before the deadline of Spring Break.

The Secondary Funding request will pay for:

- Student personnel wages (enhancement to better support all responsibilities for positions and publications)
- One-time purchase of equipment for Videocast/Podcast project to provide another Student Media option for students to participate in
- Addition of 1 Production Manager position to support Videocast/Podcast/Short-Form video media
- 200 copy print of Tahoma West

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

While reported in the Primary proposal, both Student Publications engage a large number of students through employment, viewership and readership, submissions, and the reception of a literary arts journal representing works created by UW Tacoma students. This secondary proposal is meant to alleviate some of the added strain to student employee positions that due to changes in structure and funding were not able to support numbers similar to previous years in many of these recorded areas.

While the presence of the digital newspaper has supported stronger readership in the past, there is a noticeable decline in views for articles, especially with the presence of less content. Being unable to publish a physically printed newspaper has made it slightly more difficult to reference or promote the digital version, but the Ledger is still receiving a 47% open rate, across a campus saw an increase in enrollment and retention numbers for the 2025-2026 academic year. As opposed to last year when an increase was not recorded, the number of 52.50% was measured against a student population 300 students less than the community now. The secondary proposal is meant to provide staffing hours as they need to be to optimize production of reporter products (articles and content for students to read), management of the newspaper for editorial positions, and time for the organization as a whole to be able to dedicate time to promotion and communication of the newspaper to the UW Tacoma community.

As Student Publications reflects and takes in feedback from the UW Tacoma community, an important conversation has been happening regarding the evolution of media on and beyond campus. Physical printing is becoming something difficult to advocate for, so the newspaper has infused far more life and connection into placing the media in the hands of the students, through smart devices and thetacomaledger.com. The Ledger team has also directed energy into developing a Podcast to reflect on student perspectives and engage the audience online. This idea is growing and has gained attention and is promoting questions about what this form of media could be and mean for the students at UW Tacoma. The students have made use of on-campus technology, reserved through Media Services each week they've needed it (along with other students who may be making use of the equipment). This is an area of media that the Student Publications and Media teams can pursue. With purchased equipment, the team would be able to better think of strategies for promotion, content development, and structure when and how projects were going to be completed without having to deal with conflicts in scheduling.

Secondary proposal support for Tahoma West can be found in question four, but currently as of February 6, 2026, Tahoma West has received 19 submissions in advance of the March 29, 2026 deadline for the 2026 Volume, a number different from others reported in previous years

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 the Student Publications and Media preliminary proposal.

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)

While 2025 saw another substantial increase in submissions and the goal is to keep the energy growing, reductions have led to a smaller team and a more constrained timeline for the 2 student employees (previously 4, and in some years 5) to complete the full production of a literary arts journal. As of February 2, 2026, the journal has received 19 early submissions. Co-Editors-in-Chief have jumped into their roles as January 1, 2026 (When funding was scheduled to fund their position) and tackling the mounting issue of ensuring students understand and know that they can submit their works to Tahoma West. Partially done by CSI Pro staff at events in the fall quarter, Co-Editors-In-Chief as students could have made use of their networks to ensure submitters understood the opportunity earlier. This constraint is an immediate obstacle that the two students, new to their roles, must coordinate around. While constriction can set up an urgent, but doable timeline, these positions now seem strictly to be in production mode, instead of having the time to learn from their supervisor regarding best practices for publication development. 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. Students and our new student Media Specialist will direct their energy to aiming towards that 203 amount of submissions with the support that the 30-year-old publication (year 31 this year) is a publication that students understand exists.

The secondary proposal for more funding for the Tahoma West Team is a reflection on how important and prioritized these roles should be in ensuring that students learn from this experience (and about it for those possibly submitting to the publication), while fulfilling the process. Adding student hours or another 1-2 students to this team will reduce the pressure of the constrained timeline and allow for further promotion of the benefits of being included in 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 got the fact wrong, they run a correction online.

SERVICE BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

The Ledger Newspaper\ offers a student-centered and student-operated service: timely coverage of topics that updates, affects, and supports students on campus. Data from **thetacomaledger.com** consistently shows that content based on programs, support resources, health services, and local businesses rise to the top of the "Most Viewed" list on publication days. This pattern signals that our audience actively relies on the paper for engagement on campus and the enhancement of their knowledge regarding available resources through a student's perspective. This secondary proposal is motivated to be a remedy to the decline in the current content views due to staffing reductions as only so many articles can be written each week.

The student employment experience is a critical outcome to the Student Publications and Media program. Roles on the Ledger and Tahoma West roles students to assess unfamiliar information, collaborate under pressure, and shape raw reporting or creative submissions into engaging and informative narratives. These students learn through action on repeat, maintaining attention on expectations and completion of responsibilities in continuous deadlines. CSI Professional Staff have tracked alumni outcomes to underscore this value and can report that former staff have moved into roles across social media management, project coordination, arts journalism, and editorial work. While on-the-job learning can be a fantastic means of teaching, the educational component of these positions also comes from students having the time to reflect with their supervisor and respond to scenarios and challenges, as much as the daily tasks required to complete their productions.

The Tahoma West Literary Arts Journal will celebrate its 31st edition this year and this work serves as access for students with aims to become published authors or students, across any and all majors. With only two Co-Editors-in-Chief, critical outreach is occurring through student network to ensure that students who would like to submit, but also those who may never think about submitting the work they have created, fulfill the submission process. Students benefit from seeing their work in print, but also from going through the process of preparation, editing, and finalization of the work that they are sending off. They also gain a better understanding of the composure and confidence needed to take that risk, to put their creative work for the world to see and to prepare for feedback.

While print is increasingly difficult to justify, these teams are evolving constantly to meet the needs of their community. That has resulted in strain sometimes beyond the hours that they are meant to work, with budgets provided. These positions are filled by students drawn to see impact in their world and their passion drives them. A focused investment in student hours will provide them with the time to produce stronger and plentiful content, healthier production timelines, and growth in digital formats.

Staff Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Student Staff ³	<p>Hours for Four (4) Reporter positions for the Ledger increase to allow for deeper dives into content and practice of journalism skills sets, including interviews, story development, commentary, and proofing for News, Opinion, and Arts & Entertainment sections at \$17.13/week and 12 hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) <small>E001</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$5,208
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$844
Student Staff ³	<p>Additional of 1 Reporter Role to the Ledger Staff to allow for more content development across the three sections of the newspaper and another opportunity for a student to connect with training and development in areas of communication and publication at \$17.13/week and 12 hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) <small>E002</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$7,811
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,265
Student Staff ³	<p>Increase of Art Team Role's hours by 3 hours to allow for more coverage of photo assignments and graphic development, including content creation for articles and photo assignments to campus events and occurrences at 17.13/hour and 10 hours/week for 38 (students would start on September 15, 2026) <small>E003</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$1,953
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$316
Student Staff ³	<p>Three Genre Editor positions to return to the Tahoma West Literary Arts Journal staff, to concentrate on editing 1-2 sections of work and maintaining the blind selection process at 17.13/hour and 10hours/week for 24 weeks (employees would be hired and begin work in December 2026. *Should this be approved, funding allotted towards a 2nd Co-Editor-In-Chief could be returned to SAFC (~5832.96) or reallocated to Student Publication positions. <small>E004</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$12,334
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$1,998
Student Staff ³	<p>Should funding be approved to support the employment of 3 Genre Editors, one Editor-In-Chief position from the primary proposal (if approved in full) would no longer be needed. 5832.96 would be available to be returned to SAF for distribution to other proposals or projects. *Tahoma West staff would be composed of 3 Genre Editors, managed by 1 Editor-In-Chief. <small>E005</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$-5,833
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$-945
Student Staff ³	<p>Increase of Content Assistant's hours by 5 hours to support the Production Manager in layout production, social media, newsletter development, and production of Podcast at 17.13/hour and 12 hours/week for 38 (students would start on September 15, 2026) <small>E006</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$3,255
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$527
Student Staff ³	<p>Increase of the 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 18hours/week for 38 weeks (students would start on September 15, 2026) <small>E007</small></p>	
	Student Staff Wages:	\$651
	Fringe @ 16.2%:	\$105

Other Budget Requests

Category	Details	Amount Requested
Other Services	Printing costs to print 200 more copies of Tahoma West for the campus and for those published (total of 545 copies) S001	\$2,600
Non-Food Supplies & Materials	Funding would be allocated towards purchasing supplies and equipment to make production of podcasts more efficient. S002	\$1,000
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:		\$3,600

PERSONNEL TOTAL:	\$29,489
SUPPLEMENTAL TOTAL:	\$3,600
COMPLETE PROPOSAL TOTAL:	\$33,089

Supplemental Documents



BUDGET BREAKDOWN_SECONDARY REQUEST FOR STUDENT PUBLICATIONS & MEDIA

Breakdown of Secondary Budget request includes funding for wages for increase in employees hours to best support production. Also, 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



POSITION DESCRIPTION FOR CONTENT MANAGER

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