Division of Academic Affairs
2013 Budget Request
Strategic Budget and Planning Council

Introduction

The future of The University of Rhode Island will depend largely on our effectiveness in making strategic investments that add value to the learning and scholarly environment for students and faculty. Such investments will help us recruit and retain quality students and faculty and establish partnerships that help translate and extend new knowledge and innovation into vibrant opportunities that enhance the economy and quality of life. The Academic Vision and Academic Plan that was developed collaboratively by the URI community, in combination with the President’s transformational goals, provide a programmatic and investment path for realizing this desired institutional future. These primary goals collectively aim to enhance URI as a vital learning-centered research university for the 21st century. The budget requests described herein represent active and visible manifestations of the Academic Plan and the articulated strategic priorities for the university.

1. Description and justification of highest priority new resource needs for FY 13.

URI’s historical approach to grappling with reductions in the state appropriation has led to a non-strategic disinvestment in the academic core mission. At times, quality has been compromised in the incoming freshman class in favor of greater numbers, and teaching needs are being met by adding part-time faculty in lieu of full-time tenure track faculty and lecturers. Budget reductions have been absorbed largely by Academic Affairs as was evident in the base reduction of $1.7m in FY 11, 80% of which was relegated to the academic enterprise of the university.

As we seek to “add value” and build the reputation of the university as a selective learning-centered research university, we must seek new and strategic approaches to budget challenges and ensure investments in quality and value-added initiatives that serve our students and support our faculty, while at the same time remaining efficient, strategic, and innovative. This added value also will contribute in the long-term to the greater retention of students and the associated increase in tuition revenues. The requests outlined below represent critically needed investments in the academic core mission, align directly with the Academic Plan, and are designed to achieve this balance of adding quality and maintaining efficiency.

- **Strategic Full-time Faculty Hires: Total Projected Cost - $1.46M**
  Requested FY 13 GF - $1.2M; Academic Affairs Reallocation Cost-Share - $260,000

Over the past decade or so URI has added more than 4300 FTE students, while the number of full-time faculty, including tenure-track faculty and lecturers, has remained essentially constant (Figure 1). The expanded teaching needs have largely been met by the efforts of part-time faculty. The university now spends $5.5M per year on part-time instructors, who provide the preponderance of instruction for first-year students and general
education courses. On a per student expenditure basis, URI invests less in instruction than all of our regional peers (Table 1), spending only about $6500 per FTE student. The proportion of institutional budget spent on instruction is also the lowest in the region and among the lowest nationally for 4-year public institutions (Table 2). URI is among the most expensive public doctoral granting institutions in the country with regard to OS tuition, fees, housing, and dining. Simply put, URI needs to increase the number of full-time faculty in strategic areas to ensure value and remain competitive in the higher education market place. In addition to active engagement with students and a higher quality teaching environment as evidenced by Wabash and NESSE surveys, full-time faculty also contribute to faculty and student research and scholarly activities and directly to the institutions commitment to enhancing economic development. However, our student to faculty ratio (15.3:1) remains below our target 16-17:1. To justify adding new full-time faculty, we also need to continue with ongoing efforts and progress toward engaging full-time faculty in the first-year experience, adding new “grand challenge” courses, and engaging full-time faculty in student experiential learning activities.

The Academic Plan highlights 4 thematic areas for excellence and investment at URI – Health and Wellness; Environment and Green Economy; Science and Technology; and Fundamentals of Liberal Learning and Scholarship. In addition, the Academic Plan has identified “interdisciplinary learning and discovery” and “global initiatives” as cross-cutting themes critical to the university’s future. This proposal seeks support for “clusters” of 3 tenure track/clinical faculty hires in each of these 4 thematic areas. Specific areas of importance may be designated within each theme and appointments will cut across colleges and departments to encourage interdisciplinary activities and build connections across the university. Faculty with global interests and experience will be emphasized for each position. In addition, we seek to fund 4 full-time lecturer positions in departments where lecturers can provide critical high quality instruction in courses that serve the university broadly.

The request for funding these positions would largely represent a new investment. However, I am also proposing to co-invest in these positions through a strategic reallocation from within the Division of Academic Affairs. For this investment to be financially feasible, there will need to be a commitment from colleges to continue to work to meet college and university-based (~16.5:1) student/faculty ratio targets and to ensure the engagement of full-time faculty in the first-year student experience.

Projection for Strategic Faculty Hires for FY 14 and 15: FY 14 – 8 tenure track and 2 lecturers; FY 15 – 4 TT and 2 lecturers – plan for a continued 80% new funds - 20% co-investment model.

- **Support for Global Strategies – Chief Global Officer – Total Projected Cost:**
  - $260,000
  - Request for FY 13 GF - $225,000; Academic Affairs Reallocation Cost-Share - $35,000

One of the central goals of the Academic Plan and the President’s vision is to “internationalize” URI with respect to student learning, curriculum enhancements, research and scholarship, and partnerships, including enhancement of global learning opportunities for our students and expanded opportunities for international students at URI. Currently, international activities at URI are scattered throughout the campus. There has been no overarching mechanism or office to guide our international strategy, explore opportunities and partnerships, and serve as a broad-based source of information for faculty and students. URI has been
ineffective in the enrollment of international students – only 41 of our 13,000 undergraduate students are from other countries. We expect this to change as we partner to establish an ESL program and contacts with foreign embassies interested in placing their students in U.S. institutions. Given the demographic decline of high school graduates in America, the intense competition for OS students at American universities, and our prime location in the northeastern U.S., enrollment of international students is a critically important revenue stream, a means of enriching the cultural experience of the campus for all students, and an arena in which URI can excel. However, the goal to globalize the university will not be reached without a knowledgeable campus leader who can work with the campus community (via an International Advisory Council comprising faculty, staff, and students) to develop our international plan and a strategy for implementation. Many of our institutional counterparts have now established chief global officer positions as senior administrative positions to lead in this important arena. An effective international strategy and effort does not simply happen on its own.

This personnel request would provide the leadership to oversee all things global at URI and signal our commitment to focus and expand our efforts in this area. International activities would be structured under the leadership of the chief global officer, who would ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and initiatives and serve the needs of both students and faculty with international interests. Following a detailed analysis of the opportunities for internationalization of URI, the Task Force on Global Learning recommended that the university invest in an overarching organization of global activities that cuts across academic units to be led by a chief global officer. This recommendation was supported by JCAP and also was the primary recommendation of an international consultant who visit URI this past winter. The consultant, in particular, noted the revenue generating potential associated with enrollment of international students that URI is currently missing. This is a critical and time sensitive arena for investment for URI.

This investment would support the salary, benefits, and operating budget towards this needed coordination and expansion of global activities at URI. This program would build upon our recently established Visiting International Scholars program, our new partnership with Associates in Cultural Exchange to provide ESL training for international students, and our efforts toward recruitment of international students as an added revenue stream to the institution.

Projection for further investment in Global Initiatives – at this time, it is anticipated that any additional investment in global initiatives for FY 14 and 15 would come largely from reallocation rather than new GF requests.

- Office of Experiential Learning and Community Engagement – Liaisons to Academic Units in Support of Experiential Learning and Electronic Portal – Total Projected Cost: $225,000
  Request for FY 13 GF: $120,000; Academic Affairs Reallocation: $40,000; Academic Affairs Soft Money Allocation for FY 13: $65,000.

Both the Academic Plan and the President’s vision call for a new enriched emphasis on experiential learning for students. Prospective students and their families are also seeking such opportunities. URI must respond to this call for meaningful “learning by doing” by creating a “one-stop shop” focused on experiential learning aimed primarily at supporting both faculty and students. This may involve internships, service learning, project-based courses, and student projects. While the Office of Internships provides support for students doing extensive 15-credit internships, there is little support for students or faculty for 3 or 4 credit experiential
learning opportunities. Furthermore, potential off-campus partners (corporations, agencies, and non-profits) have shared that they don’t know how to make contact with URI to engage with students and faculty about internship opportunities and potential projects.

This past academic year an ad hoc Committee on Experiential Learning proposed a model designed to provide support to students, faculty, and external constituents. This model would transform the current internship office into a new Office of Experiential Learning and Community Engagement. Key features of a new Office would be a single electronic portal aimed at all clients, development of learning outcomes and faculty support for all students doing credit-bearing internships, uniform awarding of academic credit, liability release, funding to support project-based courses, and a direct connection with Rhody-net and Career Services. This model, designed primarily to provide support for both faculty and students, has garnered support of Deans as well as faculty that have worked on implementation. A key element of this model is support for experiential learning liaisons that bridge the gap between the Office and academic units. An electronic portal and digital data hub will ensure access to experiential learning opportunities and serve as a repository of information about these opportunities.

**Projection for FY 14 and 15: FY 14 - $100,000; FY 15 - $75,000**

- **Graduate Research Tuition Differential Fellowship: Projected Cost: $150,000**
  
  Proposed $75,000 GF + $75,000 OH for FY 13

In FY2010, Academic Affairs and Research and Economic Development reallocated internal funds in an effort to foster greater support for graduate assistantships supported on research grants, enhance faculty research, and create more vibrant graduate programs at the University. A Graduate Research Tuition Differential Fellowship was established and provided faculty with matching funds to pay the difference between out-of-state and in-state tuition. By all measures, this Fellowship program has been a success and is being utilized heavily by our faculty and graduate students. For example for FY11, of the $1.3M budgeted, $1.15M was actually being utilized by existing graduate students. Following additional investments in FY11 and 12, the total initiative is funded at a level of $1.45m. Our estimate is that the fully implemented program will need to grow to about $2M to appropriately support our research and graduate education enterprise. An additional investment of $150,000, perhaps split equally between OH funds and GF, will grow the fund to $1.6m.

**Projection for FY 14 and 15: FY 14 - $200,000; FY 15 - $200,000**

- **Coordinator of summer school and special programs: Projected Cost: $125,000**
  
  Request for FY 13 GF: $0. We will support on a trial basis with soft money for two years.

Many contemporary universities, especially those with beautiful campuses in attractive locations, are generating substantial revenue through vibrant and creative summer programs, including online initiatives. URI’s summer programming has been scattered and unfocused. Summer session has been under-utilized and under-programmed, mostly because no one has been assigned to coordinate such programming. Online summer programs are vital and represent an opportunity for our students to complete their degree requirements and graduate in four years. Summer programs also generate revenue for the institution. Creative field-based, experiential, travel, artistic, international, and teacher programs could attract students from other institutions and countries, and also enhance the reputation of URI. An expansion of general education courses (on campus
and online) and specialized summer programs have the potential to make the Kingston and Providence campuses vibrant places of learning during the summer months. The expectation would be for the Coordinator to generate at least an additional 5% increase in enrollments above anticipated budget revenue increases in the summer that would generate approximately $400,000 in additional revenues. This position would more than pay for itself. However, rather than seek a GF investment for FY 13 and 14, we propose funding the position on soft money for 2 years as a pilot to determine if we can generate more summer revenue by promoting new kinds of summer programs in by working creatively with colleges and faculty.

Projected Costs for FY 14 and 15: FY 14 - $0; FY 15 - $125,000

- **Summary of Requests**

  Total GF Requests for FY 13: $1,620,000  
  Total Academic Affairs GF Budget: $160,000,000  
  Percent Increase Requested: 1%

2. **Division’s strategic plan, including a summary of specific goals.**

The Academic Plan is the strategic plan of the Division of Academic Affairs. It is a living document that is guided by the vision we articulated together as a community. The plan is a set of goals, strategies and specific actions that will strategically move our University forward and chart our path to the future. Through the work of JCAP there is now a complete set of metrics to be used to monitor progress toward the goals of the Academic Plan. Each of the aforementioned requests aligns directly with and is derived from the goals of the Plan. The Academic Plan goals are:

I. Enhance Academic Quality and Value  
II. Prepare Students for a Changing World  
III. Research and Innovation  
IV. Global Citizenry  
V. Ensure an Equitable and Inclusive Campus Community  
VI. Institutional Effectiveness

3. **Briefly describe the progress made in your division/unit over the last 12-15 months in addressing strategic priorities. Provide a summary of reinvestment efforts.**

The Division of Academic Affairs has made progress in several areas related to strategic planning and budgetary reinvestments. A new budget process was instituted in which the budget becomes a manifestation of academic strategic planning. Specifically, each college/unit developed a budget narrative based on college-based strategic priorities and an agreed upon set of budget principles. The budget narratives are presented to the Council of Deans and Faculty Senate leadership, and followed by individual college or unit budget hearings with the Office of the Provost and Office of Budget and Financial Planning. This new budget process provides a framework for transparent communication among units as well as an understandable and defensible budget allocation that reflects each college’s/unit’s goals and future directions in the context of the
University's strategic priorities. In addition to requests for the subsequent year, this budget process includes projected budget needs per unit over a three horizon. These projections allow us to understand unit-based budget needs for FY 13 and beyond. These conversations also allow for an analysis of unit productivity, cost effectiveness, and innovation.

Because of highly constrained budgets and several budget reductions over the past three years, almost all investments within the Division of Academic Affairs have been strategic allocations. The most important has been an effort to strategically invest in full-time faculty positions. As noted in the tabulation below, gains were being made in faculty positions in FY 10 and 11, but some of that was because of the mid-year budget reduction in FY 11 that became a base reduction in FY 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Faculty retired/resigned</th>
<th>Strategic Investment in Faculty Lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>28.5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*FY 11 mid-year reduction translated into a base reduction of 8 faculty lines for FY 12.*

In addition to faculty lines, the following are examples of new initiatives within AA funded through strategic reallocation of funds:

- Graduate Tuition Differential Fellowships
- Office of Online Teaching and Learning – Online Faculty Fellows Program
- Admissions Staff Enhancement
- Multicultural Faculty Apprentice Program
- Grand Challenges course initiative
- Visiting International Scholars Program
- Undergraduate Research Fund
- Graduate Enhancement Fund
- Digital Classroom Upgrade
- Faculty Laptop Program

4. Provide Comparison data – note data woven into requests

5. Projections of budgetary needs for FY 14 and 15 provided above.

6. Indicate any requests and rationale for major capital investments, such as new buildings or major renovations or proposed new construction with estimated costs to the unrestricted budget.

In addition to capital projects underway or in planning stages, we have begun conversations about finding a new home for the Office of Admissions. Under consideration is the occupation of a portion of a renovated Fogarty Hall after Pharmacy moves into their new facility. Capital planning will begin exploring alternatives for the use of Fogarty in the context of institutional priorities.
Change in Enrollment and the number of faculty at the University of RI over time.
TABLE 1

Comparison of Institutional Investments in Instruction on a Per-Student Basis in 2009 and from 2000-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>$ Per Student</th>
<th>% Increase Over 10 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URI</td>
<td>$ 6,541</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMASS</td>
<td>$10,629</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNH</td>
<td>$10,249</td>
<td>74.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UVM</td>
<td>$12,131</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMO</td>
<td>$ 7,405</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCONN</td>
<td>$20,141</td>
<td>114.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2

Proportion of Institutional Budgets Expended on Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution/Category</th>
<th>Instruction Expenditures as % Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of RI</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI College</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England Land Grants</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year Publics</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>