

## FY 2018 Budget Topics

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### Institution Name: University of West Georgia

List the top three to four strategic topics for discussion at the FY18 budget hearing. It will be important to discuss serious challenges facing the institution, but equally important to discuss major successes.

**The University of West Georgia** is continuing its progress, growth, and impact in realization of the role the USG have envisioned for us! We have continued on our path of record enrollment growth at the undergraduate level, graduate level, and in electronic delivery. This success is not by happenstance but by a concerted effort of internal continuous improvement and external image building. UWG's strategic plan 2014 – 2020 is a living document focused on the four imperatives of **student success, academic success, partnership success and operational success**. Everything we do is driven by and referenced to one or more of these imperatives.

The underlying driving force behind the implementation of this plan is the leadership development and campus transformation initiative that we have called Engage West, which is now entering its third year of full institutional participation. Four times a year, all managers and supervisors are brought together for focused professional development in leadership enhancement. It is an amazing experience to see over 250 supervisory employees working collaboratively across all boundaries to make UWG, in the language of our vision statement, “the best place to work, learn, and succeed.”

Anchored in the new strategic plan, guided by our core values, and with student success always our primary goal, the University of West Georgia's Engage West family of programs is transformative, growing, and deeply interconnected. Historically, higher ed lags behind the corporate world in terms of innovative methods of engagement, development, and assessment. Engage West has changed that.

The extensive Engage West initiative, launched in early 2014, centers on several programs. The annual Employee Engagement Survey, a concept borrowed from the healthcare and corporate sectors, is predicated on the idea that employee engagement is critical to institutional success. The survey elicits honest, anonymous feedback from all employees on seven key topics. Our unique-in-higher-ed Leadership Development Institutes (LDIs) are held every 90 days. Each retreat focuses on topics such as developing a culture of high-performance, strategic thinking and planning, hardwiring success, and infusing evidence-based leadership into both our high-level plans and everyday action. Launched fall of 2015, the “Engage West! Faculty Edition” and “Engage West! Staff Edition” create additional conduits for accelerate learning throughout the organization by providing professional development opportunities for all full-time employees three times each year. The peer-nominated Best of the West Employee Award and Recognition Program fosters a culture of recognition. The Barrier

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Team identifies, assesses, and provides recommendations for improving operational processes, policies, and practices with the goal of eliminating barriers of inefficiency. Finally, all of our senior leaders create and publish scorecards and provide annual updates on their progress. This models accountability and assessment, and also improves transparency and confidence in senior leadership, areas in which the university has traditionally struggled. Together, all programs work to create the culture necessary to achieving our vision.

Now 30 months in, change is apparent across campus. All units have created strategic plans aligned with the institutional plan and all departments have drafted plans aligned with their unit plans. Each employee's goals will also tie to the strategic plan and our budget requests and allocations now connect to our strategic imperatives and KPIs as well. The result of this top-to-bottom alignment serves to ensure that our employees and their efforts remain focused and to help each person understand how his or her work contributes to the university's success. In addition to quantifiable markers, our campus has undergone a cultural transformation from a default of negativity and random action to a default of optimism and intentional action. Both AASCU and of course, the USG, have recognized Engage West with awards.

Below, in outline format, aligned with our strategic plan and key performance indicators, we provide the strategic topics for discussion in presentation of our FY18 budget hearing. Organizationally, we will focus on two overarching topics - successes and challenges. We believe these are intrinsically tied together as we navigate the future of our institution. Extensive detail is found in the full budget narrative document and completed tables but these topics will serve as our presentational script for the budget presentation. The takeaway we wish to convey is our embracing of **accountability, relevance, and affordability**.

### **University of West Georgia – Strategic Topics – FY18 Budget Hearing Successes and Challenges**

#### **1. UWG – Successes:**

- **Record enrollment (13,308)** guided by a Strategic Enrollment Plan and market expansion representing a 14% increase in four years headed towards our 2020 goal of 15,000!
- **Progression and Graduation rate improvement** - seeing continued improvement in progression and graduation rates (6 year 41.2% = over 2% increase from previous year; 4 year 19.47% = 4.5% increase from previous year) headed towards our 2020 goal of 50% 6 year and 25% 4 year graduation rates!
- **Record Fundraising** – currently \$28M towards first-ever comprehensive capital campaign with a goal of \$50M goal by 2020.
- **Record economic impact** - \$518M – up \$100M in four years headed towards our

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2020 goal of \$650M.

- **UWG is committed to creating a culture of high performance and accountability** – guided by our Strategic Plan (2014-2020), KPIs, Leadership Scorecards, and Leadership Development – accountability at all levels.
- **Engage West!** – In the third year of our national award winning Culture of High Performance, Evidence-based Leadership Initiative. People – Purpose – Action!
- **UWG assumes leadership in innovative delivery models with direct cost savings to students**, e.g. eCore, eMajor/eCampus, PLA and CLEP as part of the Adult Consortium and has seen exponential growth in MOWR (now 483 MOWR students Fall 2016)
- **K-16 Educational Collaborative (CCEC)** – UWG is leading the state in collaborative student success partnerships within a single system school house, K-16, approach to student success outcomes – enrolled, employed, or enlisted!
- **Relevant Quality Academic Programs at an affordable price** - 5 programs in top 100 nationally (US News & World Report), students average salary after graduation 9<sup>th</sup> in Georgia of all public and private institutions, lowest tuition and fees in comprehensive sector, below average student debt upon graduation, and significantly low student debt default (7.8%).
- **UWG is financially stable and in good fiscal health** – clean audits, clear policy procedures, solid performance of PPVs, and continual growth in unrestricted net assets with a current income to debt ratio of 3:1.
- **Accountability** - UWG models strategic aligned budgeting process documenting redirection of resources based on strategic need and transparent budget allocation process that evidences transparency and accountable for internal and external constituents.
- **UWG is developing strategic partnerships for academic, operational, and student success** – Innovation Squad provides task force to develop new market aligned programs and certificates, Newnan Center delivery site with 775 unduplicated headcount Fall 2016, partnerships with Chamber and Burson Center in economic development, and innovative solutions to campus service facility needs (Health Center).

### 2. UWG – Challenges:

- **CCG-RPG** – as indicated above, we are seeing improvement in progression and graduation rates and overall trend improvement in freshman/sophomore retention - but – retention has experienced a recent static increase (currently 72.3%). We are requesting new funds specifically aligned to improving this student success indicator.
- **Growth Stress** – with growth in all student constituencies comes added stress on operations; academic core, lower and upper division seats, and graduate curriculum delivery; student and financial services; facilities and technology

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infrastructure; and human capital (personnel – faculty and staff). This is compounded with the new overtime ruling (FLSA – non-exempt) regulating hourly operational services on an already overburden staff. We are requesting new recurring and one-time funds specifically aligned with personnel, technology, and facilities to meet these needs.

- **Safety, Compliance, Risk and Assessment (unfunded mandates)** – ensuring a safe campus environment in an era of political and social unrest; Title IV investigatory processes; Financial Aid processing and distribution; ACA; ADA; Federal Policies; State Policies; Federal Policies challenged by State with educational institutions in the middle; and SACSCOC accreditation compliance and assessment. We are requesting new recurring funds specifically aligned to these critical challenges.
- **We are monitoring carefully the revenue trend analysis** particularly with eCore, UWG Online and MOWR growth – Auxiliary budgets tied to revenues based on fee revenue growth aligned with headcount growth are negatively impacted with realization of actual fee paying students. We are adjusting accordingly. We do not see this as a negative outcome, merely an alignment of market and an opportunity to realign our auxiliary budget pro formas accordingly.