



Operational Gap Working Group

Framework for Identifying Current Operational Gaps

Three Areas of Gaps:

1. Necessary recurring positions or other items funded by one time or non-recurring dollars.
2. Gaps caused by a change in environment such as increased enrollment, aging buildings or infrastructure, significant purchasing power loss due to inflation, or new mandates, and where lack of resources would cause significant risk to current operations or outcomes. The difference would be estimated from a point in the past to today (generally use six years unless there are special circumstances) and could be estimated in terms of ratios or other relative measures.
3. Where there is significant risk to sustaining current levels of operations or outcomes and higher level of resources are required (this one will be subjective but likely still has merit for some items). We recognize there will be some overlap with other working groups who will be addressing resource requirements to improve outcomes, so coordination will be required.

Clarifications/Considerations:

1. There are a finite number of major areas for gap consideration – at the highest level it seems it is people and equipment. Below that and it starts to divide into types of people (advisors, counselors, etc.) and types of equipment (research, student rec, etc.).
2. This effort is to estimate operational gaps at a high level and should not address resource gaps less than \$100,000. That said, many smaller areas will have little gaps – we will need some way of capturing the nature of those gaps without asking every unit to think through this – perhaps sampling?
3. Divisions can take the lead for their area of expertise and then bring back input to the Working Group for validation and assumption leveling across areas.
4. Sources of funding seems to complicate the conversation but should not complicate the gap analysis. For example: whether something is funded by fees or tuition ultimately contributes to an affordability gap that probably ends up needing to be modeled. This effort is generally not to replace any particular funding source, such as course fees.
5. The model will attempt to identify the equipment funding gap, recognizing that temporary salary savings, grants and gifts are, to some extent, recurring in the aggregate. However, the model will recognize that these funding sources are inadequate in that our equipment is aging, and a proper replacement cycle needs to be estimated.
6. Generally, the model will attempt to identify resources needed to maintain the current levels of output. It will not attempt to identify gaps to aspirational funding levels except to the extent that higher levels of resources are needed to address areas of risk as addressed in gap area #3 above.

7. The Working Group recognizes that space constraints or gaps have also developed on campus. These gaps and the space needed for Western's 2025 vision will be addressed during the capital planning process set to begin in the fall. That planning process will benefit from the results of the modeling process.

8. An examples of gap areas #2 and #3 above is that Western has grown by 1,000 students over the past five years. Student services has grown but may not have kept pace. We should calculate the funding ratio needed to support that growth and the gap to current funding level (#2 above). For areas where that calculated level of support will not sustain operations/output, a higher level of support will need to be estimated and funding gap calculated (#3 above). This could include mental health counselors due to increased mental health issues of new students (will need supporting data).