

W UW TACOMA 2025 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

In just a few short decades, state investment and community support for the University of Washington Tacoma has built this urban-serving campus into an engine of vitality and economic development in the South Sound.

The following requests are essential in helping UW Tacoma continue its mission of expanding access to education opportunities while functioning as a catalyst for social and economic mobility in the region.



View the online version of UW Tacoma legislative priorities



INCREASE STATE SUPPORT FOR COMPENSATION

100% STATE FUNDING SHARE
3% ANNUAL SALARY INCREASE

The ability to recruit and retain employees is essential for UW Tacoma to meet regional education and workforce demands. Not adequately funding higher education compensation and salary increases jeopardizes student success, opportunity, and innovation in Washington.

Problem:

- Rising costs and inflation
- Increasing competition for quality employees
- Over-reliance on tuition increases
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining faculty for high-demand programs

Solution: Fully funding salary increases ensures that the state invests in Washington's economic engine. Relying too heavily on tuition hikes risks burdening Washington families and jeopardizes our mission. **This support enables UW Tacoma to expand college access in the South Sound, prepare future workers and leaders, and promote social mobility for first-gen (53% of students), low-income, and military-affiliated students.**



CAPITAL BUDGET EMERGENCY POWER REPAIRS (PHASE 3)

\$3.9 MILLION

On July 6, 2024, a tragic car accident destroyed UW Tacoma's main power switch, shutting down power and HVAC to all of campus and our retail tenants. A State of Emergency was declared in the following days, and a phased repair and replacement plan was implemented. Phase 1 provided a temporary emergency power solution so we and our tenants could resume operation. Thanks to Tacoma Public Utilities and partnership with other community partners, Phase 2 completed temporary repairs critical for reliable short-term power delivery.

Problem:

- Closure of all academic buildings
- Disruption of classes, research projects and labs
- Threat to livelihood of small businesses on Pacific Avenue
- Risk to public health and safety

Solution (Phase 3):

- Move to a stable, permanent solution
- Return leased equipment to Tacoma Public Utilities
- Modernize the electrical system for campus and downtown small business
- Integrate new equipment with campus infrastructure for security and reliability



**MAKE PERMANENT
STATE INVESTMENT IN
STUDENT SUCCESS**

**\$776K/YEAR TO MAKE
PERMANENT 6.75 FTE**

UW Tacoma received a one-time investment in the 2023-25 operating budget via proviso to create the following student support positions:

- Re-enrollment Specialist
- Graduate Social Worker
- Financial Aid/Wellness Educator
- Employer Relations Manager
- Social Worker
- Staff Psychologist
- Military-Connected Career Coach
- Data Analytics/Assessment Coord.

Within one year of the proviso, UW Tacoma:

- Increased enrollment by 4%
- Launched the HuskiesCare online resource hub, enrolling 4,474 users
- Expanded mental health support and offered counseling with no waitlist
- Fully stocked *The Pantry* with healthy meals for food-insecure students
- Established a new Department of Career and Social Mobility to help students, particularly those who have faced social, structural, and economic barriers, prepare for meaningful and prosperous careers.
- Saw record numbers of participation among students and employers in career fairs (2,267 students, 193 employers)
- Served 522 military-connected students with career support through 4,407 unique interactions

Problem: Retaining these positions is vital for student success and, well-being at UW Tacoma and after graduation. Post-pandemic data on enrollment declines, mental health, basic needs, emergency aid requests, and alumni outcomes highlights the disproportionate vulnerability of students enrolled at UW Tacoma. For example, a 2023–24 self-reported student survey showed that **44% of UW Tacoma students have low or very low food security, which is 21% higher than the national average.**

Solution: Making the proviso permanent will ensure that UW Tacoma can sustain critical initiatives that have demonstrably improved enrollment, student well-being, and career readiness, such as the HuskiesCare resource hub, on-demand mental health counseling, and career fairs. Retaining these positions is essential to addressing post-pandemic challenges, supporting vulnerable student populations, and fostering long-term campus vitality and success.



“All of the students here at UWT who identify and are part of the first-gen community, we’re all here creating our own legacy, expanding horizons for our families and shaping not only our own future but the future for those who will come after us.”

Briann Jolene Castro Santos
’25 Biomedical Sciences



**UW TACOMA IS RECOGNIZED AS THE
ONLY FIRSTGEN FORWARD NETWORK
CHAMPION IN WASHINGTON**



BUILD A SUSTAINABLE SOUTH PUGET SOUND NURSING WORKFORCE

\$4 MILLION

\$602K IN FY26 + \$3.4M/YR ONGOING

The healthcare sector is experiencing a growing nursing shortage, worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as increasing RN retirements due to the aging nursing workforce. Washington schools of nursing are not able to produce enough qualified registered nurses (RN), resulting in increased RN demand and longer position vacancies, lower RN retention, and higher hospital turnover rates.

Problem: Nursing shortages jeopardize patient care, compromise safe staffing, and increase healthcare costs for Washingtonians. **Pierce County is expected to have a shortage of 1000 nurses by 2027, and RN vacancy rates are expected to reach peak severity in 2030.** Currently, no public university in the South Sound offers a pre-licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) or advanced doctoral nursing degree. On average, 3,200 qualified RN applicants are not admitted to Washington RN programs because of enrollment constraints, including at local CTC RN programs, and in part due to a lack of qualified RN faculty who are able to teach.

Solution: UW Tacoma will create new programs and degrees to produce additional nursing graduates to support the South Puget Sound and Washington. Initiatives include:

- Expansion of **RN-to-BSN** enrollment to meet growing needs and demands
 - Enrollment increase of 10–15% starting Fall 2026
- Launch of **pre-licensure BSN** program
 - Develop a tri-campus curriculum
 - Inaugural cohort of 24 students in Fall 2028
 - Full enrollment cohort of 40 students beginning Fall 2029
- Creation of the **Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)** to address faculty shortages
 - Inaugural cohort of 10–15 students beginning Fall 2029
- Transition to national Competency-Based Education (CBE) standards and accreditation

+45 additional BSN graduates annually

to ensure we are prepared to address the growing healthcare workforce shortage and address the additional demand for safe nursing staffing.



 **\$359 M**

UW Tacoma's overall economic impact to the state of Washington

Parker Strategy Group, October 2024





UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON | TACOMA

Established in 1990, the University of Washington Tacoma fosters a thriving and equitable society by educating diverse learners and expanding knowledge through partnership and collaboration with all our communities.

Sheila Edwards Lange, Ph.D.
Chancellor

4,980

Student Headcount
+4% growth over previous year

33,555
Degrees/Certificates Awarded since 1990

15:1
Student-faculty ratio

92%
of our students are **from Washington**
72% Come from Pierce, Thurston, or South King County
As determined by application address

63%
Students of color (undergraduate)
32% Underserved students of color

49%
Eligible for Pell grants
\$53M in financial aid was disbursed in the 2022-23 academic year

8/10
Alumni stay in Washington

Unless otherwise noted, all information shown is current as of Autumn quarter 2024

53%
of undergraduate students are **First to College or First to Degree**

19%
Military-affiliated students

UW Tacoma is Washington's only FirstGen Forward Network Champion

#1 **TOP PERFORMER FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY IN WASHINGTON (#8 IN THE WEST)**
U.S. News & World Reports, 2024

#1 **BEST BANG FOR THE BUCK IN WASHINGTON (#10 IN THE WEST)**
Washington Monthly, 2024

☆ **TOP 25** ☆
Best for Vets Colleges (IN THE NATION)
Military Times, 2024

UW Tacoma offers more than **60 undergraduate** majors, minors and study options, **15 graduate programs** and a variety of professional development courses and certificates.

MOST POPULAR MAJORS

1. Computer Science
2. Biomedical Sciences
3. Information Technology
4. Accounting
5. Psychology
6. Finance
7. Nursing
8. Marketing
9. Electrical Engineering (*tie*)
Mechanical Engineering (*tie*)

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