

BUDGET NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPLICATION

Name of Person Submitting Request:	Todd Heibel
Program or Service Area:	Geology-Oceanography
Division:	Science – Ranked Fifth
Date of Last Program Efficacy:	Spring 2012
What rating was given?	Continuation
Amount Requested:	Additional \$1,250 for 5611 Account (Bus Rental)
Strategic Initiatives Addressed:	Access and Student Success

1. Provide a rationale for your request.

At present, the Geology-Oceanography Program (4651) account has a total of \$1,127 within the bus rental category (5611). Unfortunately, this funding is insufficient to support more than two half-day or one full-day bus field trip(s) during each academic year. This means that the budget dictates course content, at least in terms of site visits. Because some of the concepts within Geology and Oceanography are best experienced in the field, site visits (field trips) are an integral component of these courses. Many field sites are some distance from the SBVC campus and cannot be easily accessed by students, especially those without reliable transportation (including students who regularly utilize public transportation). Please refer to the discussion related to *Access and Demographic Information* within the Efficacy Report (pp. 8-9). Aside from car pool transportation, college-sponsored buses are the most financially feasible, effective, and safe means to convey students from the SBVC campus to particular sites of Geologic and Oceanographic interest. In addition, the department requests that buses have appropriate accessibility features. This affords access to students with a variety of ability challenges (Efficacy document, p. 9). This request supports the strategic initiatives of student success and access.

2. Indicate how the content of the latest Program Efficacy Report and/or most current EIS data support this request. How is the request tied to program planning? (*Reference the page number(s) where the information can be found on Program Efficacy.*)

The importance of department-sponsored bus field trips is discussed within the “Demographics” section of the latest Efficacy document (p. 8), as well as the “Planning” section (p. 31). The overall Geology-Oceanography budget (program number 4651) has remained flat for several years. In order to compensate for rapidly increasing field trip (bus rental) costs, nearly all budgetary funds have been transferred into the 5611 account. In other words, the 2012-13 budget is no greater than the 2007-08 budget, as reported within the Spring 2008 Program Efficacy document. In fact, and as a result of perturbations within community college funding cycles, the total budget is now less than in previous academic years: \$1,827.00 (\$1,527 for 5611) for FY 2008, \$1,827.00 (\$1,127.00 for 5611) for FY 2009, \$1,360.93 (\$1,127.00 for 5611) for FY 2010, and \$1,350.00 (\$1,127.00 for 5611) for FY 2011. At the same time that budgets have stagnated and declined, student enrollment and FTES have steadily increased since the 06-07 academic year (refer to the latest EMP data): 200 and 26.50 for 06-07, 219 and 27.17 for 07-08, 304 and 34.4 for 08-09, and 306 and 42.6 for 09-10. These higher enrollments have placed a greater demand on resources, including bus field trips. Simultaneously, bus rental has steadily

increased from \$573 per half-day in FY 2008 to more than \$650 in FY 2012.

3. Indicate if there is additional information you wish the committee to consider (*for example: regulatory information, compliance, updated efficiency and/or student success data or planning etc*).

While there is no regulatory compliance mechanism that requires a field component within our Geology and Oceanography courses, sound Earth Science pedagogy demands it. Indeed, the *Challenges and Opportunities* section of the EMP One-Sheet (EMP, p. 42) includes the importance of local field opportunities within the context of limited budgets. According to the latest EMP data, the Geology Department alone served more than 250 students during the '10-'11 and '11-'12 academic years. The current bus rental budget cannot properly support this increased student population.

Any student who wishes to transfer to a four-year institution benefits from field experience, regardless of degree program or major. Therefore, SBVC owes its students an institutional commitment to funding field excursions. In addition, it is not practical for students with limited financial means to fund their own transportation to field sites. Aside from fiduciary issues, it is also much safer to hire a professional bus driver to convey students to and from field sites.

4. Evaluation of initial cost, as well as related costs (including any ongoing maintenance or updates) and identification of any alternative or ongoing funding sources (for example Department Budget, VTEA or Perkins).

At present, the Geology-Oceanography program has a small annual budget. The vast majority of this budget is allocated for bus field trips. However, it is insufficient to fund more than one all-day or two half-day field trips (for an entire academic year). Therefore, it may become necessary to transfer remaining instructional supply funds, as well as apply for other public and private funding sources. If other funds are transferred to meet bus rental needs, then instructional supply, equipment, and other needs will suffer.

5. What are the consequences of not funding this budget request?

The vast majority of community college and four-year university Earth Science programs (including Geology and Oceanography) incorporate field trips into their courses. Indeed, this is the preferred method by which students may integrate classroom and textbook concepts and theories (secondary data) with real-world processes (primary field data). If our students are deprived of the hands-on, field component of Geology and Oceanography courses, then they are less prepared to transfer to four-year universities and less likely to succeed in science-related disciplines and careers (refer to EMP, Table 6, p. 12), including education, government, and professional and technical services (refer to EMP, Tables 13 and 14, pp. 96-97).