

BUDGET NEEDS ASSESSMENT APPLICATION

Name of Person Submitting Request:	Todd Heibel
Program or Service Area:	Water Supply Technology (WST)
Division:	Science – Ranked Sixth
Date of Last Program Efficacy:	Fall 2011
What rating was given?	Continuation
Amount Requested:	\$2,500 for 5611 Account (Bus Rental)
Strategic Initiatives Addressed:	Access and Student Success

1. Provide a rationale for your request.

At present, the WST Department does not have a stable, college-funded bus rental category (5611). This funding is necessary for long-term support for two half-day or one full-day bus field trip(s) during each semester (fall and spring). This means that the budget (or lack thereof) dictates course content, at least in terms of site visits. Because some of the concepts within Water Supply Technology 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). Aside from car pool transportation, college-sponsored buses are the most financially feasible, safe, and effective means to conveying students from the SBVC campus to particular sites of WST Department interest. In addition, the department requests that buses have appropriate accessibility features. This affords access to students with a variety of ability challenges. 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 students who do not work in the industry do not have exposure and familiarity with some of the hardware and the technical terminology associated with the field. The department is working hard to mitigate this problem with additional field trips and video clips to give exposure to the actual working of water treatment plants (Efficacy Report, p. 9). In addition, the department does not have a budget provided by the college. It depends on grant money to provide support services for the students. Without a budget, it is difficult for the department to sustain the growth and the quality of the program simultaneously (Efficacy Report, p. 17). As the WST program has grown, enrollments have placed a greater demand on resources, including bus field trips. Nonetheless, field trips must maintain a central place within this program, as site visits are an invaluable learning tool for all WST students. The amount of \$2,500 is requested, as bus rental has steadily increased from \$573 per half-day in 07-08 to more than \$650 in 11-12 (or more than \$1,100 for a full-day field trip).

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*).

Institutionally supported bus field trips expose students to opportunities that they would not otherwise have. Specifically, previous (grant supported) bus field trips have introduced WST students to water and wastewater treatment facilities and their personnel. In order to find jobs in the water treatment, distribution, and wastewater industries, the students have to pass state administered certification exams. Each course in the program is designed to prepare students to take one or more state certification exam. Many students do not complete the SBVC certificate or degree requirements because the state issued certification and licenses are sufficient to gain entry-level employment in the field. Some students work for a few years and then enroll again to obtain degrees and certificates later in the career when they want to get promoted to supervisory levels. Field trips can provide additional knowledge and motivation to successfully pass these examinations (Efficacy Report, p. 9).

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 WST Department lacks a stable, college-funded budget. It is currently relying on steadily dwindling grant funds for all expenses, including bus field trips. Therefore, it will continue to be necessary to apply for other public and private funding sources, including grants, unless the college prioritizes and funds this important budget item. The \$2,500 requested would fund one full-day field trip during the fall and spring semester, or two half-day field trips during each semester, based on current prices. Because the price of (diesel) fuel is volatile, it is difficult to forecast future costs, although they are likely to continue their upward trajectory.

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

The vast majority of community college and four-year university WST programs 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 WST courses, then they are less prepared to transfer to four-year universities and less likely to succeed in water industry disciplines and careers. The water program prepares students for the workforce and for career development and provides training for incumbent (displaced) workers. The SBVC mission is to support a diverse community of learners. The water program provides training for students who like to work outdoors and with their hands. The program trains workers who want to obtain rewarding, high-paying, stable jobs after one or two years of training (Efficacy Report, p. 12). To reiterate, field trips (site visits) are an integral component of this training and makes our WST students among the most competitive within the Inland Empire and southern California. While “caravan” (student-funded) field trips are possible, they are not always financially feasible for a majority of our students. In addition, hiring a professional bus company and driver further ensures student safety to and from the field site.