

**UNIT NAME:** Eberly College of Arts and Sciences

**UNIT SUMMARY AND RESPONSIBILITY:** The Eberly College of Arts and Sciences is West Virginia University's largest and most diverse academic college. Currently, the Eberly College is comprised of 17 academic departments and schools, as well as 10 academic and research centers. The Eberly College is also home to several stand-alone academic program units. In total, the Eberly College currently offers 39 undergraduate majors enrolling approximately 4,600 students and 37 graduate degree programs including 17 doctoral programs which enroll another 1,000 students. The Eberly College is also responsible for generating more than half of all university student credit hours on an annual basis.

The college employs a workforce of more than 400 faculty and approximately 100 staff employees. Our annual budget over the past five years has averaged \$65.5 million. Our financial portfolio also includes research and development accounts of more than \$100 million in value. During the period of review, our research expenditures have averaged over \$20 million in sponsored research awards and our annual development activities over the past five years have averaged more than \$10 million.

As the largest college, Eberly provides additional services beyond what the university provides. For example, Eberly maintains an informational technology team. This allows for heightened service within our own college while reducing the need for university resources to be dedicated for our college. Over the period of review, the College has maintained its own specialized business office, informational technology services, personnel human resource specialist, facilities and shop operations, office of advancement (development and communications), academic advising and recruitment services, and research initiatives and grant management services. Each of these service units were examined with regard to staffing and administrative changes.

**UNIT HEAD COUNT COMPARISON:** According to staffing data provided by the Office of the Provost, at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2019 (July, 2018), 38 individuals were employed through Dean's Office accounting for 37.53 Full Time Equivalents or FTEs. As of January 2024, 45 individuals were employed in the Eberly College's Dean's Office accounting for 43.5 FTEs. Thus, it would appear that there was an increase of nearly 16 percent in FTEs. This increase masks several significant changes within the organization of the Dean's Office that will be discussed below. However, Table 1 provides the breakdown for positions within the Dean's Office for both time periods.

**UNIT ADMINISTRATOR-LEVEL OR ABOVE POSITION COUNT COMPARISON:** In 2018, the Executive Leadership Team for the College was comprised of eight positions including: the Dean; four Associate Deans (Academic Affairs; Financial Planning and Management; Research and Faculty); and three Directors (Undergraduate Studies; Graduate Studies; and Human Resources). It should be noted that just prior to 2018, the College retained five associate dean positions. Upon a retirement two associate dean positions were integrated into one associate dean for academic affairs position.

In 2024, the Executive Leadership Team includes nine positions. We still have four associate dean positions. However, due to a number of factors including losing some key personnel (academic directors) to the Provost Office; changes in central administration of business and human resources services; institutional prioritization in enrollment growth and recruitment; and the Academic Transformation initiatives, the College has adapted and reconfigured its leadership structure.

Specifically, we created three assistant dean positions and a Chief of Operations position. Three of these four positions are reconfigurations of positions which existed in 2018. Thus, our director of graduate studies was converted to an assistant dean for graduate studies. The director of undergraduate studies was converted to an assistant dean for undergraduate services. This position oversees our undergraduate advising and recruitment unit. Both of these positions were re-titled to assistant dean position to be consistent with other college titles as well as help with market recruitment. The Chief of Operations position was an expansion of the HR Director position. The Universities decision to move to a more centralized mode of providing HR services necessitated a change in orientation. It was clear that we still needed to retain internal expertise in various aspects of the hiring process, as well as other HR activities. However, creating this position also allowed for the College to expand its capacity for strategic initiatives both within and outside the college. The Chief of Operations position has become an important part of our workforce planning and has been invaluable given the major changes taking place at WVU.

There is one new position that has become part of the executive leadership team: the Assistant Dean for Curriculum and Assessment. A decision was made two years ago that we needed assistance with curriculum and program evaluation and assessment. Given both the institutional priorities that have been set for through the Academic Transformation process and the sheer number of courses and programs within our college, a decision was made to have a full-time position dedicated to these activities. This new position had the approval of the Provost Office and this position mirrors a similar position within the Provost Office which oversee curricular and programmatic assessment for the entire university.

Lastly, it should be noted that for the most part, the executive leadership team is comprised of individuals who hold faculty appointments; only the Associate Dean for Financial Planning and Management, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Student Services and the Chief of Operations do not hold faculty status. Given the underlining faculty appointment of many of our deans, they routinely continue to support the academic enterprise by routinely teaching, working with graduate students, and/or conducting research and outreach activities. Moreover, we also assign members of our leadership additional assignments when needed. This year, both our Associate Dean for Faculty and our Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies are also serving as interim leadership for Public Administration and the School for Mathematical and Data Sciences respectively. These are significant responsibilities which have been made all the more challenging given both units were dramatically impacted by Academic Transformation recommendations this year.

**UNIT BUDGET COMPARISON:** For the purposes of this report, we were provided salary data for personnel linked to Dean's Office for July 2018 and January 2024. We note that this data did not completely account for all salary expenditures because some administrative supplements were not included. We adjusted the numbers to fully capture the cost of personnel. Therefore in 2018, Dean's Office Personnel accounted for \$2.9 million in salaries/wages. As of this year, salaries and wages for the Dean's Office is nearly \$4.3 million. There has been an increase in the personnel budget of \$1.37 million; a nearly 47 percent increase. While this increase appears dramatic, two factors account for a substantial amount of this increase. Over this period of time six positions which existed in individual college units were centralized within the College Office. Further three positions associated with new initiatives now appear in the Dean's Office.

Accounting for both new initiative costs and relocation of positions under the Dean's Office, we adjust the five year increase down from \$1.37 to \$.73 million. Thus, the adjusted increase represents a 25 percent increase from 2018 to 2024. Additional factors associated with this increase included additional operating positions, underlying faculty salaries associated with dean positions, and promotion and other salary adjustments.

**UNIT BENCHMARKS:** Comparing colleges of arts and sciences is challenging due to the unique configurations found within various colleges. Most notably, many universities have divided traditional colleges of arts and sciences into two or three separate colleges. Of course, in universities where these structures have been adopted the administrative staffing and costs are inevitably greater than singular colleges of arts and sciences. Thus, for our purposes here, we look only at peer institutions which have a singular college of arts and sciences.

We compared our college to similar colleges at predominantly other Big XII universities, as well as the University of Pittsburgh. The table below provides a comparison of current administrative staffing for predominately higher-level administration leadership. Titles of positions can vary greatly across universities, so we have concentrated primarily on dean and director positions and tried to compare positions with similar responsibilities related to the primary academic mission of the colleges. One last note, we excluded positions related to development. While all colleges reported staffing devoted to development activities, it was not clear whether the positions are part of a college’s staffing budget or a foundation budget.

**Peer Comparisons**

	Dean	Associate Deans	Assistant Deans	Directors or equivalents	Total
WVU	1	4	3	2	10
Iowa State	1	5	1	4	11
Baylor	1	8	0	5	14
Kansas	1	4	1	3	9
Ok. State	1	5	1	2	9
Cincinnati	1	4	2	2	9
Texas Tech	1	4	1	4	10
Oklahoma	1	4	0	5	10
Pittsburgh	1	5	0	5	11

<i>Mean</i>	1.0	4.8	1.0	3.6	10.3
<i>Median</i>	1	4	1	4	10

As can be seen from the data, our college administration is consistent with other colleges of arts and sciences. Of the nine colleges examined, we find that our associate dean number is the modal response and slightly less than the average. Where there is some discrepancy is in the assistant dean and director categories. We have two more assistant dean positions than the sample’s mean. However, we have fewer director positions. Thus, it would appear that of the colleges examined, more have opted to use director labels than assistant dean titles. Overall, however, our administrative staffing is in line with the other colleges. Our 10 positions is at the sample median and just below the sample’s mean. Thus, in relation to other colleges of arts and sciences, the Eberly College does not appear to be over staffed.

**CONCLUSION STATEMENT / REVIEW OUTCOME:** We were asked to examine our college’s administrative structure with regard to staffing and costs paying particular attention to changes from 2018 to 2024. The Eberly College of Arts and Sciences contributes to all aspects of WVU’s mission and has done so in a highly significant and impactful manner. The College’s academic portfolio at both the undergraduate and graduate level is expansive and diverse. The research and scholarship that is generated by the College’s faculty is also diverse and highly recognized across academia. Given the size and scope of the College it is not surprising that the

administrative structure corresponds with the expectations of our student, alumni, and university leadership.

Our report has tried to concisely capture the many aspects of the College's operations. In doing so we hope that we have provided adequate justification for decisions related to staffing. When adjusting for some positions which were moved from other units in the college to the Dean's Office, our current staffing is relatively the same as it was in 2018. It was also shown that our administrative structure and size, particularly as it pertains to the executive leadership of the College, is consistent with other colleges of arts and sciences at selective peer institutions.

*Administrative costs associated with personnel in the Dean's Office grew from 6 percent of all College salaries to 8 percent (though adjusting for relocation of positions and new initiatives it was 7 percent).* Thus, while there was an increase in actual administrative expenditures as it relates to salaries, the impact on the College's overall budget was very modest. Administrative efforts to support the College are both of high quality and necessary to support not just college operations but to support University demands.

During the period under review, we have gone through considerable challenges related to the global pandemic, as well as the fiscal realities which lead to Academic Transformation recommendations. It would be hard to imagine how the College could have managed these challenges without the highly productive and professional administrative staff of the college – at all levels.

As we move forward, we will continue to look to find ways to provide high level services for our constituent groups and be more efficient while doing so. We anticipate several changes as we move to the next fiscal year. We will be eliminating a position within our IT group and we anticipate some retirements which will necessitate some reorganization and garner further savings in our budget. Further, we are exploring the possibility of shifting some personnel costs to external research funding. Finally, the transition to a new budget model may also impact our staffing as it is unclear whether we will continue to be able to provide internal services which we will now have to budget for centrally. At the same time, we are understaffed in both our Marketing/Communications and Development groups. Other initiatives and/or needs may present themselves such that we may need to consider additional or new types of staffing.

The Eberly College, though large, has the capacity to adapt and improve. Eberly will remain committed and reflective in order to meet both the needs of the University at large and the State of West Virginia.