Nevada System of Higher Education

Fiscal Impacts of Proposed COLA Funding for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025

May 16, 2023
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Assembly Committee on Ways and Means
And Senate Committee on Finance
Subcommittees on K-12/Higher Education/CIP
Attn: Chair Marilyn Dondero Loop
401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

May 4, 2023

Dear Chair Dondero Loop,

On behalf of the Governor, I am writing in support of the Nevada System of Higher Education’s (NSHE) COLA adjustment from 65% of salaries to 80% of salaries as indicated on Page 99 of the closing document for the Joint Senate Committee on Finance and Assembly Committee on Ways and Means meeting held on May 1, 2023. This adjustment would require an additional General Fund amount of $26,215,570 (FY 2024 - $10,614,562, FY2025 - $15,601,008).

Attached please find the back up documentation outlining the calculation for the additional funds.

For any questions, I am available at astephenson@finance.nv.gov. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Amy L. Stephenson
Director
State of Nevada
Governor’s Finance Office
## Nevada System of Higher Education

### State Funded Accounts

#### Cost of 2023 Legislative COLA Proposals

**FY 2024**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Position Type</th>
<th>FY 2024 G01 GF %</th>
<th>FY 2024 Using GF %</th>
<th>FY 2024 10% COLA</th>
<th>FY 2024 Funding</th>
<th>FY 2024 Difference BTW Cost and Funding</th>
<th>FY 2024 Using 80% GF</th>
<th>FY 2024 Funding</th>
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## FY 2025

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<th>FY 2025 10 + 4% COLA</th>
<th>FY 2025 Funding Using GF %</th>
<th>FY 2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding</th>
<th>FY 2025 10 + 4% COLA</th>
<th>FY 2025 Funding Using 80% GF</th>
<th>FY 2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding</th>
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## Nevada System of Higher Education

### Self Supporting, Gift and Grant Accounts

**Estimated Impact of PERS Increase Due to One-Half of Normal Cost**

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### Estimated Impact of PERS Increase Due to One-Half of Normal Cost

- **Self Supporting, Gift and Grant Accounts**
- **Date:** 05/16/23
- **Source:** Supplemental Material, BOR Item 2
- **Page:** 9 of 25
## Nevada System of Higher Education

### FY 2024 and FY 2025

#### Registration Fees - State Operating Budget

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<tr>
<td>TMCC Upper Division</td>
<td>2,155</td>
<td>$132.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TMCC Lower Division</td>
<td>152,928</td>
<td>$83.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNC Upper Division</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>$127.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WNC Lower Division</td>
<td>61,688</td>
<td>$87.13</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| Total                | 1,937,624 | $277,915,827 | $10,627,501 | $288,543,329 | 1,957,461 | $283,888,022 | $15,602,486 | $299,490,508 |
## Executive Summary of Potential Increase to Registration Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Fees - State Operating Budget</th>
<th>FY 2024</th>
<th>FY 2025</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current Fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNR Undergraduate</td>
<td>$176.65</td>
<td>$8.44</td>
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<td>UNR Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNLV Undergraduate</td>
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<td>$8.25</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNLV Graduate</td>
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<td>NSC Undergraduate</td>
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<td>NSC Graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>GBC Upper Division</td>
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<td>CSN Upper Division</td>
<td>$127.40</td>
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<td>CSN Lower Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>TMCC Upper Division</td>
<td>$132.83</td>
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<td>$83.18</td>
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<td>WNC Upper Division</td>
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<td>WNC Lower Division</td>
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<td>$4.16</td>
</tr>
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</table>
University of Nevada, Reno  
Fiscal Impact of Proposed COLA Funding for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025

The additional costs related to COLA are expected to total:

- FY24 – $21.9M
- FY25 – $31.6M

If the state provides funding at the 80% level, UNR will need to identify the following amounts:

- FY24 – $4,387,498
- FY25 – $6,317,997

If the state provides funding only at the reduced amount – 61% for UNR, the University will need to identify the following additional funds:

- FY24 – additional $4,069,146, for a total of $8,456,902
- FY25 – additional $6,116,926, for a total of $12,433,818

The University’s proposed plan to address the shortfalls that would come from the proposed 80% and 61% COLA funding include:

**To address the difference between funding at the approximately 80% and the full amount needed:**

- FY24 – Hold approximately 21 positions vacant and cut 8% operating to make up the expected $4,387,498 shortfall
- FY25 – Hold additional 9 positions vacant and cut additional 1% operating to make up the expected $6,317,997 shortfall

**To address the difference between funding at the approximately 61% to the 80% level:**

- FY24 – Potential increase of $8.41 per credit on registration fee to make up the additional $4,069,404 needed
- FY25 – Potential additional increase of $4.23 per credit on registration fee to make up the additional $6,116,929 needed

**Impacts**

- These actions will have an impact on the quality of services we provide to our students, faculty, and community.
  - These estimates assume that we will have to hold professional and classified positions, both of which are essential to the university’s operations
○ We are analyzing which positions we could postpone hiring with the least amount of impact. However, every position is important to delivering on our mission.

○ We expect that students will have longer wait times to meet with advisors, financial aid counselors, and for other support services.

○ We may not be able to offer as many sections of academic courses, which will negatively affect the ability of students to progress or complete their program of study. We will also likely have fewer course options, constraining the breadth of students’ educational training.

○ There will also be a recommendation to suspend annual performance pay, which is a critical incentive to recruit and retain the best faculty and staff.

○ Cutting operating budgets will jeopardize our funding for library subscriptions, software and computer maintenance agreements, necessary repairs, equipment replacement, and many more.
### University of Nevada Reno COLA Projected Impact

#### State Accounts

**FY2024 - 10%**

| Institution | Position Type | G01 GF% | FY2024 COLA | FY2024 10% Funding Using 80% | FY2024 Difference BTW Cost and Funding | Positions to Eliminate or Held (50% of the shortfall) | Decrease On Operating Budget % (50% of the shortfall)* | FY2024 10% COLA | FY2024 Funding Using GF% | FY2024 Difference BTW Cost and Funding | Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held (50% of the shortfall) | Addl Reduction on Operating Budget % (50% of the shortfall)* | FY2024 10% COLA | FY2024 Funding Using GF% | FY2024 Difference BTW Cost and Funding | Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held (50% of the shortfall) | Addl Reduction on Operating Budget % (50% of the shortfall)* |
|-------------|----------------|---------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| UNR         | Professional   | 61.45%  | 21,937,490  | 17,549,992                 | (4,387,498)                           | (21)                                   | -8%                                             | 21,937,490  | 17,549,992                 | (4,387,498)                           | (21)                                   | -8%                                             | 21,937,490  | 17,549,992                 | (4,387,498)                           | (21)                                   | -8%                                             |
|             | Classified     |         | 17,897,599  | 14,318,079                 | (3,579,520)                           | (14)                                   | -14%                                            | 17,897,599  | 14,318,079                 | (3,579,520)                           | (14)                                   | -14%                                            | 17,897,599  | 14,318,079                 | (3,579,520)                           | (14)                                   | -14%                                            |
|             |                |         | 4,039,891   | 3,231,913                  | (707,978)                             | (6)                                    | -15%                                            | 4,039,891   | 3,231,913                  | (707,978)                             | (6)                                    | -15%                                            | 4,039,891   | 3,231,913                  | (707,978)                             | (6)                                    | -15%                                            |

* Excluding Financial Aid and O&M from the reduction base. Reducing operating will affect Library Subscriptions, Computer Software Maint/Supplies, Building Leases, Education Trainings, Travel, Repairs, and many more.

**FY2025 - additional 4%**

| Institution | Position Type | G01 GF% | FY2025 COLA | FY2025 10+4% Funding Using 80% | FY2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding | Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held (50% of the shortfall) | Addl Reduction on Operating Budget % (50% of the shortfall)* | FY2025 10+4% COLA | FY2025 Funding Using GF% | FY2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding | Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held (50% of the shortfall) | Addl Reduction on Operating Budget % (50% of the shortfall)* |
|-------------|----------------|---------|-------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| UNR         | Professional   | 60.64%  | 31,589,986  | 25,271,989                 | (6,317,997)                           | (9)                                    | -1%                                             | 31,589,986  | 25,271,989                 | (6,317,997)                           | (9)                                    | -1%                                             | 31,589,986  | 25,271,989                 | (6,317,997)                           | (9)                                    | -1%                                             |
|             | Classified     |         | 25,772,543  | 20,618,034                 | (5,154,509)                           | (6)                                    | -14%                                            | 25,772,543  | 20,618,034                 | (5,154,509)                           | (6)                                    | -14%                                            | 25,772,543  | 20,618,034                 | (5,154,509)                           | (6)                                    | -14%                                            |
|             |                |         | 5,817,443   | 4,653,954                  | (1,163,489)                           | (3)                                    | -20%                                            | 5,817,443   | 4,653,954                  | (1,163,489)                           | (3)                                    | -20%                                            | 5,817,443   | 4,653,954                  | (1,163,489)                           | (3)                                    | -20%                                            |

**FY2024 & 2025 ~ 14%**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Position Type</th>
<th>G01 GF%</th>
<th>FY24 (10%) &amp; FY2025 (10+4%) COLA</th>
<th>FY24 &amp; FY2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding</th>
<th>Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held</th>
<th>Addl Reduction on Operating Budget %*</th>
<th>FY24 (10%) &amp; FY2025 (10+4%) COLA</th>
<th>FY24 &amp; FY2025 Difference BTW Cost and Funding</th>
<th>Addl Positions to Eliminate or Held</th>
<th>Addl Reduction on Operating Budget %*</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UNR</td>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>53,527,476</td>
<td>42,821,981</td>
<td>(10,705,495)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
<td>-9%</td>
<td>53,527,476</td>
<td>32,636,755</td>
<td>(20,890,721)</td>
<td>(30)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Classified</td>
<td>43,670,142</td>
<td>34,936,114</td>
<td>(8,734,028)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
<td>-10%</td>
<td>43,670,142</td>
<td>26,626,545</td>
<td>(17,043,597)</td>
<td>(21)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Increase on Student Fees-per Credit Hour for Shortfall BTW GF% and 80%

**Impact**

- **80% Support from State**
- **GF% Support from State**

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05/16/23 Supplemental Material, BOR Item 2
Page 14 of 25
The additional costs related to COLA are expected to total

- FY24 – $31.7M
- FY25 – $45.6M

If the state provides funding at the 80% level, UNLV will need to identify the following funding sources:

- FY24 – $6,337,230
- FY25 – $9,125,611

If the state provides funding only at the approximately 64% level, UNLV will need to identify the following additional funding sources:

- FY24 – additional $5,107,323, for a total of $11,451,374
- FY25 – additional $7,317,241, for a total of $16,489,979

Our proposed plan to address the shortfalls that would come from the proposed 80% and 64% COLA funding include:

**To address the difference between funding at the approximately 80% the full amount needed:**

- FY24 – Hold approximately 75 positions vacant to make up the expected $6,337,230 shortfall
- FY25 – Hold approximately 90 positions vacant to make up the expected $9,125,611 shortfall

**To address the difference between funding at the approximately 64% to the 80% level:**

- FY24 – Hold approximately 60 additional positions vacant (135 total) to make up the additional $5,107,323 needed
- FY25 – Hold approximately 80 positions vacant (170 total) to make up the additional $7,317,241 needed

**Impacts**

- These actions will have an impact on the quality of services we provide to our students, faculty, and community.
  - External benchmarks demonstrate that our institution is staffed at a very lean level, so every vacancy will necessarily have a deleterious impact on the level and quality of services to our students, faculty, and community.
  - These estimates assume that we will have to hold professional and classified positions, both of which are essential to the university’s operations.
  - We are analyzing which positions we could postpone hiring with the least amount of impact. However, every position is important to delivering on our mission.
  - We expect that students will have longer wait times to meet with advisors, financial aid counselors, and for other support services.
  - We may not be able to offer as many sections of academic courses, which will negatively affect the ability of students to progress or complete their program of study. We will also likely have fewer course options, constraining the breadth of students’ educational training.
  - Unfortunately, there will also be an impact on the availability of funds for student financial aid. Among our strategic goals is to increase the financial aid we provide to our students. The financial aid source available for our students is far less than the...
amount needed to successfully support our students. Many students are unable to continue their educational journey due to financial constraints.

- There will also be a suspension of annual performance pay, which is a critical incentive to recruit and retain the best faculty and staff.

We support the Chancellor’s proposal to increase the student registration fee in the next academic year due to the unusual circumstances of higher than usual inflation. We will also likely need to request increases in other student fees as well.
Many of DRI’s administrative faculty are state-supported, and as such, COLA adjustments are funded at least in part by the state.

DRI’s research faculty are self-supporting, with their salaries paid by the grants and contracts that they earn.

A COLA is welcome for both administrative and research faculty, but for research faculty, it is also challenging. The research grant proposals that our faculty will work on next fiscal year were submitted based on their current salaries. A ten percent COLA means a ten percent increase in project costs with no way to increase the funds to pay for that difference.

DRI may need to use indirect cost recovery funds (ICR) to make up for that difference.

ICR funds "overhead" are monies received by the institute in reimbursement for services rendered in support of grants and contracts. Those funds are intended to reinvest in research.

Research reinvestments include:

- Proposal Development
- Research and New Faculty Support Programs
- Faculty Senate and Strategic Initiatives Support
- Institute Project Assignments (IPA) Competition Funding
- Post-Doctoral Student Support
- Academic Teaching Start Up Funding
- Sabbaticals

The fiscal impact on DRI’s self-supporting funds is more than $4.5 million over the biennium.

In addition to the self-supporting challenges discussed above, the following fiscal impacts have been identified for state-supported funding for each of the NSHE provided models.

**General fund model fiscal impact:**

The general fund model provides the least fiscal impact to DRI over the biennium, for a total of about $23,000. Compared to other NSHE institutions, DRI is 98.43% general fund funded over the biennium. DRI will fund this small shortfall using unplanned vacancy savings or cuts to state O&M expenditures. Potentially impacted projects include landscape maintenance, window cleaning, or building sealing.
80% GF model fiscal impact:

This model provides 80% of state general funds for COLA and has a greater fiscal impact to DRI. The potential investment required for DRI using this model is $288,000 or more over the biennium. DRI expects to fund this shortfall using a combination of unplanned vacancy savings, a reduction in operating expenditures and/or a reduction in budgeted research reinvestments in self-supporting funds, as identified above.
For the College of Southern Nevada (CSN), being funded at the general fund amount, 68.1%, will detrimentally impact our ability to serve students. Prior to the 2021 legislative session, the institutions were funded at 80% and had the ability to request funds beyond 80% if justified. In addition, with the COLA amounts that were previously received, e.g. 1%, CSN could generally absorb the 20% gap in funding with only a 1% COLA increase. As an example, in FY23, CSN’s gap was around $280,000 or .18% of our total State Supported Operating Budget. With a COLA appropriation of 10% and an additional 4%, it will be extremely difficult for CSN to absorb a 20% funding gap, let alone a 32% funding gap for COLA.

**IMPACT TO CSN FOR ENROLLMENT LOSSES**

CSN is already working to re-align its budget due to the enrollment loss suffered in the FY22 count year of $16.6 million per year, as well as related registration fee revenue reductions and the need to institutionalize capacity positions. The State has generously given CSN some enrollment funds, but they equate to about 36% of the $16.6 million loss per year. Plans for the enrollment gap currently include moving approximately $14 million per year to our HEERF set aside, HEERF indirect and investment income distributions. As the capacity positions are not included in the legislatively approved budget positions, they are being moved to these designated funds. Other contemplated moves include our Synoptek IT contract, a large portion of utilities and possibly expenses related to security officers. In addition to moving expenses to the designated funds, to meet our budget needs, CSN will need to cut approximately $5 - $5.6 million per year to balance the budget. The plan is to cut operating expenses by approximately $3 million per year and personnel expenses by about $2.6 million per year (or 29 positions).

**IMPACT AT 80% (20% FUNDING GAP)**

For FY24 and FY25, with COLA funded at 80%, CSN will need to self-fund about $2 million and $2.9 million, respectively. This additional expense will require CSN to freeze 23 more positions in FY24 and 26 more positions in FY25. This would bring our total frozen positions to 52 and 55 for FY24 and FY25, respectively. 55 positions are 4.5% of our total full-time workforce.

**IMPACT AT 68.1% (31.9% FUNDING GAP)**

For FY24 and FY25, with COLA funded at 68.1%, CSN will need to self-fund about $3.2 million and $4.6 million, respectively. The difference between the 68.1% and 80% equates to $1.2M and $1.7M. This additional expense will require CSN to freeze 12 more positions in FY24 and 19 more positions in FY25. This would bring our total frozen positions to 64 and 74 for FY24 and FY25, respectively. 74 positions are 6% of our total full-time workforce.
The chart below summarizes the impact at the various levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Budget Shortfall after moving expenditures to Non-state &quot;set aside&quot; funds</th>
<th>FY24</th>
<th>FY25</th>
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<tr>
<td>Operating Reductions needed</td>
<td>$(5,627,725.32)</td>
<td>$(5,074,528.32)</td>
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<td>Personnel Reductions needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Approximate Number of Positions</td>
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<td>29</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Shortfall including gap in funding at 80% COLA funding</th>
<th>FY24</th>
<th>FY25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Reductions needed</td>
<td>$(7,636,619.32)</td>
<td>$(7,967,335.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Reductions needed</td>
<td>$(3,000,000.00)</td>
<td>$(3,000,000.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Number of Positions</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Shortfall including gap in funding at 68.1% COLA funding</th>
<th>FY24</th>
<th>FY25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Reductions needed</td>
<td>$(8,793,674.32)</td>
<td>$(9,688,743.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel Reductions needed</td>
<td>$(3,000,000.00)</td>
<td>$(3,000,000.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Number of Positions</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A reduction in a workforce of this magnitude will significantly impact our departments and the ability to effectively deliver programming and services to our students. The vast majority of CSN’s personnel expenses exist in our instructional, academic support and student support services, and a cut of this size will impact those areas as well as our institutional support and operations and maintenance staff. Cuts to personnel would impact our:

- ability to deliver courses that our students need and want to complete their degrees and transfer to four-year institutions;
- ability to meet our 350:1 mandated student to advisor ratio and ensure students’ persistence in the appropriate classes;
- ability to staff appropriately in the library and in the tutoring departments;
- ability to support our early college and dual enrollment programming; and
- staffing and hours available for other student support services including financial aid, cashiering, psychological services, testing, veterans advising, recruitment, student life and career services.

CSN is currently working through our Budget Alignment Taskforce process with specific solutions to address the enrollment budget gap, the 80% COLA funding gap, and finally the 68% funding gap (if needed), but it is clear that reductions in staffing of the magnitude needed when we have to self-fund 32% of our COLA will impede our performance momentum to include a direct impact on graduation and course completion rates.
Great Basin College
Fiscal Impact of Proposed COLA Funding for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025

FY2024

Total COLA estimate at 10% is $1,460,767
Funding gap at 80% for FY2024 is $292,153
Funding gap at GF% (73.4%) for FY2024 is $388,573
Difference of funding gap between GF% and 80% is $96,240

FY2025

Total COLA estimate at 10% + 4% is $2,103,505
Funding gap at 80% for FY2025 is $420,701
Funding gap at GF% (73.34%) for FY2024 is $560,850
Difference of funding gap between GF% and 80% is $140,149

The proposed high rates of COLA increases for FY2024 and FY2025 put additional strain on GBC’s state operating budget, which has already been reduced by approximately $1M due to a decline in WSCHs during FY2022 as a result of continued low enrollments due multiple factors, including the lingering effects of the pandemic and uncertainty in personal lives.

Options:

A- Reduce operating costs – This is not an option as Great Basin College has already reduced operating budgets due to previous budget reduction (prior to the 2021 required reductions) by 30%. Any further reductions would decimate academic programs and department operating budgets, which some are currently only at $500 per fiscal year. Reductions would limit the ability of full-time academic faculty and part-time instructors to have the materials needed to conduct their classes and provide a successful student experience.

B - Hold positions vacant/hiring freeze - At the high level of proposed COLA increase, this is not a sustainable option. During the normal attrition and recruitment and replacement processes over the course of a year, GBC expects to realize approximately $200,000. Therefore, to cover the funding gap between the GF% and 80% in each of FY2024 ($96,240) and FY2025 ($140,169) the use of the historical vacancy savings from re-filling positions may result in funds to cover this smaller gap.

To cover the funding gap between 80% and full funds needed, Great Basin College would need to address the unfunded COLA shortfall through a process of holding vacant positions unfilled and not recruited for one or more months longer to generate additional vacancy savings. This would include 3-4 Faculty/Professional (3 Academic and 1 Administrative) positions, 2 Classified positions, and 0 temporary/student worker positions. Where needed for the fall semesters, part-time instructors will be hired to cover classes that in the past have been taught by full time faculty. In some instances, we are unable to find qualified part-time instructors in subject matters, therefore leading to some classes not being offered when the students need them for timely completion of their
educational pursuits and proper sequencing of classes. Potentially the over use of part-time instruction has a detrimental effect on the learning of the students, as they may not get the same experiences in classes and labs if they were taught by full-time instructors. The hiring of backfill on a part-time basis does not result in full savings from position vacancies. Position vacancies would be reviewed for possible recruitment for either the spring semesters or the start of the next fiscal year, and therefore, these positions are one-time solutions to the COLA shortfall. In addition, not all classes may be offered, or students are unable to get into classes when they need them to graduate. This can increase their time to graduation and becoming an asset in the workforce. Class sizes are most likely to increase due to the lack of available instructors. Students would be impacted by unfilled administrative and classified positions with reduced services and longer wait times for advising, tutoring, financial aid, and other support services and delayed responses to inquiries.

C - Eliminate positions – GBC has eliminated over 80 positions in the past due to budget reductions and only reinstated about 12 of previously eliminated positions due to continued lack of funding. All remaining positions both vacant and filled are critical to ensuring the success of GBC’s students. If any positions were eliminated to fund the COLA, it would impact academic faculty, student support services and institutional operations. Students would not be able to take the classes they want or need to complete their educational pursuits in a timely manner. Delays and longer time to respond to students inquires and receive services would become the norm in financial aid, advising, library, tutoring and other support services.
Executive Summary

For almost three years, TMCC has held vacant approximately 20 full-time faculty positions and roughly 20 staff positions in other areas of the college for which there is no state funding. During this time, we have relied on soft money, including state and federal grants, Perkins funding, and Capacity dollars to hire roughly 20 temporary faculty on year-to-year contracts – in addition to the 20 vacant positions. Temporary faculty enable us to function from one semester to the next, but they do not enable programs to expand or grow, and we face a continual risk of losing these instructors to full-time, higher-paying, tenure-track jobs elsewhere. As Capacity funding, Corequisite support funds, and an NV Energies grant will sunset this summer, our ability to deliver vital courses necessary for student completion and graduation risks further erosion. Program areas that suffer most include some of the occupations that Nevada most urgently needs to hire, including Nursing, Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology and Computer Programming, and related high-tech fields.

Nursing

In a 2022 white paper entitled “Addressing Nevada’s Nursing Workforce Shortages: A Call to Action,” the study’s authors gave clear evidence of a nursing shortage across Nevada. One of the strategies recommended in the white paper is to expand public funding to increase the capacity of NSHE nursing programs like the one at TMCC, in order to help close the gap on the shortage we are experiencing. The paper also noted the urgent need to address the shortage of faculty to teach Nursing courses and the need to increase the low salaries often associated with those teaching positions. Furthermore:

- Hospitals like Renown & Northern Nevada have made it clear that they rely heavily on registered nurses (RNs) and are still reporting a high number of vacancies that they are struggling to fill
- There is a need for more than 4000 additional RNs just to meet the national population-to-RN average
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the need for registered nurses is expected to grow by 12 percent from 2018 to 2028, compared to 7 percent growth across all occupations

Unfortunately, however, TMCC lost half of its Nursing educators during the pandemic due to the extreme wage differential between teaching and clinical practice. We have six vacant nursing positions for which we are actively recruiting, but our inability to match the salaries offered in the private sector due to budget shortfalls renders it impossible to meet the growing need for nurses in Northern Nevada. To be fully functional even before the Covid 19 pandemic, it took 12 faculty and part-timers to bring on 40 students per cohort. Without fully funded COLAs and significant budget restoration, TMCC will continue to face difficulty recruiting the skilled Nursing instructors necessary to provide for this critical workforce sector.

Advanced Manufacturing

Manufacturing makes up $8.37B of Nevada’s economic activity and continues to grow. In a survey conducted by Manufacture Nevada, 73 percent of Small and Medium Manufacturers indicated that they will need to hire additional workers to meet the needs of smart manufacturing. Additionally:

- 68 percent of manufacturers would need to increase their workforce by 8 percent
- Additional training would be required for both new and existing employees
- Less than one-in-five employees are trained to operate smart manufacturing technologies
- The majority of survey respondents (62 percent) believe that current employees could adapt if they had additional training
For this reason, the Economic Development Association of Western Nevada (EDAWN) has named advanced manufacturing one of their key industries. With companies like Tesla building new facilities that will require 3,000 more employees, it is imperative that we as the community college be ready to provide the training necessary to have a skilled workforce. Currently, we have just two full-time faculty members in the area of advanced manufacturing, however, their salaries do not meet industry standards, and we risk losing them to area firms. In recent years, we have seen several faculty members in this area of study come and go due to the low wage. In order to retain our existing instructors, we need to offer competitive and equitable salaries. Our current faculty are invested in meeting the needs of our two main workforce partners, Panasonic and Tesla, and with Tesla in need of expanding their training opportunities, it will be imperative to do our best to keep our faculty on board. Without fully funded COLAs, we will continue to struggle to hire in this arena.

**Information Technology and Computer Science**

Information Technology continues to be a critical field for US employers, including those in Northern Nevada. However, the faculty salaries offered by TMCC cannot begin to recruit the talent necessary to teach in such vital areas as Computer Science, and in programming languages in particular. Since 2021, EDAWN has thrown its support behind our Tech Careers Fast-Track program, but this program struggles to recruit FT faculty who can teach key programming languages because these workers can fetch twice the wage or more in the private sector. Our non-credit programs rely on third-party course providers in order to deliver current training, but to do this on the for-credit side is very challenging. Without fully funded COLAs and significant budget restoration, TMCC will continue to face difficulty recruiting the skilled instructors necessary to provide for this critical workforce sector.

**Highlight Summary**

TMCC is no longer able to do more with less. If COLAs are not fully funded and if enrollment restoration does not occur, and if workforce investment monies are not allocated, student fees will need to be increased and program reductions are likely to ensue. In many areas of study, TMCC only has one or two full-time faculty members on staff, and that problem will be exacerbated if we need to leave instructional positions vacant.

Examples of critically challenged programs include Advanced Manufacturing, Diesel Technology, Welding, Logistics, HVAC, Machining, Automotive, and Data Science. TMCC gives students the opportunity to pursue stackable credentials in many of these Career and Technical Education fields, but staffing levels are insufficient to meet industry demand. EDAWN has named distribution, logistics, e-commerce, technology and advanced manufacturing as some of their key industries. With many companies moving into the Northern Nevada area and expanding/growing yearly, it is imperative that we as the community college be ready to provide the necessary training to have a skilled workforce to support their employment & infrastructure needs. We need the state of Nevada to invest in our students so that they can access high-quality workforce training and health career preparation.

**Fee Increase Proposal**

If the COLA is not fully funded by the legislature, TMCC proposes a $17 per credit, per student, fee increase in order to staff our vacant positions. This is based on our 11,000 student headcount, who are enrolled at an average of 9 credits per semester.
Western Nevada College
Fiscal Impact of Proposed COLA Funding for Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025

FY2024

Total COLA estimate at 10% is $1,296,779
Funding gap at 80% for FY2024 is $259,356
Funding gap at General Fund (GF)% (75.66%) for FY2024 is $315,589
Difference of funding gap between GF% and 80% is $56,233

FY2025

Total COLA estimate at 10% + 4% is $1,867,362
Funding gap at 80% for FY2025 is $373,472
Funding gap at GF% (75.72%) for FY2024 is $453,376
Difference of funding gap between GF% and 80% is $79,904

The proposed high rates of COLA increase for FY2024 and FY2025 put additional strain on WNC's state operating budget.

Options:

A - Reduce operating costs – This is not an option as WNC has already reduced operating budgets due to previous budget reductions. Any further reductions would decimate academic programs and department operating budgets. Reductions would limit the ability of full-time academic faculty and part-time instructors to have the materials needed to conduct their classes and provide a successful student experience.

B - Hold positions vacant/hiring freeze - WNC will have to hold 4-5 positions vacant at any given time, which will have an impact on students, current faculty and staff through reduced services and class offerings. As we don’t know what positions will be vacated due to natural attrition, the impacts are expected to be across the board. WNC has a small number of staff at the college overall with very little redundancy, meaning that any vacancy affects services to students and employees more directly. Through the normal attrition process, WNC estimates that $300,000 will be realized.

To cover the funding gap between the GF% and 80% in each of FY2024 and FY2025, Western Nevada College would need to address the unfunded COLA shortfall through a process of holding additional positions vacant and not recruiting for one or more months longer to generate additional vacancy savings. This likely would include 2-3 faculty/professional positions.

C - Eliminate positions – This is not an option as WNC has already reduced positions in the past due to budget reductions. Every higher education institution requires critical positions in offices across the campus to provide basic operations. All positions are critical to ensure the success of WNC’s students. Further cuts to positions impact academic faculty, student support services and institutional operations. Students would not be able to take the courses they need to complete their programs of study due to reduced services in admissions, advising, financial aid, library services, tutoring and other areas.