SUMMARY

Since 2014, administrative units across campus have made, and continue to make, progress on reducing operational costs; and while changes could improve effectiveness, significant cost savings are not likely to be realized. The largest administrative cost is personnel, and since 2014, administrative positions across campus have been lost due to cuts in state budgets, leaving most units minimally-staffed or under-staffed for the work that needs to be performed. Shared services could improve services by redistributing workloads, matching tasks with staff qualifications, and co-locating staff with similar duties where they can share and develop knowledge and expertise. Centralization of services is not widely supported as it is perceived to reduce the quality of customer service.

Recommendations

1. Explore opportunities for units to share services, potentially through a distributed model where personnel with specific expertise report to a central office but are deployed to units where the work is performed.
2. Explore moving SHRA personnel actions from the divisional offices to Human Resources.
3. Leverage remote work.
4. Reduce excess (duplicated/replicated) technologies across the campus community by formally assessing authorization for ALL University technology (software and hardware) procurement requests.
5. Continue to vet and hone recommendations of the Distributed IT Report.
6. Explore consolidation of the computer refresh programs under ITCS for efficiency in compilation, ordering, and installation of replacement computers.
7. Explore consolidation of the parking and transit offices.
8. Facilitate access to operational materials on the Materials website.
9. Convene a workgroup to streamline processes and procedures related to hiring graduate, teaching, and research assistants.

**OPERATIONAL COSTS SUBGROUP**

1. **MEMBERSHIP**

   Stephanie Coleman, Interim Vice Chancellor
   Hector Molina, Deputy Chief Information Officer, Chair-Elect Staff Senate
   Paul Schwager, Dean of the College of Business
   Wendy Sergeant, Assistant Vice Chancellor
   Gary Vanderpool, Executive Associate Vice Chancellor

2. **CHARGE**

   The Fiscal Sustainability Coordinating Committee Operational Costs Subgroup was charged with drafting recommendations regarding efficiency and effectiveness of processes, procedures, and operations.

3. **ACTIONS**

   - The Operational Costs Subgroup consulted with the Education Advisory Board (EAB) to gain outside perspectives on potential cost savings in operations. EAB provided a copy of a report, Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiatives, that analyzed findings from 21 colleges and universities that engaged external consultants to review operations for potential cost savings. The Operational Costs Subgroup reviewed that report for insights into potential cost savings in operations at ECU.

   - The Fiscal Sustainability Coordinating Committee established an online suggestion box to receive input from campus on ways to increase revenues, reduce costs, and increase effectiveness of operations at ECU. Most of the suggestions aligned with recommendations from the 2014 Fiscal Sustainability Initiative. The Operational Costs Subgroup compared the new suggestions with the recommendations from 2014, which yielded 41 unique suggestions that were evaluated. The Committee consolidated and prioritized the suggestions for further consideration and found that most of the prioritized suggestions closely related to recommendations from the 2014 Fiscal Sustainability Report. Each division was subsequently asked to report progress and ongoing activities related to the OC1-OC15 recommendations from the 2014 Report. Divisions were asked to address the following questions.

   1) What, if anything, has your division already done to address this recommendation? Have the changes that were made improved the quality of service? Is there anything that you would have done differently?
   2) What are your next steps?
   3) How can our sub-group help to facilitate in moving any of these recommendations forward?
BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The EAB report, Efficiency and Effectiveness Initiatives, looked at engagement of business consultants by 21 colleges and universities, and presented the following conclusions.

“The vast majority of identified savings at each institution came from the same five administrative functions and one opportunity (organizational redesign) that cuts across all central administration. Dollar estimates for these areas were also relatively consistent across campuses. Moreover, consultants offered essentially the same set of tactics to achieve these savings. For instance, nearly all final reports contained recommendations to automate HR processes, consolidate preferred vendor contracts, centralize particular IT services, and retrofit equipment to reduce energy consumption.” By addressing these five issues, the colleges and universities “reduced costs by approximately 2% of their total operating budget. Negligible savings were derived from reduction of operational costs in other areas.”

ECU’s state operating appropriations in 2020 was $310 million, of which 66% was expended for salaries and benefits, leaving $105 million for non-personnel operating costs. A 2% savings would yield approximately $2 million annually. A $2 million savings out of a total budget of $310 million would represent a 0.6% savings, but the savings would be less for ECU due to past and ongoing initiatives to reduce energy consumption and negotiate preferred vendor contracts. Automation of HR processes could lead to savings and should be investigated, and ITCS is currently engaged in centralization of IT services, but the focus is more on security than on cost savings.

The 2014 Fiscal Sustainability Report contained fifteen recommendations to address operational costs. Divisions reported to the Subgroup on responses to those recommendations, areas identified for further improvements, and future plans. There is little support for shared services due to concern that in the past, service to units declined with centralization.

OC1. Numerous common operational tasks and workflows have large volumes in which individual operating units each perform a relatively small number of these tasks independently, which contributes to operational redundancy and inefficiency. Examples may include travel, electronic personnel action forms (EPAF), purchasing, grants and contracts, and budgeting. ECU will evaluate and implement consolidation and centralization of these activities at the university- or college-level. Staff the centralized activities with current staff from across the university. As shared services operations are implemented, examine remaining staff allocations across campus and adjust accordingly. Over 3-5 years and through attrition, reduce some type of staffing levels by 20%. Provide temporary funds to appropriately renovate physical space to provide for the centralization of selected services.

Division of Academic Affairs

• The colleges/units in AA Division have eliminated personnel over the last several years, and duties have been redistributed among existing personnel - reasons for this include streamlining processes, new software that created efficiencies in processes, budget cuts, and changes in administrative structure.
• Next Steps include continuing to evaluate duties of personnel and process review – allow for reclassification of positions (when UNC SO permits). Most colleges/units are already lean in personnel, so further consolidation would be difficult to manage.
• UCFS Subgroup can aid by continuing to provide trainings by subject matter experts to improve knowledge, invest in appropriate methods to streamline processes (new software, prioritize projects that will help to create efficiencies).

Division of Health Sciences
• While the colleges/schools in HSD do have staff to perform tasks that are consistent with other units on campus, these tasks/responsibilities do not make up the entirety of their duties, and there does not appear to be waste associated with these positions.
• Both Human Resources and Administration and Finance have lost key positions, and we find very little, if any, redundancies in those areas.
• Chrome River implementation apparently centralizes some aspects of travel; elements that need to be at the local level remains.

REDE
• Activity codes were set up in Banner to track recovered F&A funds, and ECUBIC reports were developed to provide investigators and unit information on F&A fund balances down to the level of the investigator. This has reduced the workload on staff who no longer need to generate the reports and maintain shadow databases. The process also automated distribution of F&A in BSOM, which previously distributed F&A manually.
• Each year, the Office of Research Administration is asked to generate numerous reports on sponsored programs activities. REDE reorganized and dedicated three people as a data analytics group with the charge of implementing and maintaining enterprise research systems and developing tools that allow units to run the reports they require on a regular basis. The unit has also developed enterprise databases for annual reports. The stored data are used for self-studies required for SACS assessment and 5-year program reviews, reducing the work required to prepare for the reviews. Working with IPAR, REDE also streamlined the annual reporting process so that the office annual reports, SACS assessment reports, and strategic plan reports were combined into one annual report that satisfied all three requirements.
• Award setup in the Office of Research Administration (ORA) was conducted by the individual financial analysts, resulting in inconsistent data entry and problems in reconciling accounts. An administrative assistant supervised by a financial analyst has been dedicated to award setup which has reduced the number of errors and improved reconciliation. The workload on the financial analysts has not decreased appreciably because they are still manually compiling the information that the administrative assistant keys into Banner. With the implementation of the financial module in eTRACS which is expected in 2022, the data should flow directly from eTRACS into Banner, reducing the work on the analysts. Implementation of the financial module in eTRACS should continue to be a priority.
• Historically, each financial analyst in ORA reviewed grant funds for unallowable charges. Compliance monitoring reports have been developed that flag questionable transactions and alert the financial analyst who then investigates. The aim is to reduce the manual review and workload as well as providing an auditable record of compliance monitoring.
• Close-out of grant funds is often delayed by charges to the funds after the project period. The funds are re-opened to clear the charges. To close the account, the financial analyst must get an alternative fund to cover the charges which adds work to staff and delays final billing on the grants. In some cases, this can lead to penalties due to late reporting to the sponsor. The process has been revised to require a default FOAP at the time the award is set up. Charges that post after the project period are redirected to the default FOAP, allowing the financial analysts
to close the fund and issue a final report to the sponsor, ensuring that revenue is received in a timely manner.

- An internal audit of research participant payments led to the implementation of Greenphire. A separate system was implemented to approve and track participant payments for which the use of Greenphire is not feasible or practical. Both systems have been implemented, are functioning well, and have streamlined tracking and reporting participant payments. Additional benefit can be achieved by linking the Greenphire exception system with approval and ordering of gift cards and certificates through Materials Management, which would reduce the work associated with separate systems. Meetings are scheduled to explore linking the approval and acquisition processes.

**Student Affairs**

- The Student Affairs Business Administration Unit (SABAU) was created in 2015 to centralize several HR and finance functions. A vacant SHRA position in Student Affairs Marketing was reassigned to the SABAU to assist with the consolidation of various HR and Finance duties. SABAU consolidated the processing of all permanent and temporary SHRA and EHRA actions such as employee hires and separations, submitting position descriptions, EPAFs/Hiring Proposals, compensation forms and Termination Forms that were previously handled by the individual departments and then reviewed by the division office. The SABAU submits all Position Change Forms (PCFs) for EHRA and SHRA positions instead of departments submitting and division having to review and approve. With the implementation of the Kronos, the SABAU serves as the Kronos superadmin (leave clerk) for several units across the division such as Student Media, Student Affairs Development, Counseling Center, Student Affairs Assessment, Research and Planning, Student Affairs Marketing, and Student Affairs Technology that was previously covered by one person in each department. The approval of finance action such as direct payment forms, PORT orders, travel, journal vouchers, etc., was split between two positions (executive director of SABAU and A&F accountant). All approvals moved to the executive director, allowing the reassignment of duties to the accountant for A&F needs. This change gave the departments and others across the university one contact person for all funding sources under Student Affairs. In 2016, the business services coordinator position for Career Services was moved under the SABAU and began providing finance, student hires, and graduate assistant duties for Student Transitions and Student Veteran Services. Over time, Student Affairs has reduced the administrative support level positions (administrative support associates, administrative support specialist, and executive assistants) from 59 positions to 49 positions, which is around a 17% reduction of administrative-type positions.

- Student Centers are charged with the administrative and finance functions for two other departments (Student Engagement and Intercultural Affairs) and have reduced their staff by 15% and all physical space has been renovated.

- Over the last year, Student Involvement and Leadership (SIL) has begun reviewing their administrative and finance functions to identify redundancies and opportunities for efficiencies across processes. This will continue as we move forward into 2021-22.

- Campus Living has developed some position overlap in the finance area to manage the number of positions while maintaining needed positions for audit and control of financial and HR functions. This has included centralizing some of the financial processing/budget management/HR functions across Housing Operations, Residence Life, Transit, and Dining.
Administration and Finance

• Campus Safety & Auxiliary services has initiated and tested a centralized (service center) approach to administrative and financial functions, as well as security technology/IT functions. Our next steps will be full implementation of shared service center approach for Campus Safety & Auxiliary services.

• Budget and Athletics Fiscal Affairs eliminated an accountant position after streamlining processes.

• HR conducted an HR Hiring Practice Business Process Review in advance of the People Admin upgrade.

OC2. Examine consolidation of grant and contract administration across colleges/departments with low grant and contract volume.

Division of Academic Affairs

• The creation of the East/West Grant Hubs in AA has reduced personnel & streamlined processes in some units. Some colleges are not supported enough & need more staff.

• Next steps include further discussion on the report that REDE conducted on the grant hubs.

• Division of Health Sciences

• Two research administration hubs have been established, which has improved grants pre- and post-award administration.

• BSOM is in the process of developing a research administration hub.

• In the CON/CAHS hub, one ADR serves both colleges, thereby, reducing the number of administrators.

REDE

• Four research administration hubs have been established across campus and a fifth is being implemented in BSOM, and discussions are underway with the Coastal Studies Institute to ensure access to services. Two or more colleges share staff within a hub, thereby reducing the staffing requirements at the college level and ensuring that all colleges, regardless of size or funding level, have access to qualified support staff without having dedicated staff within their colleges. The implementation has increased the quality of grant proposals, reduced the errors that need to be corrected at the central level, and contributed to increased grants and contracts revenue.

OC3. Review and, as appropriate, implement efficiencies in operational and administrative components of Human Resources among Academic Affairs, Health Sciences, and central Human Resources offices. Review should be completed within the next six months, with applicable implementation over the following year.

Division of Academic Affairs

• AA Division Office centralized budget management for state funds; AA Division Office requires EPAFs for personnel actions to originate at the college level, not the unit/dept level when applicable; the AA Division Office also eliminated multiple appointment letters and now has one letter of appointment from the Provost issued by the AA Division Office - this has also reduced institutional risk; AA Division Office requires division-level electronic-review of the salary pre-approval forms to ensure all guidelines are met prior to routing for signatures. AA Division
Office created a Sharepoint site that contains a wealth of information for the units on various personnel actions; AA created a shared drive for units to pass along personnel information electronically (when applicable).

- Next steps includes continuing review of processes to create efficiencies when possible.

**Division of Health Sciences**

- Because of significant differences in HR functions, particularly in clinical areas, reorganization of HR to a centralized model proved ineffective and inefficient in terms of streamlining and centralizing processes. The division intends to review HSD Human Resources to identify changes needed in structure and resource allocation.

- Health Sciences Human Resources (HSHR) maintained a SharePoint site for nearly ten years which provided a library of resources for department chairs, deans, and HR representatives including templates for contracts, salary tables, policies, ECU Faculty Manual links, personnel due date, guidelines, etc. In January 2021, HRHS launched a shared drive model. End-user feedback has been very positive.

- Prior to the pandemic, HSHR piloted the use of DocuSign for employment contracts, subsequent fixed-term contracts, reappointments, tenure notification, etc. Using DocuSign for employment contracts has significantly increased efficiency and reduced cost of copying. The time saved by no longer needing original signatures is difficult to measure. According to DocuSign tracking, HSHR has submitted over 2,000 personnel actions successfully in DocuSign during the period of March 2020 – May 2021, contributing to the saving of 68,000 gallons of water; 23,000 pounds of wood, eliminating 3,700 pounds of waste, and reducing carbon by 54,000 pounds. This information is provided by DocuSign tracking for ECU’s total savings campus-wide, not specific to HSHR.

- As mentioned previously, the FedEx and shipping costs for contracts and EHRA personnel actions in the Division of Health Sciences has been eliminated. Assuming a 25% corporate discount, a FedEx envelope not exceeding one pound for overnight next morning delivery is $49.50. With an estimated 157 new hire offers in Health Sciences for March 2020 – August 2021, the shipping cost savings is estimated at $7,772.

- In addition to reduced shipping costs, the paper costs have been greatly reduced.

- The pandemic forced the need to have an electronic PAD. The entire academic campus benefited from the reduced labor costs, reduced use of paper and printing costs by having an electronic PAD. The BSOM requires four copies of the PAD for the BSOM Personnel and Tenure schoolwide review. A savings of over $2,000 per year (estimated 12 P&T actions in BSOM per year times $191 per employee cost reported by Emergence Medicine for producing four PADS.)

- Xtender was initiated five years ago to allow for digital processing of personnel files. Digitizing the personnel files allows for access to the personnel file while teleworking. This allows for extensive savings in labor costs and increased efficiency.

- HSHR eliminated a half permanent file clerk position, saving annual salary costs of $15,000. This position number was 950578.

- The salary recovery position was eliminated and replaced by a full time Human Resources assistant. The salary recovery position had a salary of $43,054; the Human Resources assistant position has a salary of $38,438. This is an additional savings of $4,616.

**Administration and Finance**

- HR conducted an HR Hiring Practice Business Process Review in advance of the People Admin upgrade to streamline processes.
OC4. Review the appropriate levels of central and distributed IT positions and workload with goals of staffing at levels appropriate to fulfilling university priorities and maintaining service levels.

- The Distributed IT Final Report Recommendations concluded that the role of server administration and network administration should be centralized, where operationally feasible, using a risk-based approach, prioritizing servers that store, process, or allow access to sensitive and confidential information (level 3 and 4, as defined in the University’s Data Classification Standard) with certain exceptions (academic or research use). The DIT Work Group also recommended that a team of subject-matter experts be convened to conduct the following:
  
  o Inventory all networking and server equipment  
  o Assess the risk of the equipment  
  o Develop implementation plans for centralizing the administration role of these assets

- A kickoff meeting has been held with the subject-matter experts and the appropriate IT directors have been asked to work with their distributed IT point of contacts to 1) inventory all equipment, 2) assess the risk of the equipment, and 3) develop implementation plans (or exception requests) for centralizing the administration role. The server inventories have all been gathered, the networking inventory is still being gathered from CET, and the risk for all equipment (networking and server) is still being assessed. This work has slowed as a result of our OSA IT Audit which has taken up the majority of ITCS time. As we resolve our OSA IT Audit issues, our focus will be back on the DIT Recommendations and follow-up, which should happen in the July-August timeframe.

- The Distributed IT Final Report Recommendation pertaining to desktop administration stated that desktop administration should continue in a shared service model except for units that routinely store, access, and process confidential information (level 4, and some level 3) that require greater controls. ITCS should develop standards regarding inventory, imaging, and software installation for other units, and monitor compliance with the standard(s). The DIT Work Group also recommended that a team of subject-matter experts be convened to conduct the following:
  
  o Ensure DIT desktop administrators are compliant with ISO 27002 and all relevant IT controls related to desktop management  
  o Document desktop administrator access within the department and identify which departments access level 3 and 4 data

- A kickoff meeting has been held with the subject-matter experts and the deputy CIO. The group is reviewing the relevant IT controls and developing action plans to ensure compliance. The group is also actively reviewing department access for desktop administrators. This work has slowed as a result of our OSA IT Audit which has taken up the majority of ITCS time. As we resolve our OSA IT Audit issues, our focus will be back on the DIT Recommendations and follow-up, which should happen in the July-August timeframe.
  
  o Our current infrastructure issues outlined above are not specifically personnel related, but our current organizational structure for IT infrastructure management is insufficient to properly manage our servers and network in an efficient, secure, compliant manner.
• As a follow-up to the DIT Recommendations, we will compile implementation plans for ITCS to centralize server and network administration, which may include a recommendation to centralize some existing DIT staff members.

Division of Academic Affairs
• There has been some reduction of IT positions over time within the colleges.
• Next steps include waiting on the Distributed IT report from the CIO.

Division of Health Sciences
• The HSD, particularly the College of Nursing, has invested significant resources in building a local IT staff and utilizes them extensively. There are unique needs for simulation lab, virtual clinics, telehealth, electronic health record, Laupus Library that require distributed IT resources. There is a fundamental difference between IT and Informatics. IT involves the hardware, operating systems, and networks for systems, while informatics involves the discipline-specific software that serve the needs of the SoDM. The SoDM has shared governance with ITCS of all IT with an emphasis on the data security of HIPAA data. The informatics processes for clinical and educational software include appropriate staffing for the configurations, implementation, training, and monitoring. There are specifically trained informatics experts for each critical system with redundancy.

Student Affairs
• Campus Living created a central position to manage the servers and IT support of systems across Housing Operations (housing management software, electronic key systems), Transit (NextBus), and Dining. This position works with the Student Affairs Technology group as well.
• Campus Living has ended student staff support (4-5 student part-time positions) of the student residential networking by working with ITCS to simplify the onboarding system for the wired and WIFI connections. The lower need for support is now handled by ITCS via the Networking Team, and the Pirate Techs – student support. The director of Housing Operations now focuses on a liaison role with ITCS on this support instead of hands-on work and management of the student workers.
• Student Affairs had representation on the Distributed IT workgroup that worked throughout 2020 to make recommendations to the Chancellor.
• Implement any relevant actions from recommendations from the Distributed IT workgroup.

Administration and Finance
• Distributed IT Work Group recommended centralizing server and network administration to ITCS. We are currently assessing centralization and developing a plan.

OCS. Evaluate the combination of the operational and administrative components of undergraduate and graduate admissions while providing appropriate levels of service.

Division of Academic Affairs
• Increase collaboration between graduate and undergraduate admissions, including Global Affairs, by implementing a new CRM program. This will improve efficiencies and reduce the total cost of CRM investment over the next several years. However, it is NOT recommended to combine UNDERGRADUATE /GRADUATE admissions offices as they are so vastly different in the admissions process, and prospective students could suffer a loss of customer service.
Next steps could include aligning data fields and operational practices between UNDERGRADUATE /GRADUATE admissions when implementing Target X. Determine if marketing staff has the bandwidth to dedicate resources for admission-specific communication plan development and periodic refresh.

UCFS can assist by finding ways to reduce obstacles often experienced by applicants to graduate programs and implement more automated workflows.

Division of Health Sciences
- Undergraduate and graduate admissions are quite different requirements, and needs of students are different as well. By definition, areas of undergraduate and graduate admission need to be decentralized. There is a separate ADDSAS process for the dental school.

OC6. Study the allocation of administrative staff across academic units for the possibility to consolidate and share staff support, particularly across departments. Departmental workload and staffing needs are materially different than in the past.

Division of Academic Affairs
- Similar responses given for OC1

Division of Health Sciences
- Administrative support positions are closely evaluated as turnover occurs and positions have been eliminated if it is feasible to distribute duties to others. In many cases, traditional administrative support (calendar management, phones, etc.) have been absorbed by those in higher level positions. Communications has been consolidated which some schools feel has resulted in diminished internal communications.

REDE
- In some research administration hubs, financial transactions for grants and contracts that are typically handled by department personnel are handled by hub personnel. This reduces the need for staffing in each of the departments, increases compliance with federal regulations, and improves service to the investigators. However, in most units, there is little sharing of research administrators at the department level, but there is great opportunity to do so, particularly in HCAS and BSOM, our largest research schools. The Committee could restate this recommendation with language to “investigate and act on opportunities for departments to share personnel with specific expertise in critical functions, including but not limited to grants administration, accounting, and personnel.”
- In addition to staff sharing, REDE has developed a PI portal that allows investigators to access their financial grants records without using Banner. This reduces the need for an administrative assistant producing separate monthly reports for the investigator once they learn the system.

Student Affairs
- The Central Reservations Office became centralized in 2014 to reduce administrative functions across the campus, especially with academic units. Also, SIL has reduced administrative support positions by 30%. In 2020, SIL completed a reorganization, combining Student Activities and Organizations with Greek Life to make Student Engagement, and eliminated one administrative function.
• Student Veteran Services administrative staff member assists the Office of Student Transitions (OST) during orientation and other large in-person events. This is a cost-saving measure as OST is not required to hire additional student workers. This staff person also frequently aids with transfer student events and male student success events, which also prevents additional hiring.
• The administrative assessment within the SA Assessment, Research & Planning Office (SAARP) was reviewed after the position was vacated due to a staff retirement in 2017. While the position remains as SHRA, the position was reclassified to become a University Program Associate in 2018 given the need for different skillsets to achieve a changing portfolio of unit responsibilities, with less reliance on office administration support.

Administration and Finance
• ITCS is not replacing the CIO administrative assistant.

OC7. Examine academic support services offices (e.g., Office of Faculty Excellence, student support services, Financial Aid, Admissions, etc.) to determine if any functions can be eliminated, streamlined, or consolidated.

Division of Academic Affairs
• Due to changes in administrative structure, personnel and efficiencies in operations have been streamlined.
• UCFS can aid by advocating for allocation of additional advisor positions for online and transfer students.

Division of Health Sciences
• Recent changes to Financial Aid support for students was based on LCME recommendation. Having student services available to all HSD students in a central location is an effective method to ensure that HSD students have access to services. There was an effort to review specific student services across the division to ensure consistency where applicable. Student Services at the SoDM have had a recent change in personnel and types of services offered with the addition of the Financial Wellness Hub and the Office of Financial Aid Services on the Health Science Campus; the replacement of a full-time EHRA-NF director position has been reduced to a part time position for the SoDM. These changes have been approved and the process of hiring an individual is in the beginning phases. No determination can yet be made as to how the status and quality of service has differed based on these changes. The SoDM has also experienced a reduction in student services through attrition of our Learning Specialist. Some of the responsibilities of this position were shifted to the SoDM director of Academic Success. We have decided to hold and further evaluate the need for replacing this position in the Student Affairs Office as we gauge the quality, satisfaction, and volume of the services provided.

OC8. Evaluate additional consolidation and coordination of administrative and operational functions across related ECU Advancement entities (ECU Foundation, Pirate Club, Health Sciences Foundation, and Alumni Association).

Division of Academic Affairs
• College advancement positions have been reduced and centralized.
Division of Health Sciences

- The ECU Medical & Health Sciences Foundation is coordinating very well with University Advancement, and further consolidation is unnecessary; there is no need, from a Health Sciences' perspective, to move any QC8 recommendation forward. Most donors who give to our foundation have a specific interest in improving the health of citizens and supporting the need for a healthcare workforce. Our donors have relationships within the schools/colleges primarily, (and the profession) as opposed to ECU at large. There may be some functions that could be shared.

Advancement

- University Advancement provides most shared services to the four affiliated foundations. This includes Annual Giving, Corporate & Foundation Relations, Planned Giving, Advancement Services (IT). Pirate Club is mostly separate though. More can be done, especially with Financial Services. We are currently in the middle of a merge of databases.

- The four foundations focus on their independence. Maintaining four independent structures is wasteful.

Administration and Finance

- All the foundations still have separate staff. There was no consolidation; however, two positions were eliminated by changing the reporting of all financial operations of the Foundations to different people. Prior to April 2018, Financial Services had combined oversight for all Foundation activity. This move created compression, and if the Foundations consolidate financial operations in the future, a new management level position will need to be included in the structure.

OC9. Examine business processes to increase transition to paperless workflow including

- Online processes for signatures (bills, journal entries, direct payments, etc.)
- Invoicing and bill payments
- Increased ProCard usage
- Use of electronic documents across the university including in program reviews, the tenure process including PADs, the graduate and undergraduate admissions process, course transfer and equivalency process, graduate assistant contracts, student records, personnel records, documents distributed at meetings, etc.

Division of Academic Affairs

- Increased usage of ProCard, increased use of MS Teams, Chrome River, E-PAD process, shared drives for personnel actions, SharePoint sites. Eliminated student paper applications and receiving transcripts for high school and college students electronically in the admissions process; increased email/text messages/phone calls to prospective students

Division of Health Sciences

- Significant advancements have been made - especially over the COVID-19 pandemic. Very few functions remain that cannot be done paperless.

- Insurance claims processing is now being performed electronically (not yet 100%)
- Bank processes are being digitized (some lock box procedures still requires printing)
- Chrome River has digitized travel and ProCard
• Tenure PADS are now electronic in Microsoft Teams
• Moving towards “Advancement in Title” portfolios going electronic
• Laupus is a model for electronic FT faculty portfolios and uses electronic documents for personnel records and meetings. The admin office engaged in a two-year transition to using paperless workflows in 2016-2018
• Number of employees with Procards is being reduced

Chancellor’s Division
• The Office of Internal Audit implemented an audit management system which has allowed us to transition from paper audit files to electronic workpapers and workflows for review and approval of audit work. The system also has modules which have made the risk assessment and audit follow-up processes more efficient. The Chief of Staff Office prefers to pay all bills via ProCard rather than PORT, when applicable. The office has also implemented the use of DocuSign services that allow for digital transmission of signed documents, rather than printing, signing, scanning, then emailing.
• We will continue to use the system and refine the way we use it for all aspects of our office’s mission. The Chief of Staff office will continue to use ProCard as the university makes it more allowable.

REDE
• REDE, Administration & Finance, and Internal Audit have worked together to transition from manual billing for grants and contracts to utilization of the billing module within Banner. This has streamlined the billing process and ensured reconciliation of accounts receivables. The next phase is to link the clinical trials management system to Banner which will allow automation and reconciliation of clinical trials billing.
• The pre-award module in eTRACS was implemented as a replacement for RAMSeS, which was being discontinued by the UNC System Office. The financial tracking module in eTRACS is planned for implementation in FY22, which will automate award setup in Banner, greatly reducing the manual keying that is currently required.

Student Affairs
• The Office of Student Transitions has increased the usage of the ProCard. The orientation assistant hiring process has been moved to an online format which eliminates the printing of application packets and reference forms for 70+ applicants per year.
• Student Involvement and Leadership eliminated paper forms and processes by using software options – examples include electronic tickets with Paciolan, added Engage (was OrgSync) for paperless registrations, voting, and community service. CRW added Fusion to eliminate registration forms and receipts, and Student Engagement (Greek Life in 2019) made all grade checks and FERPA waivers paperless through Engage.
• The SA Business Affairs Unit (SABAU) has been approving journal vouchers for several years with electronic approvals once established by Financial Services. With COVID, the SABAU signs all financial documents such as direct payment forms, contracts, sponsorship agreements, and contractual services payment request forms using electronic signature and email approvals. HR compensation forms are also signed electronically and routed via email. The SABAU has implemented DocuSign for EHRA appointment letters and documents instead of mailing hard copies saving paper and postage.
• Campus Living, Campus Dining & Transit have increased the use of ProCard across the department. They have also moved to electronic documents in the conduct, student assignments, and finance areas. They also have used shared documents (Teams, Google Docs) and services like DocuSign to decrease paper use and streamline processes when possible. Some key examples: the assignments area is no longer making paper files for each student; this information is stored in CBORD. The department transitioned to Kronos in this timeframe for payroll; on-call is maintained fully electronically, and student employment schedules are managed through When-to-Work.

• With the implementation of Freshbooks and 25Live pricing in Campus Recreation & Wellness and the CRO, the SA Technology Services has successfully reduced printing in this area. Invoices are sent via e-mail through Freshbooks, eliminating the need for printing.

• Student Media/Pirate Media 1 has reduced the frequency of printing The East Carolinian from two days a week to one day a week, which still provides students experience in working as a team to produce a printed newspaper. The Hook magazine printing frequency also was reduced from twice a year to once a year for financial reasons, but this decision should be revisited with student experience and engagement in mind.

• The 2021-2022 Pirate Media 1 rate card will be provided electronically instead of in-print with printed sales sheets available for clients, as needed.

**Administration and Finance**

• Implemented Formstack to aid in electronic document routing, which was used for CARES-HEERF student aid requests. ECU also moved to DocuSign as a result of going remote for COVID. We need to continue to educate campus on Formstack/DocuSign.

• Implemented Chrome River to create a paperless travel and employee reimbursement process;

• Implemented Total Supply Manager (automated process for vetting and setting up vendors);

• Automated Dental Patient Refunds and Student Refunds for ACH and paper check integration with the A/P module;

• Implemented ECSI to manage all aspects of Perkins Loans Administration;

• Provide on-line student billing and payment processing through TouchNet;

• Expanded use of UStores to collect non-student receipts at various locations on campus;

• Expanded use of ProCard that has reduced the use of direct pay forms;

• Implemented Greenphire for processing research participant payments;

• Assisted with the Kronos implementation which will eliminate paper timesheets;

• Use DocuSign and Formstack for processing and approving all fund authority forms;

• Use Adobe for collecting electronic signatures on documents;

• Created an automated JV process, working on final details and should go live soon.

• HR will continue to look at more paperless options;

• We will look into automating medical patient refunds consistent with the dental process;

• Created pdf fill in forms in Campus Operations Project Authorization Forms;

**OC10. Find ways to increase environmental efficiency, including, but not limited to:**

- Mandate and enforce temperature settings in all buildings.
- Reduce hourly air turnover in research buildings, consistent with safety.
- Evaluate adding solar panels to buildings where payback is less than 7 years.
- Mandate a 20% reduction in copier usage in three years at the college and division level.
- Establish page print limits in student computer labs.
- Aggressively consolidate summer classes and summer dorm use to take buildings offline.
Invest in appropriate technology to retrofit or replace building systems to maximize water and energy efficiency.

Reduce desktop printers and route printing jobs to larger centralized printers. Reduces capital and per-page cost.

Across all divisions, review vehicle use and need with goal of reducing the number of vehicles and increasing average usage. Increase efficiency of trips to reduce vehicle miles traveled by 10% over two years.

Division of Academic Affairs
- The use of centralized printers, electronic delivery of documents through LMS systems rather than printing; leasing of state cars rather than purchase new ones. Regional admissions counselors has allowed for reduction in travel costs (gas, hotel, meals).

Division of Health Sciences
- Utilization of campus fax service
- Student print kiosks with print limits
- Printer refresh plans to limit individual desk printers
- Shared equipment by employees when feasible
- Supplies purchased on demand
- Electronic delivery of documents, Electronic Pads, and use of DocuSign

Student Affairs
- The Office of Student Transitions has removed desktop printers for each individual staff member and student worker. All staff members and student workers print to the centralized copier/printer in the office. Student Veteran Services has done the same thing with removing desktop printers and using central copier/printer.
- Orientation previously required two vehicles during the summer to move staff and materials between main campus and check-in held at Dowdy-Ficklen Stadium. The opening of the Main Campus Student Center allowed usage of the space for orientation check-in and therefore eliminated the need for these vehicles. This eliminated summer usage of one van from Campus Recreation and Wellness and one rental vehicle from Enterprise.
- CRW has made improvements to North Recreation Complex using reclaimed water for irrigation and moved all the Eakin Student Recreation Center (ESRC) from regular lighting to high efficiency LED lighting. All SIL facilities have upgraded their restrooms and water fountains to assist in water management.
- Campus Living has limited summer dorm use to take buildings offline, and they have participated in the winter break shutdown. Their construction/renovation on West End (Clement, White, and Greene Hall) has upgraded three buildings with new outer shells that are more efficient for energy use. CL has upgraded showerheads and sink aerators across the housing system for water/hot water savings. CL has educated students on energy use/savings annually and perform room checks at breaks to turn off items and set AC/heating units at energy saving levels. CL uses centralized copying/printing, while also changing systems to decrease printing needs.
- Student Affairs Technology Services has partnered with ECU Facilities to integrate Events2HVAC in the Main Campus Student Center. Events2HVAC pulls 25Live data to optimize efficiencies in the center’s HVAC system by aligning with the building’s space utilization.
Our focus moving forward is to repair and upgrade the ESRC HVAC and pool pump systems that are dangerously close to failure. On top of the imminent need, these upgrades would also make them more energy and water efficient.

We are hopeful that CRW will be allowed to start their HVAC and pool upgrades. NOTE: This may be difficult because of the current budget constraints even though CRW actually has the needed funds.

Administration and Finance

According to DocuSign, our increased usage of the tool during COVID has had an environmental impact of 16,000 lb. of wood, 49,000 gallons of water, 39,000 lbs. of carbon, and 2,700 pounds of waste.

Campus Operations and the senior administration of ECU have established and published standard temperature set-points for buildings on our campuses. Age of building controls, division of control zones in buildings, and buildings with limited central control systems affect our ability to control temperature set-points everywhere. This can lead to occupants overriding set-points for personal comfort. Each degree of temperature adjustment up or down generally equates to about 4% energy increase or decrease, depending on the seasonal comfort zone.

Facilities Services, in consultation with EH&S, have reviewed areas for the ability to reduce the number of air changes in lab buildings during unoccupied hours. Lab safety is the priority and the reductions considered to be safe during the unoccupied hours often reduce the air changes by up to 50% (typically air changes are reduced to the range of 6 to 8 air changes per hour, from 10 to 12, or higher, air changes per hour).

Stopped servicing individual printers except in limited circumstances; require the use of a centralized printer for unit.

Facilities Services continues to look for solar demonstration projects on campus, but wide-scale use on campus will provide limited energy to offset utility consumption in buildings and high paybacks in the 15 to 20-year range. Additionally, solar installations across the country are subsidized by heavy utility rebates. Locally, Greenville Utilities does not offer, nor expect to offer energy efficiency or solar rebates. By example, we have explored a proposal for a solar application on the Heart Institute Roof as well as the HSC Central Utility Plant. In the case of the Heart Institute, the proposal is to install 230 solar panels on the roof (essentially covering the entire roof) at a purchase cost of about $210,000 and that will generate about $10,000 annually in savings (20-year payback). The energy produced by the solar panels would offset about 5.5% of the annual building consumption. ECU will be better served, long term, with a larger off-site solar farm. However, this is not possible today in North Carolina because of utility regulations, i.e., because the University is not a utility provider and North Carolina prohibits third party sales of utilities. Unless we’re buying from Greenville Utilities, we’re not buying third party produced solar electricity.

OC11. Each unit (academic and non-academic) shall devise and publish appropriate and applicable performance metrics no later than December 31, 2014. While the units are to determine the metrics, data and tracking/reporting over time will be a joint effort of IPAR and the units. Metrics will include, but not be limited to, metrics established by the UNC System. Academic metrics may include graduation rates, departmental and college retention rates, time to completion of degree, etc. Non-academic metrics may include response times, accuracy of work, timeliness of actions, reduction of cost per action, etc. Metrics should be established at the college level for academic units or at the
division level for non-academic units. Performance will be monitored against benchmarks to be established.

**Division of Academic Affairs**
- Units strategic plan developed and worked with IPAR to develop metrics. IPAR has created numerous dashboards to provide various data at the unit level.

**Division of Health Sciences**
- HSD colleges/schools track metrics for accreditors. The SoDM has developed, patented and implemented several technologies that perform constant monitoring of all academic standards - simultaneously for SACS and DOCA accreditation processes. Data are gathered at the time of course delivery and performance assessment instead of annually.
- Laupus Library calculates savings through e-resource negotiations as well as all reductions in e-resources expenditures annually. Laupus also tracks the savings to students through acquisitions of multi-use eBooks.

**Chancellor’s Division**
- The Office of Internal Audit has established numerous metrics for IPAR, for the BOT Audit Committee, and for our office's Strategic Plan. Performance is regularly monitored by numerous parties including the chief audit officer, UNC System Office, NC Council of Internal Audit, and BOT Audit Committee.
- ECU’s chief audit officer also chaired a 2020 workgroup for the UNC System and is currently (Jan 2021) part of a workgroup established by the State Controller to establish performance metrics and best practices for IA shops across all state agencies.

**REDE**
- Sponsored Programs metrics have been developed and are reported as part of SACS assessment and BOT performance metrics. College and department-level sponsored programs metrics are reported to deans and senior leadership monthly.

**Student Affairs**
- Fundraising metrics are easily tracked and focused on gifts, visits, and proposals. These are all measured during 6-month review and annual reviews.
- Student veteran graduation rates and retention are being tracked with the assistance of IPAR after a working group established the most effective way to track the military affiliated population. GPAs and college/major are also tracked. Statistics can be viewed via military student dashboard.
- Since 2016, SAARP has worked with divisional units to identify and implement metrics tracking as outlined in the “meaningful metrics” documents. Departments are currently responsible for monitoring and measuring their unit metrics in their annual reports. Some metrics may also incorporate into annual assessment measures.
- As part of the division’s strategic plan, ten major goals (aligned to ECU’s plan) are accompanied by a total of 20 key metrics.
- Two key metrics are tracked in the Board of Trustees University Affairs Committee dashboard: 1) housing contract commitments, and 2) counseling center visits.
Administration and Finance
• Unit assessment plans are evaluated annually.

OC12. Evaluate units and operations within Student Affairs and determine functions which can be eliminated, streamlined, or consolidated. Ensure that Student Affairs support activities are not duplicative of other support activities in the university. Areas for study may include marketing and information technology.

Division of Health Sciences
• There is something valuable about “being where the students are.” Student Affairs in colleges/schools work to integrate with University Student Affairs and Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. HSD convened a group from all colleges to assess student services across the division.
• The Division will continue to evaluate additional opportunities for collaboration

Student Affairs
• Over the last six years, Student Involvement and Leadership has added new areas such as Campus Recreation and Wellness and Intercultural Affairs, and most recently combined Student Activities and Organizations and Greek life into Student Engagement, and eliminated redundant functions and programs such as administrative support and marketing.
• Priority registration permissions for student veterans are pulled directly from each semester’s new admit lists rather than requiring new students to present paperwork to prove their military service. This prevents duplication of work by certifying officials, SVS staff, and student workers.
• The Student Affairs Assessment, Research, and Planning Office has been fully centralized with staffing organized to work with all departments across the division rather than having quarter and half-time position responsibilities embedded in myriad positions. This has reduced duplication of effort across departments and has moved the division toward having the appropriate expertise needed to effectively and efficiently complete assessment, research, and planning functions.
• As we move forward, we will continue to review our programs and services, as well as administrative functions, to become more efficient – specifically around finance and marketing.

OC14. Recommend the Faculty Senate evaluate code-related matters to increase efficiency and effectiveness, including:

- For colleges with departmental or school-level unit codes (College of Fine Arts & Communication, College of Human Ecology, Harriot College of Arts & Sciences) reevaluate codes to identify the governance and operational activities that should be at the college level.
- Evaluate creation and implementation of college-level Promotion and Tenure committees (in addition to existing committees at the departmental level).
- Explore the possibility of developing college-level codes that permit departments to maintain local operating procedures that reflect disciplinary differences and scale of operation.

Division of Academic Affairs
• College of Human Ecology merged with the College of Health and Human Performance and the College of Business, which were college-coded units. With the mergers, the respective colleges underwent review of unit codes according to the Faculty Manual.
• Some colleges considered the creation of college-level promotion and tenure committees, but ultimately decided not to pursue – reasons stated are faculty did not support the idea; impractical given the variety of scholarship; there are too few tenured faculty at the department level to populate a college level committee.

Division of Health Sciences
• These functions are performed at the college level. SoDM continues to work with Linda Ingalls and representative from the ECU Faculty Council to move the colleges Unit Code to a final document.

OC15. Over the last nine months, the Hunter Partners has been examining the efficiency and effectiveness of the operations of ECU Physicians (ECUP). The findings of the evaluation are intended to increase the profitability and long-term operational viability of ECUP. Strongly support timely implementation of the findings of the Hunter Partners.

Division of Health Sciences
• In response to the Hunter report, ECUP engaged Premier Consulting to advise on a clinical productivity-based compensation model. Implementation of this was delayed by the onset of the pandemic. Hunter identified under-coding of visits, low clinical space utilization, and clinical funds subsidizing academic expenses as opportunities for improvement. Significant improvements in coding have resulted in improved financial performance. Clinical space utilization has improved somewhat, although there are opportunities for additional improvement. Academic expenses have not been eliminated from the faculty practice expenses. The NC General Assembly has provided $8M in “stabilization” funding to support market-rate compensation, and ECU leadership coordinated efforts to push for improved rates for contract revenue.
• Continue to assess, identify and implement processes to improve productivity, efficiency, quality care and physician retention.

R4. Examine operational and administrative barriers which impede faculty from engaging in external consulting projects, offering continuing professional education, and related revenue-generating activities through the university. Expand the ability of units to utilize funds created by these activities to support faculty, students, and the university. The intent is to liberate a greater entrepreneurial spirit among faculty and units.
• Agreements between REDE, CET, and COB were negotiated and executed that allow the deans to sign standard contracts of less than $25,000 for consulting and continuing professional education activities. Revenues are subject to a reduced indirect cost rate (10% on total cost) and residuals are maintained in a department trust fund account for discretionary use. Use of standard contracts and signatory authority by the dean reduces the time and administrative burden to launch these projects and residuals are used to cover infrastructure within the units.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Unit have made, and continue to make, progress on reducing operational costs, and while changes could improve effectiveness, significant cost savings are not likely to be realized through cost cutting.

2. Shared services do not lead to significant costs savings, but can lead to better service through better distribution of workloads and consolidation of skills and expertise. Units should explore opportunities to share services. Moving services to central offices is not widely supported as it can lead to a reduction in customer service. Therefore, a distributed model should be considered in which personnel with specific expertise report to a central office with knowledge in that area, but the individuals are deployed or distributed to units where the work is being performed.

3. Explore the opportunity to remove all SHRA actions from the divisional offices. This will allow for a more streamlined process & eliminate redundancy in approvals. It is recommended that a small working group of select individuals from HR and a few divisions work together to see if this change in operations is feasible.

4. Leverage remote working when possible to increase morale, productivity and retention of employees and utilize campus space more effectively. Currently, ECU is developing a policy to implement teleworking opportunities on campus based upon the guidance recently received from UNC SO.

5. Reduce excess (duplicated/replicated) technologies across the campus community by formally assessing authorization for ALL University technology (software and hardware) procurement requests. In May 2020, the Executive Cabinet approved the creation of the Technology Acquisition Committee (TAC) and charged it with reviewing each technology procurement request for potential approval; while also providing guidance in the selection of IT services that support University operations. Additionally, the University has merged the management of several enterprise technology contracts within central IT (ITCS) to drive down costs, reduce redundancy and make smarter use of resources. This has been executed across the campus of late, with Academic Affairs being the most recent division to complete this consolidation.

6. **Continue to vet recommendations of the Distributed IT Report** and update the recommendations and proposed implementation plans in light of budget and personnel changes since the Report was published.

7. Explore consolidation of the computer refresh programs under ITCS for efficiency in compilation, ordering, and installation of replacement computers.

8. Explore consolidation of the parking and transit offices.

9. Materials Management will streamline information on their website so operational materials are easily accessible.

10. Explore the opportunity to streamline processes and procedures related to GA/RA/TA hiring in the Graduate School either by use of electronic software (i.e. People Admin or web-based forms) or by reassigning additional staff members to The Graduate School to assist with the GA/RA/TA hiring process (i.e. centralizing the function at the Graduate School and/or College level). It is recommended that a small working group of select individuals work together to see if this change in operations is feasible.
APPENDIX

DIT Report Recommendation provided by the Chief Information Officer:

In addition to the Distributed IT Report, I would like to add some personal reflections for consideration by the fiscal sustainability committee based on my experience over the last year with the distributed IT report, the OSA audit (which concluded after the distributed IT final report was completed), industry trends on cyber security, and new discoveries related to distributed IT infrastructure at ECU. It is my view that in order to best manage the IT infrastructure at ECU (servers and network) in an efficient, secure, and compliant manner, any position on campus that is primarily responsible for IT infrastructure (server or network) should be moved to ITCS. The impact should be limited; I’m aware of less than 10 positions on campus that meet that criteria.

My view is based on the following:

- Cybersecurity attacks are becoming more severe. Over the last year, we have had the SolarWinds attack, Colonial Pipeline ransomware, JBS ransomware, and many others. Locally, North Carolina has experienced the following:
  - The Federal Government issued an advisory for Public Health Sector organizations as being the target for ransomware activity (October 2020).
  - As of November 2020, 15 successful ransomware attacks impacted North Carolina Local Governments and State Institutions, including three higher education institutions.
- Despite compiling an inventory of servers and networking equipment from distributed IT areas, ITCS continues to “discover” equipment on our network that was not properly reported.
- One division had a distributed IT server administrator position vacant for 10 months; during that time the server was not maintained or patched and contained vulnerabilities.
- There have been instances over the past year where distributed IT administrators who report to a non-IT professional are often put in a position where they are asked to deploy servers in an insecure way to “make it work”. I am concerned this goes on more than I am already aware.
- We have had security incidents involving sensitive data on servers managed by distributed IT staff.
- ITCS has found many instances where servers and application software used and managed by distributed IT areas contain vulnerabilities and do not have an active support contract with the software vendor, preventing the ability to patch the software to an acceptable/secure level.
- We have discovered instances where distributed IT allowed personal devices to be used when accessing sensitive information, which is against university policy (this has been resolved).
- Due to budget cuts, some distributed IT areas have cut vacant distributed IT positions; some of that work has been sent to ITCS, but it is unknown if there are other vacancies that are impacting our infrastructure.
- We have had instances of lost data on distributed IT managed servers/systems due to insufficient backup plans, which is a standard within ITCS.