

# PROGRESS REPORT

**Working Group Name:** Financial Process Improvement

**Working Group #:** 27

**Chair:** John Crawford

**Date:** March 31, 2022

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## **Update on Actions Taken Since Last Report:**

- This is the fourth report.
- A fifth meeting of the Working Group (WG) was held on March 31, 2022.
  - Dr. Alan Sams, Vice President for Operational Innovation, joined the meeting. Dr. Sams recently returned to Texas A&M University, and one of his responsibilities is facilitating the implementation of *The Path Forward* initiative.
  - Minor edits that had been made to the draft outline of the continuous service improvement oversight process, the Continuous Service Improvement Governance Group (CSIGG), were discussed. These edits entailed the addition of a Sponsored Research Services member as well as specific acknowledgement that a cost/benefit analysis is intended to be part of the project prioritization process. Also, the CSIGG will be responsible for developing a way to measure progress for each work process improvement review. A copy of the final version is attached to this report.
  - Next there was a brief discussion about two modifications to the prioritization criteria. The first was to refine the “Expense to Fix” scale into a numerical value rather than use “high, medium, and low cost.” The second change was adding “Compliance” as a criterion to be used in the prioritization process.
  - The last item discussed was the potential projects list. There are currently 18 potential projects on the list. There was some clarification about the scope of a few of the projects. It was agreed that we needed to make a first cut on the project list before applying the prioritization process. We will send out a template for everyone to vote for their top ten projects, compile that information, and send it out prior to the next meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

## **Next Major Issue to be Addressed:**

- Prioritization of the potential projects list.

## **Problems or Barriers Encountered and Solutions Identified:**

- There is recognition that not all improvement processes will go through the formalized process that this working group is developing. We need to ensure that we do not discourage financial improvements around campus, but that the oversight group is aware of them.

**Deliverables Completed:**

- None at this time

**Timeline for Completion of Remaining Deliverables:**

- Finalize the list of prioritized financial process projects to evaluate – April 30, 2022
- Establish the oversight committee for this initiative – May 31, 2022
- Full implementation of the customer service improvement process – September 1, 2022

## **ADDRESSING INEFFICIENCIES IN INTERNAL WORKFLOW PROCESSES WORK GROUP TEAM #27**

### **Continuous Service Improvement Governance Group (CSIGG)**

- Sponsor: The Vice President and CFO serves as the Sponsor of the financial work process improvement initiative.
- Charge: To oversee a methodical, intentional process to continually improve campus financial work processes.
- This workflow improvement process will be referred to as continuous service improvement.
- Membership
  - Chair, Vice Chair, and 12-14 members, generally from the following campus groups:
    - 2 faculty members
    - 1-2 Assistant Deans
    - 1-2 Associate/Assistant Vice Presidents (AVPs)
    - 2 SABAs/ABAs
    - 1 Financial Management Operations (FMO) member
    - 1 Business Services member
    - 1-2 Administrative finance (non-academic) members
    - 1 Sponsored Research Services member
    - 1 Student Government representative
    - 1 Graduate & Professional Student Government representative
    - 1 remote campus representative
  - All members are appointed by the Sponsor. Individuals who are Working Group #27 members will have a one-year initial term on CSIGG. All other CSIGG members will serve two-year initial terms. The intent is to stagger terms so there is always continuity in the group.
  - The Chair will serve a one-year term and the following year the Vice Chair will serve as Chair. The Vice Chair will serve as Chair in the absence of the Chair.
- Meetings
  - The Chair will call a CSIGG meeting at least every other month.
  - Notes of these meetings will be kept and reported out to the Sponsor.
  - The Chair will meet periodically with the Sponsor.
- Accountability
  - At the end of each fiscal year, the Chair and the Sponsor will prepare a report summarizing the work of the CSIGG and continuous service improvement teams for the year.
  - The report will be provided by the Sponsor to the President of the university.

- Process
  - The initial prioritized list of processes will be developed by Work Group Team #27.
  - The CSIGG will develop a set of criteria and a process to maintain a current list of prioritized financial processes to be evaluated. A cost/benefit analysis should be a key component of the prioritization process. Additionally, CSIGG will establish and implement a methodology for measuring progress for each work process improvement review. Communication will be essential to campus input (see Communication below) and it is important that students, faculty, and staff have the opportunity to provide suggestions during the intake process. This process for maintaining a current prioritized list will be approved by the Sponsor.
  - It is understood that there may be times when, for various reasons (such as efficiency), the prioritized financial processes are evaluated out of order. This decision is made by the CSIGG Chair.
  - It will be up to CSIGG to determine how many projects will be active at a given time.
  - For each process being reviewed, the CSIGG will put together a team of campus stakeholders, to include both CSIGG members and non-CSIGG members. The CSIGG will develop a process to oversee each of these continuous service improvement teams to ensure progress is made in a timely manner.
  - The CSIGG will ensure that the process improvement steps outlined in the Education Advisory Board white paper, *Process Improvement Primer* are followed, including being able to articulate what success looks like. Go to the link [here](#), log in or register for an account, and click on “Explore the Primer.”
    - Assemble the right people
    - Map the current state
    - Collect current-state data
    - Design the future state
    - Develop an implementation plan
  - The *Process Improvement Primer* explains the above steps and contains other resources such as various templates and examples.
- The recommendations coming out of the individual continuous service improvement teams will route through the CSIGG Chair to the Sponsor for acceptance. The Sponsor may accept the recommendations in whole or in part.
- It is recognized that there may be financial workflow improvement processes occurring outside of the processes overseen by CSIGG. It is the responsibility of the appropriate AVP or Assistant Dean to ensure the CSIGG Chair is aware of these external processes.
- Training
  - It is recognized that CSIGG members as well as continuous service improvement team members may benefit from training about their roles. The EAB offers various types of training around process improvement such as:
    - Information about process improvement opportunities
    - Kickoff meetings for process improvement teams
    - Workshops

- Leadership brainstorming sessions
    - Advisory sessions
  - Training needs should be communicated to the Sponsor by the CSIGG Chair.
- Communication
  - Communication about continuous service improvement efforts to the campus community will be critical to the success of this process. All avenues of communication should be used, including Controller Connection emails, Financial Management Operations emails, and communication with CSBA and ABOC. In addition, communications with Faculty Senate and student groups will be provided for those improvement projects that may impact their constituents. Communication will help build confidence in the process.
  - Communication will be important when reaching out to the campus community for feedback and ideas for process improvement as well as communicating process changes.
  - The rationale for process changes must be clearly communicated to campus stakeholders.
  - The Division's Communications Director will be a valuable resource available to the CSIGG and continuous service improvement teams
- Budget Impacts
  - Budget impacts resulting from CSIGG recommendations or specific continuous service improvement teams recommendations should be communicated to the Sponsor.
    - Fiscal resources requested for training or other logistical items that arise while executing this initiative should be submitted to the Sponsor by the Chair of the CSIGG.