

MEMORANDUM

To: Nancy McKee, Vice Chancellor
State University System of Florida

From: Beth Barnes
Vice President and Chief of Staff
for
John C. Hitt, President
University of Central Florida

Date: November 5, 2007

Subject: Operational Efficiencies at the University of Central Florida

The University of Central Florida has taken the following measures to improve operational efficiencies, including programmatic reductions and collaborations with other SUS universities. Our activities have attempted to ensure that the educational needs of our students come first.

I. Operational efficiencies include:

A. Reduction of expenses

E&G-funded travel and subscription expenses have been significantly reduced by many units. Paper-based business processes are being replaced with online e-forms, reducing repetitive data inputting, errors, and processing time. Routine purchases of items such as office supplies have been reduced. Computers are being reconfigured to turn off monitors after twenty consecutive minutes of inactivity. Staff members are being urged to turn computers off at night and to turn office lights off when not in use.

B. Staffing (hiring freeze--critical positions filled by exception policy, priority given to instructional positions)

Vacancies from some unfilled support positions are being filled with student assistants, and some positions are now shared by two units. Vacancies from some unfilled faculty positions are left unfilled or have been shifted to programs with higher demand. Some USPS and A&P positions remain unfilled. E&G funds for employment of nine-month faculty during the summer sessions will focus on classroom instruction, with preference given to staffing fully-enrolled courses. Units were or are being reorganized, and workloads are being redistributed.

C. Course offerings

Faculty teaching loads and class sizes are being increased when the increase does not negatively impact quality. Admission to the part-time MBA program was replaced with a cohort program, and these students are admitted only in the fall semester, making class offerings and sizes predictable.

D. On-line learning and technology-related services

The number of Web-based and Web-mediated course offerings is increasing and faculty who have not previously taught Web courses are being trained to do so. The capacity of some existing Web sections is being increased to allow students access without added costs, and extra efforts are being made to recruit students for Web-based programs. Technology is being enhanced to facilitate Web-cast courses. Some courses taught at regional campuses are video-streamed to the main campus. Regional campuses began ITV course origination from one regional campus site to other regional campus locations. Improved scheduling of blended-learning courses is resulting in more efficient use of classroom space.

E. Budget management

The College of Sciences created new expense management planning and tracking mechanisms and procedures to more closely monitor spending and also created its own reserve to allow for quick response to emergency needs without creating a budget crisis or shortfall. The College of Education implemented a performance and initiative funding model to better allocate funding.

II. Programmatic reductions:

Courses with low enrollment are being canceled and some courses offered in multiple sections were combined into single-section courses. Twelve electrical engineering and computer science courses were merged to six, saving resources and instructor, TA, and staff support salaries. The College of Education is deactivating programs with low and declining enrollments.

III. Collaborations with other universities:

Faculty and staff from UCF's and Florida International University's Colleges of Medicine are working together on course development and other issues related to the start-up of the colleges of medicine. UCF is collaborating with the University of South Florida and Florida State University to develop UCF's new mapping and tracking system for undergraduate education. UCF, USF, FIU, and FAU are participating in ENLACE together, a national initiative funded with a Kellogg Foundation grant to promote college readiness, access, and success for Latinos and underrepresented students in the state. The Florida High Tech Corridor Council merges the strengths of UCF, USF, and UF with regional economic development initiatives to attract, sustain, and grow high-tech industries.