State University System
Efficiencies

Universities were asked to describe three monetary or non-monetary operational efficiency efforts made, currently underway, or planned at their university within the past year that seeks to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of processes that affect the students on campus.

The following are a few examples of the efficiencies administered throughout the system:

➢ Entered into a $125 million loan agreement via the HBCU Capital Finance Program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The funding provides capital to Historically Black Colleges and Universities to address infrastructure needs. The loan agreement allowed for the financing of a new 700-bed student housing facility and refinancing of existing housing debt. An average of $3M in interest savings annually will be realized utilizing this loan agreement. – FAMU;

➢ Implementing new enterprise software integrated with existing Workday financial system to provide efficient and convenient core facilities scheduling, invoicing, and billing. Will increase graduate and undergraduate student research access to sophisticated research infrastructure by lowering core management costs and by adding customer-managed equipment reservations. – FAU;

➢ Contracted with Conversion Technologies International, Inc. (CTI) for handling the receiving and conversion of both PO based and non PO based invoices that are not coming in as e-Invoices through Workday. CTI converts these invoices to an electronic format accepted by Workday. The CTI solution provides the University a 100% solution to turn all of its invoices into an electronic format within Workday. This creates efficiencies by ensuring that the AP team does not need to manually scan and capture the invoice data to load to Workday. - FAU;

➢ Continued with the consolidation and elimination of administrative functions and positions in order to eliminate duplication of effort and achieve greater efficiency - FGCU;

➢ Information technology was further reorganized, combining functions that generate greater efficiencies when able to operate under one umbrella. The most immediate and positive return is the leveraging of purchases across functional technology areas, resulting in lowered cost and the most impactful deployment of equipment such as servers and desktops. – FGCU;

➢ Enhanced Transcript Processing: Enrollment Services, along with the Division of Information Technology is implementing Brainware software, which provides the capacity to automate transcript processing using optical character recognition (OCR) for incoming paper transcripts and reduce processing time from weeks to hours. During the 2018-2019 academic year, FIU received 47,390 transcripts from potential transferring students; 13,290 transcripts were in hard copy. With this enhanced capacity, Enrollment Services will be able to provide the institution and students with a more efficient transcript posting process by posting transfer credits on a timelier basis, yielding higher conversion rates; and generating operational efficiencies by reducing the time to review and post a transcript to PeopleSoft from up to 1 hour to a few minutes. Additionally, the earlier availability of transfer credits allows students to be better informed as they work with advisors to review course selection, make adjustments, and avoid accruing excess hours. – FIU;

➢ FIU Online has streamlined fully online course scheduling which is now integrated into the scheduling workflow within the Office of Class Management (OCM) scheduling process, eliminating the need for multiple course scheduling workflows. Additionally, FIU Online has switched to a pooled scheduling system reducing the time needed to schedule and modify course needs as a team handles all requests in queue. Finally, academic units now have the option to schedule their own online courses during the key-in period rather than sending them afterward to FIU Online. This now allows fully online courses to be included in the same strategic schedule planning process as all other courses. – FIU;

➢ Enhanced numerous business processes to ensure appropriate controls and approvals in conformance with best practice. (e.g. expense reports, purchase requisitions, supplier invoices, FMLA, Federal Work Study, etc.) These enhancements are part of our continuous improvements efforts. – Florida Poly;

➢ Redesigned the structure and delivery of key gateway courses, including adding additional support for students, to improve student learning and course passage rates. This resulted in improved student completion of these courses. Based on the improved passage rates, an estimated 775

students successfully completed these courses during the fall 2018 and spring 2019 semesters, reducing the need for students to retake the courses in future semesters. This represents a collective cost savings to these students of approximately $0.5 million in tuition and fees. This also resulted in a direct cost savings in instructional costs for these course sections of approximately $0.4 million– FSU;

➢ CashNet is an electronic payment system that allows students to pay charges for tuition and other student services. The system was launched during FY 2018-19 and serves multiple functions for the College. Students can make payments to post real-time to their student account, with the ability to receive text alerts for payments or other account changes. Furthermore, CashNet provides the functionality for the College to set up storefronts and checkouts to accept payments from a variety of functions and sources – family weekend, orientation, parking operations, etc. This tool saves a considerable amount of time for the students and the Business Office; minimizing paper, duplication of effort, and improving communication regarding student billing and other financial obligations between the Business Office and the students served. – NCF;

➢ In early 2018, the university embarked on a discovery journey to bring widespread and significant change to UCF's Oracle PeopleSoft Financials system. Born from this work, project UCF Rising is a comprehensive restructuring plan that will modernize our research administration business processes and technologies. The project currently will integrate the Huron Research Suite with PeopleSoft Grants module within UCF Financials, replacing a legacy, homegrown pre-award system and enabling UCF's Office of Research meet the Collective Impact Strategic Plan goal of doubling research awards to $250 million by 2020. – UCF;

➢ Continuing to set its own institutional records for student success, UCF's focus remains on ensuring a more affordable, high-quality degree for Florida's students. Improvements to our graduation rates, average time to degree, and student-to-faculty ratio lead to reduced costs for students and more efficiency for UCF. Thanks to additional institutional aid, including a record amount raised for first-generation scholarships, and a lower credit hour average, last year's average cost to the student was the lowest in five years. The new downtown campus in partnership with Valencia College opening in fall 2019 will pioneer a new model that saves students up to $6,000 to earn a four-year degree. Undergraduate students attending the new campus will have the opportunity to realize this reduced cost of attendance by taking co-listed general education courses offered to both UCF and Valencia students. – UCF;

➢ UF's Information Technology division has developed data-driven dashboards for academic advisors to allow access to reports with up-to-date, comprehensive information. This real-time data makes in-office visits all-inclusive and valuable for students and more efficient for both students and staff. This information enhances graduation and retention rates and decreases excess hours. The ability to track students comprehensively and provide this information to both students and advisors helps students graduate on time. Status reports and degree audits connect the degree audit system and the registration system, which also manages enrollment. Students receive a schedule showing critical courses that they must take at specific times during their college career and the grades that they must earn in order to remain on track and graduate in four years. This schedule allows colleges to better manage course offerings according to student timelines for graduation and has a direct impact in enabling students to graduate on time. – UF;

➢ The Office of ADA & Title IX is implementing a newly acquired on-line training course for sexual assault prevention for students, along with a free, internally 2020-2021 LBR created, employee course to train our entire campus on how to maintain a safer community, eliminate sexual harassment and assaults, and properly handle situations as they arise. The new student program efficiently addresses other health topics such as alcohol education and drug use education, along with bystander intervention training. This is a shared initiative with the Division of Student Affairs, the Athletic Department, the Office of Human Resources, with the Office of Title IX Compliance co-facilitating the training opportunities for all students and employees, including student employees within the Division of Student Affairs, along with all athletic department employees and athletes. Utilizing an efficient "train the trainer" model, there have already been 50 university professionals trained to facilitate bystander intervention training within their respective departments. Ultimately, this is a more efficient process to properly inform the entire campus regarding healthy relationships. The initiative provides better information and support, and ultimately, a safer, more informed campus community. This initiative saves the Office of Title IX Compliance many hours by not directly providing as many trainings to the various university constituents. – UF;

➢ The division of Student Affairs was merged into Academic Affairs and now reports to the Provost. The integration of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs is transforming the student experience and significantly advancing student success through increased collaboration,

communication, and innovation. Multiple departments have been realigned to provide better service and support to our students (for example, Career Services and Advising are now together). Teams of faculty and staff from across the division (the Student Success Rapid Response Team is one example) are coming together to develop initiatives to improve student success. The integration has also improved efficiency and allowed us to reallocate significant resources (just over $1 million) to improve the student experience. - UNF;

➢ Three Vice President positions were eliminated during the year: Vice President and Chief of Staff, Vice President of Student Affairs and Vice President of Human Resources -- generating savings of $759 thousand. Student Affairs was merged into Academic Affairs and the department of Human Resources was moved under the Vice President of Administration and Finance. In addition, two Associate Vice President positions were eliminated: one in Student Affairs and one in Administration and Finance generating savings of an additional $390 thousand. – UNF;

➢ USF IT completed the migration of all disaster recovery (DR) systems located at our Clemson University collocation datacenter. These 72 servers were rehosted in a public cloud (Microsoft Azure), providing improved redundancy and resiliency to our DR systems infrastructure environment. We were able to eliminate major risks/vulnerabilities such as aging equipment, extensive failover times and scalability constraints. Moving our DR systems to public cloud has also provided more reliable business continuity for some of our most critical faculty and student systems, in the event of common threats/ natural disasters in our region, such as hurricanes. Our data security stance was also improved from this migration as databases are now routed through private internet protocols –(IP) versus the previous public IP configuration. Cost offsets of $94,000/yr. were seen, with better transparency for future cost savings efforts in the environment. We have the ability for self-service of these systems, reducing support process times nearly in half. – USF.

➢ Through the use of the State of Florida Contracts and SUS shared initiatives for cloud computing and use of shared advertising, the University realized savings of more than $690,000 FY 2019. Additionally, owner direct purchases made for the construction of the Lab Sciences building resulted in more than $10,000 savings of sales taxes. - UNF

For detailed reports by institution, please contact the Board of Governors General Office.