VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

B. Finance and Asset Management Committee

Efficiency Item – Transforming Work in Housing & Food Services Through Process Improvement

INFORMATION ITEM

This item is for information only.

BACKGROUND

Over the past several years, the Communications and Marketing (ComMar) unit of the Department of Housing & Food Services (HFS) has transformed the way it works. Partnership with UW Organizational Excellence positioned ComMar to fully support the current and future needs of the organization.

HFS is a self-sustaining auxiliary engaged in a 10-year $850 million Housing Master Plan (HMP); when completed, it will add over 3,000 beds to the system. Within this context, the ComMar team provides services to all HFS units including development of communications and marketing strategic plans and production of a wide range of creative materials and communication tools, from posters and brochures to websites and social media campaigns.

Soon after HFS Executive Director Pamela Schreiber arrived in 2009, she articulated a vision for ComMar that involved increasing its capacity without adding staff. The vision included handling an expected increase in workload due to the HMP, evolving use of social and other new media in communications with students, as well as being nimble and responsive to project requests. As a newly formed unit located in two different buildings, the team faced several challenges.

Deborah Costar, HFS Assistant Director, leads the ComMar team. It was clear that the team would need to make significant changes to accomplish these objectives. Deborah engaged Jeanne Semura in UW Organizational Excellence as a consultant to assist. Anticipating the time required to make these changes and the need to better prioritize requests from other HFS units, Deborah enlisted the sponsorship of the HFS Executive Director, a key element of success.

Improvement was an iterative process; as initial revisions were made, other needed changes were discovered. The decision to improve a single process evolved into a more comprehensive overhaul of the team’s way of working.
Because the entire ComMar team participated, they had ownership of the changes and staff morale increased.

ComMar’s role has evolved from a receiver of specific requests to that of consultant, guiding clients in the most effective ways of informing students and the campus community about HFS programs and services, so that they can take advantage of opportunities to enhance their experience. The changes have allowed ComMar to accommodate the additional work of the HMP, and its efforts are more impactful.

*Attachment*
Transforming Work in Housing & Food Services Through Process Improvement
TRANSFORMING WORK IN HOUSING & FOOD SERVICES THROUGH PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Board of Regents
Finance and Asset Management Committee
July 9, 2015

Deborah Costar
Assistant Director for Communications and Marketing
Housing & Food Services
UW Housing & Food Services

- House over 7,000 students in 15 facilities on campus
- Serve approximately 30,000 customers daily
- Involve over 1,700 students in living-learning communities
- Provide catering, conferences and Husky Card I.D. services to the campus
- Implement the 2010–20 Housing Master Plan

HFS Communications and Marketing (ComMar) Team

- Support programmatic and revenue goals through services to all HFS units including Catering Services, Conference Services, Facilities Services, Human Resources, Husky Card, Information Technology, Residential Life, Student and Financial Services, and UW Dining

- The HFS Director’s Vision challenged ComMar to increase its capacity without adding staff:
  - Support additional workload required by the Housing Master Plan
  - Increase use of social and other new media to communicate with students
  - Enhance responsiveness to collaborations with other HFS units
How ComMar Reinvented Itself to Achieve the Director’s Vision

• Used process-improvement techniques to transform its work process

• Developed tools to manage work (e.g., visual boards, kanban boards)

• Used time savings to focus on complex, urgent and strategic work
Flowcharted Original ComMar Project Process
Identified Pain Points and Areas of Rework
Categorized Workflow by Project Complexity

- Identified four distinct types of processes based on the complexity of the work involved

- The process for handling each type of project and the staff involvement for each was documented
Key Process Enhancements and Outcomes

- Team member skills were better utilized, and ComMar’s capacity was enhanced, by delegating the process of assigning incoming project requests to managers.
- Additional time was made available to focus on more strategic work by eliminating managerial oversight of routine projects.
- Accountability was established and efficiency created through the development of the Project Lead role.
- Rework and time to complete projects were reduced through the implementation of kickoff meetings with appropriate staff, clients, and other stakeholders.
- Weekly team meetings to review project progress were reduced from 60–90 minutes to zero minutes due to the implementation of visual boards and an online project management tool to track project progress—the time is now used for professional development and strategic planning.
Categorized Workflow by Project Complexity

Nov 2011  Identify challenges
Dec 2011  Define current process
Apr 2012  Elicit support of leadership
Jul 2012  Design new process
Mar 2013  Implement tools/visual boards
Ongoing  Reflect on changes

Evolve visual boards and other enhancements
Process Improvement Changes Allowed ComMar to Complete Work Associated with Housing Master Plan Projects

2010–Fall 2015

• Opened six new residence halls and two new apartment communities
• Expanded housing for graduate and professional students
• Moved 600+ students from Terry Hall to Lander Hall midyear
• Opened a grocery store, a full-service restaurant and a residential-dining venue
• Held demolition and grand opening events for alumni and campus
• Incorporated new amenities for students including a fitness center, Living-Learning Communities and a maker space (opening fall 2015)
• Moved HFS offices to the new Terry Hall
Development of Project Campaigns Created Efficiency and Effective Strategy

Before process improvement, all projects were treated separately. Now similar work in the project queue is clustered into campaigns, creating a cohesive strategy that has greater impact.

- **January–June 2011**
  
  270 total projects completed

- **January–June 2015**
  
  45% of 244 total projects completed were campaigns
Successfully Connecting Students and the Campus Community With HFS Services, Programs and the Husky Experience

• **Digital Publication Promotes On-Campus Housing to Newly Admitted Students**
  Identified an opportunity to communicate earlier with newly admitted students, collaborated with the HFS Student Services Office and HFS IT to develop the publication in a format that meets students’ needs, and coordinated distribution with Undergraduate Admissions

• **Instagram Campaign Promotes Local Point**
  The campaign was developed to engage students in this new residential-dining venue, which opened midyear after students’ eating habits were established
Successfully Connecting Students and Campus Community with HFS Services, Programs and the Husky Experience

**Housing Demand Continues to Increase**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As of June 1</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate housing (9-month) demand based on as-built capacity</td>
<td>108.4%</td>
<td>110.5%</td>
<td>122.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate housing (Mercer Court) units assigned for fall</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>99.6%</td>
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</tbody>
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Client and Student Testimonials

“... I think one of the most positive things I’ve noticed are the quicker turnaround times and the internal communication within their unit, which both reduce the amount of time I need to spend communicating our needs and following up on job statuses.”

—HFS Student Services

“Thank you for the terrific work coming out of your area...the look and messaging has been the best I’ve ever seen in our department. Simply outstanding.”

—HFS Residential Life

“Living on campus at UW has defined so much of my college experience. The halls are so much more than a place to live. They are a place to learn, socialize and be involved in the community where you live. I have loved living in the halls, and I know the staff and administration really care about making the community better for students.”

—Emma T., Junior, Political Science

“The engineering community provides an academically focused environment where students of similar interests can collaborate in classes, extracurricular activities and internships/jobs. The community gives students extreme exposure to all that the engineering department offers on campus, and gets them thinking about research and jobs early.”

—Sean O., Engineering Living Learning Community Resident
TRANSFORMING ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

ONE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION, WITH A COMMON VISION, AN ENHANCED CULTURE OF SERVICE, AND A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

> UW has already gained significant efficiencies. But we can do more to...
  – be even more effective and efficient
  – serve students and faculty even better
  – further decrease administrative burden
  – employ more data-based decision-making
  – manage change more effectively

> Focus on excellence and quality of services, quick delivery, easy navigation.
TRANSFORMING ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM

WORK IS ALREADY UNDER WAY:

> An executive team (TAPteam) charged to oversee a systems-wide approach to transforming administration
> Bringing together organizational development staff (TAP’s OE Team) to manage change in enterprise-wide projects and serve as internal consultants to campus partners
> Surveying campus stakeholders on their views of what’s working, what drives them “crazy” and best practices
> Creating goals, principles and standards for all central administrative units
> Fostering a culture of continuous improvement
> Action plan for FY 15-16 to share at September meeting