Texas A&M International University
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)
for Administrative or Educational Support Units

Unit Name:

Comptroller/Business Office

Unit Type:

__X_ Administrative Unit **___ Educational Support Unit**

Assessment Period Covered:

January 2009 to February 2010

Unit Coordinator (Preparer of Report):

Elena Martinez

List Other Report Contributors (if applicable):

The annual review is directed at the following goals of the Texas A&M International University 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. Please list goals below:

GOAL 3: Service
Maintain, strengthen, and expand service to all University stakeholders.
3.2 Provide service and outreach activities to the University service area in a professional, courteous, efficient, and timely manner
GOAL 4: Financial Resources
Obtain the appropriate resources to assure continued growth and enhancement of all areas of the University.
4.3 Allocate available financial resources for the effective implementation of the strategic plan and in response to the needs identified through the institutional effectiveness process
4.4 Conduct all financial activities in accordance with all state and System regulations and general accounting practices

<u>Institutional Mission</u>

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society … Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

<u>Administrative or Educational Support Unit Mission</u>

The mission of the Comptroller/Business office is to provide accurate financial reporting of the University's financial activities, to provide timely payment of goods and services received by the university including university travel and to provide accurate and efficient receipting of university funds and the timely processing of student refunds.

<u>Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented</u>

This statement should specify if the outcomes addressed were a continuation of previous ones, new outcomes, or modified versions of previous outcomes. In addition, the statement should include a concise analysis of the assessment data collected during the previous year, a brief explanation of actions taken to address specific outcomes, an evaluation of how these actions contributed to the improvement of the unit, and any recommendations formulated. Assessment data must be viewed and discussed by the unit during this process.

The University Comptroller and Business Office has assessed the data received from the annual survey conducted by the office of the Vice President for Finance and Administration to evaluate the needs, concerns, perceptions, and to formulate this units contributions to the vision and mission of the university. In the previous year, the Business Office was successful in obtaining the funding necessary to move forward with the purchase of software to facilitate payment processing. This software implementation becomes a unit outcome for this year. This software will serve to facilitate students payments for tuition and fees via the internet, provide for electronic enrollment into payment plans, provide PCI compliance for credit card payments, and provide the university with opportunities to take payments for other sales thru internet marketplace applications. The need for ACH payments to vendors (and reimbursements to employees) was assessed as an important outcome for 2008 and was not completed, therefore it will be an outcome carried forward for 2009. The Business Office was successful in the implementation of the Smart Data On Line project in 2008. The data retrieved in the SDOL processing of ProCard purchases will serve to provide relevant, timely, and actionable financial information for account holders and administration alike. In summary, this office understands the need for more process and information to be available via the internet or electronic processing and will continue to work on these needs in 2009.

<u>List of unit-level outcomes</u>

It is recommended that units rotate through their entire set of outcomes over a multi-year period. Units may focus on one or two outcomes each year, as deemed appropriate.

1. Implementation of Touchnet software that will facilitate the electronic processing of payments via internet for student accounts, student payment plans, sales of goods and services across campus, and payments handled in the business office.

2. Implementation of the process for bank ACH payments to vendors and for reimbursements to employees.

3. Implementation of the process for the electronic routing of the personnel action form. This project will be in conjunction with the department of human resources, the payroll department and the budget office.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Outcome(s)

Identify the outcome(s) that will be focused upon this year.

1). Implementation of software and electronic processes to facilitate the university community, these include implementation of Touchnet software that will process payments electronically for student accounts, internet sales of goods and services, and payments handled by the cashiers in the business office;

2). Implementation of the process for bank ACH payments to vendors and reimbursements to employees;

3). Implementation of the process for the electronic routing of the personnel action forms.

Methods of assessment to be used:
Identify and describe the type of assessment(s) that will be used and how the data will be obtained. During this assessment period, has your unit used any of the following measures for assessment of outcomes? Indicate "Y" if currently being used; "N" if not currently being used but interested in using; and "NA" if not applicable.

Type of Measure	**Y**	**N**	**NA**	**Specify which type of measure was used and what outcome the measure was applied to:**
<u>Volume of Activity:</u> (Number of clients served, circulation data, etc.)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
<u>Efficiency:</u> (Turnaround time for filling requests, timely service or prompt response, etc.)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
<u>Service Quality:</u> (Error rates, accuracy of information provided, etc)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
<u>Client Satisfaction Survey</u> (Student, employer, alumni, customer, etc.)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
<u>Feedback:</u> (Suggestion box, focus groups, evaluation forms, etc.)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
<u>Review of existing data:</u> (Routine records or reports, institutional data, audits, etc.)	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
Staff discussions or evaluations of services to clients	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
Standards/guidelines provided by professional associations		X		
Standards set by federal, state, county, city or system regulations	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2
External evaluations or auditors	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
Benchmarks or comparisons with peer institutions	X			VPFA Annual Survey – Outcome 1, 2, 3
Other				

Criteria/Benchmark(s):

Specify, if deemed appropriate to assess outcome(s). Criteria/ benchmark(s) may be optional, especially if qualitative measures are used for data collection.

The benchmark for success would be for the department to achieve full implementation of all electronic processing software modules.

Section II: Analysis of Results

What were the results attained?

Describe the primary results or findings from your analysis of the information collected. Were the results used to improve the unit services or operations? Please specify:

A substantial amount of progress was made in the implementation of the three different software applications, however full implementation was not achieved. Progress continues in order to achieve completion in 2010.

What were the conclusions reached?

Include a brief description of the procedure used for reaching the conclusion(s) based on the evidence collected and describe the process used to disseminate the information to other individuals. For example, if the discussion took place during the annual retreat, include a summary from those deliberations using the Meeting Minutes template found on the Project Integrate web page at http://www.tamiu.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc. Once completed, submit the minutes to assessment @tamiu.edu.

Since implementation was not completed, there have been no conclusions drawn on the benefits of using the software. However, feedback on the VPFA Annual Survey continues to support the need for automating more processes and for information to be available via the internet or electronic processing. One survey respondent wrote: "Business Office should use direct deposit for travel reimbursements. I know that other system components are currently doing that, and in HRConnect, we can update our direct deposit for that purpose." Another respondent wrote, "Under students, there is no link to the Business Office for students to go to and find out about payment plans and deadlines." Unit level outcomes attempted would have directly addressed concerns like these received thru the VPFA annual survey.

Describe the action plan formulated. (The plan may be multi-year in nature.)

Based on the conclusion(s), describe the action plan to be implemented to improve or maintain unit services and operations, including resources needed and a timeline for implementation.

Because a substantial amount of work was completed in 2009 for the three software systems, all of them will be fully implemented by end of 2010. Practices and processes used in the past and already in place will continue to be used until implementation is complete.

Section III: Resources

Resource(s) to implement action plan: *Describe the resources that will be needed to implement the action plan. Also indicate if the resources are currently available, or if additional funds will be needed to obtain these resources.*

Funding

- ☐ New Resources Required
- ☐ Reallocation of current funds

Physical

- ☐ New or reallocated space

Other

- ☐ Primarily faculty/staff time
- ☐ University rule/procedure change only

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan – or Compact, if relevant)

Funding will need to be allocated to cover the maintenance and licensing costs for Touchnet software.
Funding will need to be allocated to cover the travel and training of staff who need to learn to fully utilize the three systems.
Funding will need to be allocated to cover credit card processing costs, since more students and departments will be processing an increasing volume of credit card payments.
Other resources, staff time, will be needed to become facilitators and trainers on how to use the new software.

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation):

Continuation on 2009 outcomes will extend thru 2010 since they persist to be relevant and desired. At the time that outcomes were decided upon, the information available for proper planning were vague and assumed more resources than were properly estimated. Consequently, the timelines set for full implementation were too aggressive, but weren't realized until the projects began.

New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below):

Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification):

Date Completed:

April 15, 2010

Submit completed form to integrate@tamiu.edu. *Updated 9/2009*