TAP Background

The key goal of TAP is simple — to enhance the culture of service in UW's central administrative units.

The Transforming Administration Program (TAP) encompasses all central administrative units (those led by Vice Presidents and Vice Provosts) and focuses on excellence and quality of services, quick delivery and ease of navigation. This work builds on existing efforts around Organizational Excellence, Lean, and the work of change management and organizational development professionals and expertise throughout the units.
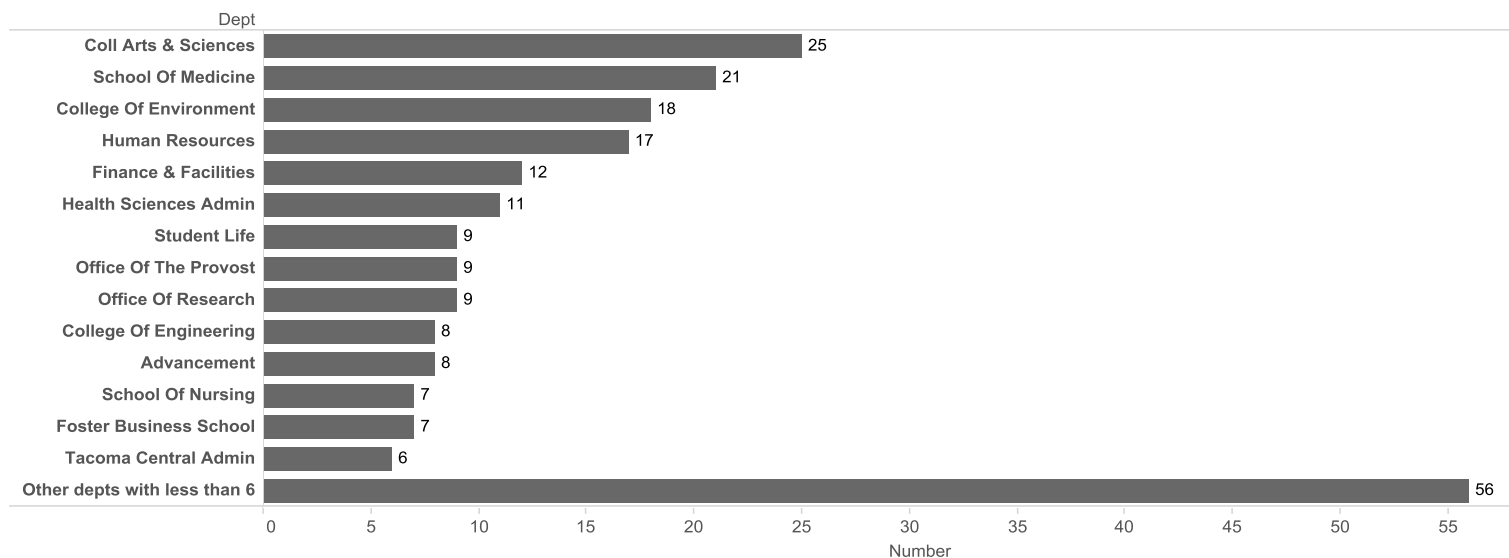
For more information, visit the TAP website

Survey Background

The goal of the TAP survey was to gather input from campus on what's going well in Central Administration and what can be done better, as well as share ideas for process improvements, best practices or lessons learned that would benefit colleagues in other units. The survey included five open-ended questions and heavily relied on qualitative data. The survey was sent to the President's Cabinet, Vice Presidents, Vice Provosts, Deans and Chancellors and cascaded to their staff. The survey was open from June 10th through August 7th, 2015.

Survey Participation

There were a total of 223 completed surveys. 51% of responses were from Academic units and 48% were from Non-Academic units.

Dept	Number
Coll Arts & Sciences	25
School Of Medicine	21
College Of Environment	18
Human Resources	17
Finance & Facilities	12
Health Sciences Admin	11
Student Life	9
Office Of The Provost	9
Office Of Research	9
College Of Engineering	8
Advancement	8
School Of Nursing	7
Foster Business School	7
Tacoma Central Admin	6
Other depts with less than 6	56

Next Steps

The TAP Team will use the results of the survey to help plan and prioritize projects and will continue to engage staff, both for general feedback and on specific projects. Sixty-eight survey participants said they would be willing to help with the TAP initiative. To get involved, email tapteam@uw.edu.
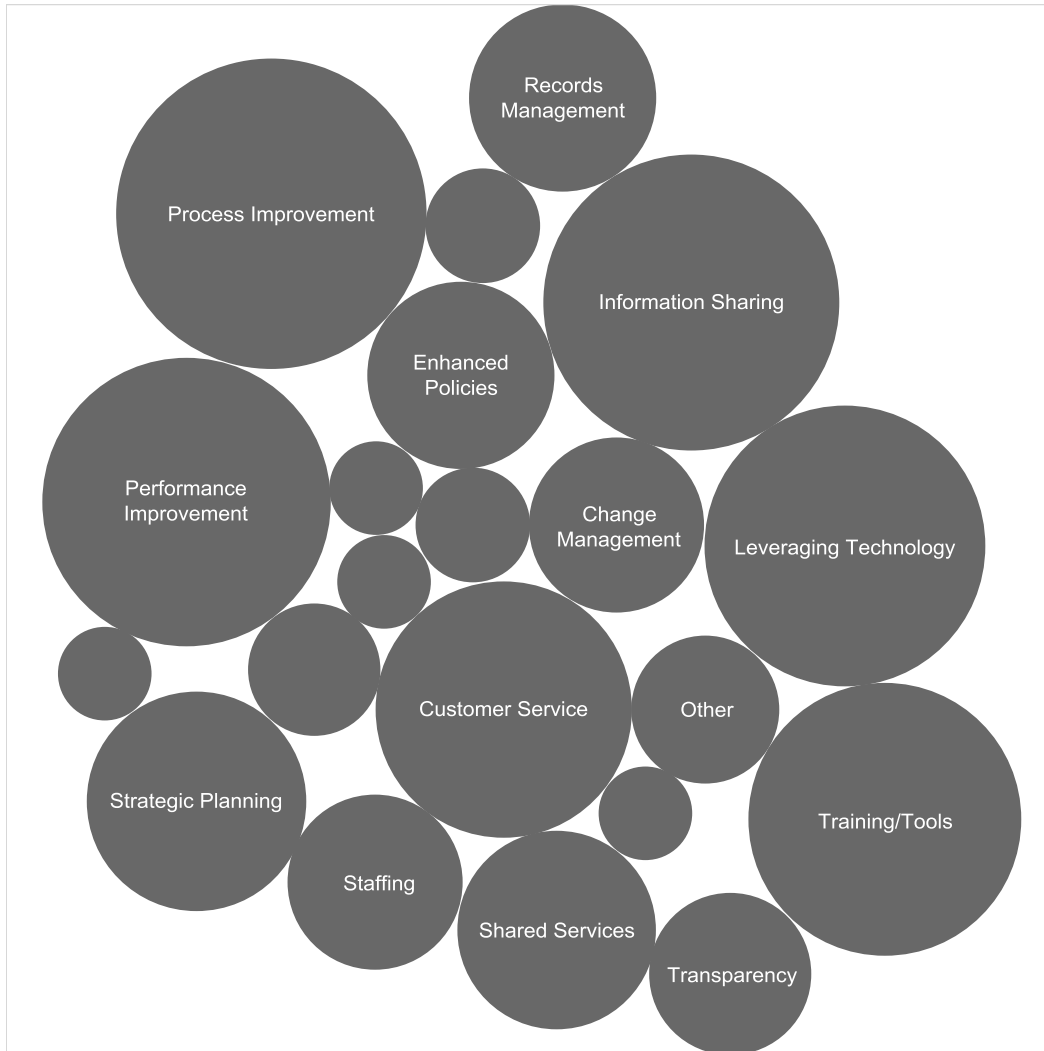
DEPARTMENT	THEMES	DOING WELL	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
General Central Administration	Communications	• Most information is available on a website • Changes are usually communicated in advance • Information is provided in a timely manner • Communication from leadership has improved	• Difficult to navigate and find information on websites • Changes are not always communicated • Communication is top-down and not enough opportunity to provide input to upper leadership
	Customer Service	• Staff respond in a timely manner and are well informed of policies and procedures • Central Administration provides services to a large customer base more efficiently than could be done at the unit level	• Staff are sometimes slow to respond and lack appropriate knowledge • Customer service does not seem to be a priority in some Central Administration units • Answers may vary depending on the person you talk to and there is confusion around who to call for answers
	Policies & Procedures	• Central policies and procedures help to standardize and streamline • Policy briefs are a helpful resource	• Policies and procedures are overly complex, unclear and confusing • Policies and procedures change often and changes are not always communicated • There is a lack of formal policies/procedures and existing ones can be difficult to find
	IT Systems	• The University is making improvements in IT systems • IT security is good	• Antiquated legacy systems have created an overreliance on paper and inefficient processes • There is a lack of coordinated systems and technology management which creates compatibility issues
	Knowledge of Central Administration		• Central Administration needs to be more clearly defined
	Strategic Planning	• Provides a leadership voice for campus and communicates priorities • Sets the mission, vision, and values for the university	• Strategic planning should be more aligned throughout the university departments
Finance & Facilities	Procurement (i.e. Procard, Ariba, Purchasing…)	• Staff in the office are helpful	• Processes are confusing and cumbersome • The subawards transition was messy and disjointed • It takes too long to get subrecipients paid • Difficult technology systems create inefficiencies
	Facilities Construction & Maintenance		• Cost of construction and maintenance projects is too high • Projects take too long • Processes are unclear and communication is poor
	Payroll	• Payroll staff provide great customer service • Payroll processes function well to get everyone reliably paid on time	• There are redundant processes within the time leave reporting system
	Grants and Contract Accounting	• GCA has improved their service and systems	• There is a disconnect between OSP and GCA • Complicated process and difficult systems create transparency issues in grant/contract accounting

DEPARTMENT	THEMES	DOING WELL	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
Office of Research	Sponsored Programs	• Technology systems have improved turnaround times in recent years	• Response time is slow and guidance is unclear and lacking in some areas • The processes are confusing and take too long • The systems are difficult to use and there is inadequate support from OSP • There is a disconnect between OSP and GCA
Human Resources/ Academic HR	Recruiting/Hiring	• The University recruits excellent faculty and staff	• The hiring process takes too long • Hiring Plans are time consuming and unnecessary • Processes are overly complicated and confusing and changes are not communicated well • Policies are overly prescriptive • The offices are understaffed
Planning & Management	ABB/Budgeting	• The budgeting process has improved and staff are helpful	• The ABB model is overly complicated which creates transparency issues • There is a lack of training and documentation around the budgeting process creating inefficiencies • The ABB model discourages collaboration and does not support the University's mission

*This table provides a summary of the high level themes from the survey and is not an exhaustive list of the results

Best Practice Categories

Survey participants were asked to share best practices within their unit or other Central Administration units.

Category bubbles
Records Management
Process Improvement
Information Sharing
Enhanced Policies
Performance Improvement
Change Management
Leveraging Technology
Customer Service
Other
Strategic Planning
Training/Tools
Staffing
Shared Services
Transparency

Examples of best practices within the categories:

Change Management
- HR/P Readiness

Customer Service
- Service standards
- Central email for requests
- Follow-through

Information Sharing
- Administrators meetings
- Staff engagement
- Meeting management

Leveraging Technology
- Team collaboration tools (i.e. Sharepoint)
- Automated processes
- User-friendly websites

Process Improvement
- Lean
- Standard operating procedures

Performance Improvement
- Formal professional development plans
- 360 degree reviews
- Performance measurement

Shared Services
- Central purchasing
- Shared administrative services

Training/Tools
- Budget process tools
- Administrators toolkit