Overview

It is the University’s goal to conduct its business operations as efficiently as possible to maximize resources that can be directed to its core missions of teaching, research and public service. One possible approach is to cluster or elevate selected business functions to the School/Division level that has been traditionally decentralized to the department level. (In this usage, “cluster” and “elevation” have distinct meanings and are defined below.) This approach is anticipated to achieve increased efficiencies and enhance service quality. Human resources and finance/accounting support have been identified as primary consolidation opportunities; however, additional options may exist within some units, including information technology support, sponsored research administration and facilities coordination. These guidelines and procedures have been established to assist Deans and Vice Chancellors in carrying out the transformation of their core administrative functions to achieve the desired efficiency and service improvement outcomes.

Organizational Approaches

Two primary organizational approaches have been identified:

- Unified Business Cluster (UBC): This option offers a UBC manager/director role with subordinate accounting and human resources specialists. This group delivers comprehensive administrative services to a group of departments and centers (see Attachment A for an example). The UBC manager/director is typically an administrative “generalist” (e.g., Business Officer or Business Manager) whose skill set spans the finance and human resources domains. The UBC model elevates the traditional departmental business office to a higher organizational level, and expands the number of departments and/or centers served by such a unit. This approach retains an integrated approach to business operations, but presents challenges in recruiting and retaining the depth of expertise that may be necessary for more advanced consultative services within both the finance and human resources domains. The UBC model also requires that both the human resources and financial functions be consolidated at the same time, when in some circumstances there may be reasons for one or the other to remain decentralized at a departmental level, or to be consolidated on separate timelines.
• Elevated Business Function (EBF): This option involves the creation of separate but equal human resources and finance managers/directors within a School/Division organization or some other group arrangement, as opposed to a UBC led by a single administrative “generalist.” Each manager/director has subordinate specialists who assist in the delivery of their respective services (see Attachment B for an example). This approach may afford the opportunity for the School/Division to accept more delegated authority from central offices, and therefore operate more independently in addressing complex matters, given the higher degree of subject matter expertise and competency available with these specialist roles. It also offers the option to consolidate or elevate one business function (e.g., human resources or finance) instead of both together. For some units, it may be more feasible to elevate one function but leaving the other to continue operating on the departmental level.

Both approaches lessen the number of distributed business office staff that must interact with central University offices, which in turn eases communication and training challenges, and simplifies the implementation and support of core University business systems. Deans and Vice Chancellors have the flexibility to adopt either approach as they work to transform their administrative operations depending on their specific needs and organizational culture. The Office of Human Resources (OHR) is available to assist units in evaluating which model most effectively addresses their needs and the human resources implications of one approach over another.

Technical Assistance

OHR is available to provide consultative assistance to Department Heads in their efforts to plan and implement UBCs or EBFs and has more detailed information to assist in this process. To obtain such assistance, contact OHR’s Director of Classification and Compensation at 962-8099.

Related Documents

• Attachment A: Example Organization Chart for UBC Model
• Attachment B: Example Organization Chart for EDF Model

Prepared By: Office of the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
Attachment A
Example Organizational Chart
for UBC Model

Note: These charts provide an illustration of a possible organization structure. The specific job classifications and number of positions that would be included in an actual organizational structure would vary depending on the scope of responsibilities covered, including number of employees managed from an HR perspective and amount of budget and types of accounts managed from a financial and accounting perspective.
Attachment B
Example Organization Chart
for EBF Model

Note: These charts provide an illustration of a possible organization structure. The specific job classifications and number of positions that would be included in an actual organizational structure would vary depending on the scope of responsibilities covered, including number of employees managed from an HR perspective and amount of budget and types of accounts managed from a financial and accounting perspective.