STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT REVIEW TEAM

Themes from Campus/System Office Feedback
Dec-2012
Background

- During December 2012 and January 2013, the Administrative Review team for Strategic Procurement conducted feedback sessions at all seven campuses and the system office as part of its overall outreach and communication effort.
- The following is a summary, organized by themes, of the comments and suggestions made during the feedback sessions.
- The Administrative Review team is reviewing all of the feedback and soliciting additional feedback.
- The cost saving and efficiency recommendations of this Administrative Review will be informed by this feedback.
- The recommendations will likewise be informed by the additional ideas, research, best practices, statutory and policy considerations, and other information available to the team.
Theme 1 - Flexibility

- Acknowledge that one size will not fit all
- Have a user-friendly exception policy and Standard Operating Procedures
- Exceptions for international travel if system not accessible, useful, or timely
- Consider how grant requirements may affect travel and purchasing
- Consider issues of purchasing timing and storage
- Remember that remote campuses don’t have same robust supply chain
- Policies for unique purchasing circumstances (emergencies, late at night/weekends, booking travel for a team on a shoestring budget, etc.)
- Companies that don’t take P.O.’s
- Rare but critical use of pcard
- Guests, applicants, etc. (both paying for and travel)
- Periodic need to use packaged travel
- Need multiple ways to access travel system (internet, agent, phone, etc.)
- Need exception if I can find a lower cost
- Remember users may not always have access to internet (MaineStreet Marketplace, Travel systems)
- Traveling safe (taxi cabs in New York)
- Traveling smart (cost of time to take 2 leg flight, rather than direct, staying at hotel where conference is held, etc.)
- Servicing student and athletic activities
- Small and low cost items
Theme 2 – Incorporate strong awareness, training, resourcing, and practice as part of rollout.

- Design a robust rollout plan and communicate it well
- Have “go to” people for questions and training
- Allow time for users to learn the systems before they become mandatory (or switched over)
- Build in admin. support for using new systems
- Post APLs (or changes) on website
- Plan for effective project management during implementation
- Utilize user group trials or pilots
Theme 3 – Opportunities for efficiencies and/or savings

- Collaboration with other institutions to get price break because of scale
- Collaboration with other institutions to use their systems
- Collaboration between campuses (i.e., surplus equipment)
- Collection process to keep these ideas flowing into places they can be prioritized and addressed
- Less paper – more electronic submissions and approvals
- Faster turn times on reimbursements and authorizations
- Reduce the bureaucracy
- Standardize laptop and device offerings where appropriate (realizing the need for some non-standard systems)
- Smaller campuses appreciate the assistance with content expertise in specific centralized areas
- Over 50 ideas were collected and more than half are being incorporated directly into the emerging recommendations / administrative review report. 20 ideas will be referred to the new strategic procurement units for further review and action as appropriate
Theme 4 – Implementation Concerns

- Consider “unintended consequences” proactively/ upfront
- Please consider a Pcard spending limits review and review process
- Request that UMS look at “per diems” (especially for regional differences)
- Consider data requirements as new system design (including account codes)
- Define legitimate limits of APLs (if APL doesn’t specifically prohibit, then why do campuses extend requirements / restrictions beyond APL?)
- Increase # of vendors in MaineStreet Marketplace – ask who we need.
- Any travel portal or process needs to be worldwide (not just regional)
- Desire use of specific “cheaper” vendors (Amazon, WalMart, ebay, etc.)
- Desire use of specific “local” vendors
- KISS (Keep it Simple and Straightforward) principle
- Maintain a balance between cost savings and service delivery
Theme 5 – Ensure the University’s mission and people are supported, not hindered

• Build a system that helps good people do good work, not just prevent bad things
• Use commitment paradigm for the approximately 80+% that will do the right thing with proper communication and training
• Use audit and consequences paradigm for those that “do their own thing” after being notified and trained
• Don’t confuse the two categories
Theme 6 – Need to consider total cost of purchasing along with initial cost

- shipping
- storage
- employee time
- cost of delay
- implementation time
- replacement cycle
- warranty
- return / restocking fees
- training
Theme 7 – Seeking more Information

- Desire to understand how this initiative helps with core mission
- Desire to see the data that proves the Return on Investment (ROI) on the recommendations, especially highlighting total cost (including administrative time and from where savings emanate)
- Design systems to allow easy mining of data
- Desire to have timelines more clearly quantified and communicated
Thank You!

The Strategic Procurement Administration Review Team greatly appreciates the constructive comments and suggestions provided by the more than 200 people who participated in the campus and system office feedback sessions. The feedback is already being incorporated into the work of the team. We look forward to additional feedback as we continue with the administrative review process.