**Survey Comments - Broad Summary for myUMBC Group**

Introduction

The Shared Services Centers (SSC) Task Force sent a survey to all faculty and staff (total of 3255 surveys sent) for completion during the month of June.

Total Responses: 477 (~15% of total surveyed)

Respondent categories were:

* + Exempt Staff: 38.2%
  + Non-exempt Staff: 22.3%
  + Faculty: 32.1%
  + Other: 7.3%

429 individual comments were reviewed. The following is a summary of all comments, with responses developed by the Shared Services Communications Work Group:

1. Many respondents asked for a definition of Shared Services Centers.

* **Task Force Response**: SSCs consolidate scarce, yet expert resources into cohesive groups allowing for high levels of customer service, expertise, and compliance. Business processes are improved via standardization and automation resulting in more accurate and timely transactions. Service levels to the University community and external stakeholders are measured and monitored to ensure goals are met. SSCs create a community of cross trained subject matter experts with a customer focused philosophy of service. The University Business Executive Roundtable Report, *Making the Case for Shared Services*, from which the above was adapted, further states, “Typical business support services provided by shared services are human resources, finance, and procurement; other functions—such as marketing, research administration, and facilities—are sometimes included.” 1

1. Why are we establishing Shared Services Centers? What issues are being addressed?

**Task Force Response:** The driving force for establishing this Task Force is the promising future of UMBC and UMBC’s expanding research portfolio. In order to provide appropriate administrative support for all of our employee needs in the areas of human resources recruitment, payroll, procurement, accounts payable, travel, grants and contracts administration (pre and post award), financial management and analysis, IT support, and inventory, we recognized the need to improve business process standards throughout campus. A specific commitment made by President Hrabowski to the Board of Regents to improve our business infrastructure provides additional impetus for change. The “Task Force charge” states this as follows:

UMBC has experienced tremendous growth in many areas in the past decade. Enrollment has increased by nearly 2,000 students, from 11,237 in Fall 2001 to 13,199 in Fall 2011. The total university budget has gone from $239M in FY 2001 to $370M in FY 2013. Externally sponsored research activity has increased 50% from 2000 to 2010 from $64M to $95M. There is consensus that the administrative infrastructure required to effectively manage this growth in both magnitude and complexity has not kept pace. **With the intent to establish a strong platform of financial and administrative management to enable UMBC to continue to thrive and expand**, there is a need to engage a campus-wide group of thought leaders to determine a course of action to make this happen. Many leading research universities across the country have moved to a shared services model, where a strong provider group takes responsibility for all administrative and financial activity previously performed by generalist staff located in individual departments. Through streamlining, consolidation and automation, these models leverage economies of scale to increase service quality of back-office functions.

Some of the benefits realized at other campuses through establishment of these centers include:

* Higher level of specialization allowing for greater assistance in proactively resolving issues.
* Broader knowledge of administrative and financial policies, processes and procedures, providing stronger support and backup for all campus departments.
* Improved transactional flow and accuracy to reduce duplication of effort and errors.
* Greater ability to use technology to improve communications and to report to senior leadership, chairs, directors, faculty and staff.
* Strengthening of all aspects of compliance with external and internal policies and procedures.
* Improved audit results.

As the Task Force developed, the need for business process redesign emerged as critical to any solution. The Task Force researched many possible solutions, including those not directly involving a shared services centers model. Our task is to objectively assess possible solutions and then to match any solution with the particular needs of UMBC – now and for the future.2

1. How will progress continue to be communicated?

**Task Force Response:** We will continue to use the established myUMBC group (<http://my.umbc.edu/groups/ssc>) as well as Town Halls, Insights updates, and additional meetings with key campus shareholders in order to solicit feedback throughout the business process improvement and SSC implementations.

1. Many expressed a need for training and documentation across all business processes.

**Task Force Response:** Appropriate documentation and training (both in person and on line) will be provided for all business processes with a priority focus on the processes included in the centers.

1. How will SSCs be implemented on campus?

**Task Force Response:** Initial Phase I implementation will include two centers: one to support a college and one to support one group of departments/units (NOTE: These terms are used interchangeably throughout this document) in academic affairs. Please refer to the timeline posted on the myUMBC group (<http://my.umbc.edu/groups/ssc>) for more specifics regarding implementation activities.

1. What services will be included in the centers?

**Task Force Response:** Initial services identified by the Task Force and survey responses point to more routine, repeatable tasks as logical choices for inclusion in the centers. These include procurement, accounts payable, hiring, and payroll. Additional tasks will be discussed with the University community as we move forward.

1. How will success be measured?

**Task Force Response:** We will work with the units to be served by the SSCs to establish expectations which will be formalized in service level agreements (SLAs). Metrics defined in the agreements will be used to assess the performance of the Phase I centers. Continuous feedback on performance will provide the basis for future adjustments.

1. Will jobs be lost? How will staff be impacted?

**Task Force Response:** Jobs will not be lost. The intent of the SSCs is to consolidate our scarce, yet expert resources – not to reduce them in any way.

Staff may be impacted due to changing staff levels in the departments being served by the shared services centers. Business processes are being redesigned. Staff members are participating in the redesign of these processes and their implementation to ensure smooth transitions. Training and documentation (including both in person and on-line training modules) will be provided to all impacted staff prior to implementation of new business processes.

1. Will remaining staff in departments be able to cover required tasks?

**Task Force Response:** Yes. The implementation team is committed to working with Human Resources and departments to develop backfill plans to ensure adequate staffing for all departments.

1. SSCs are an excellent idea, however, should only be implemented in some departments (i.e smaller departments or departments without previously established centers).

**Task Force Response:** The full benefits of Shared Services Centers are realized when procedures are standardized, streamlined, and automated for the entire organization. The implementation will be flexible enough to serve the individual needs of each unit serviced. Service level agreements will be developed collaboratively between service center staff and internal customers.

1 Making the Case for Shared Services,

*Lessons for Overcoming Obstacles to Business Process Reform*

University Business Executive Roundtable Report - 2009

*2*Task Force Report Issued 4/4/13, Section II

[Link to Shared Services Centers Task Force Report](http://my.umbc.edu/system/shared/attachments/179113cd9a4a3149b3e7d53727ffe08e/521621e3/group-documents/000/003/875/07dd4d5a72f5740ef0f035f201951476/Shared%20Services%20Centers%20Task%20Force%20Report.pdf?1364949289)