



A November 2011 response to the question “What will administration of Universities look like in the 21st Century?” with input from the Organizational Effectiveness initiative based on projects to date, research and interactions with national peer institutions.

Administration for the 21st Century

...operates more effectively and efficiently to focus on core values

Our administrative units will operate at the same high standards as our faculty and students. Departments will improve core processes, enabling them to focus on the UW's core mission of education, discovery, and service. They will work across campus to streamline and automate services, eliminate duplication, and reduce complexity and waste. Groups will share ideas and improvements to enable departments to be more nimble and better meet the needs of students, scholars, and the community. Through more efficient operations and a focus on the customer, departments will free up resources, improving their sustainability and capacity to focus on their most meaningful activities.

...collaborates across departments to decrease costs and improve services

Collaboration will allow us to develop new approaches to improve service in ways that also decrease cost. Implementation across campus of best practices, automation, and process standardization will enable units to offer streamlined and/or new services to their customers, including faculty, students, and staff, resulting in decreased processing time for both the customer and the department or work unit. Many departments and units across the UW are already partnering to share services and best practices, facilitate improvements, and grow capacity.

...creates a culture of continuous innovation

A nimble workforce that can identify issues, proactively solve problems, and adapt to increasing demands will be critical for a rapidly changing university. Empowering leaders and staff across units and departments to plan strategically and continuously improve processes will result in a flexible workforce of employees who are motivated, engaged, and rapidly meet new challenges in efficient and innovative ways.

...demonstrates performance through data

The UW will rely on evidence-based decision making at every level regarding critical aspects of running academic and administrative units, including data on students, such as credit hours; staff FTE; and other issues. Service improvements and programmatic changes will be informed by a firm understanding of available resources and potential gains. Performance of units and departments will be continuously reevaluated by meaningful accountability measures. Through a solid understanding of data and benchmarking against best practices, departments will be able to adapt to changes quickly and deliver better and more efficient services.

... is fiscally and environmentally sustainable

Through planning and process improvements, departments will be able to make investments in more efficient, sustainable core operations that better serve the UW's mission of education, discovery and service. Environmental and financial sustainability will converge as short-term improvements in efficiency and effectiveness lead to long-term gains in capacity and resources. Process improvements to service delivery through use of automation and digital infrastructure will decrease reliance on paper-based services, increasing efficiency and decreasing use of resources. Business practices will be more fiscally sustainable as departments and units engage in long-term resource planning. Increasing sustainability through innovation will allow the UW to protect its core mission and continue to nurture the experimentation at the heart of discovery.