

## **ERP/Finance Transformation Project**

As discussed at the last meeting of the Audit Committee, Gwen Canady has been hired to lead the ERP/Finance Transformation Project and has spent her first three weeks building on the financial assessment completed by Ernst and Young and communicating with individuals and groups to ensure that everyone understands the directive of President Bowles and the Board of Governors regarding both the short-term and long-term goals of this project. She has met with all those to be involved in the project that work at General Administration as well as various campus representatives (CFOs, CIOs, CAOs, HR Council, and Financial Aid Directors) to outline the overall objectives and timelines and receive valued feedback.

The project team will include GA employees as well as current and former campus employees with significant university expertise. New hires on the team will include young professionals in an effort to build an experienced workforce that will ultimately be available for hire by the campuses or work in the shared services center. Ernst and Young resources will continue to be used to jump-start the project with the use of these resources diminishing during the year as the university team is fully staffed. In addition to the high risk process areas previously discussed (General Accounting, Payroll, Financial Aid, Contracts & Grants and Procure to Pay); team members will have an additional area of concentration - data analysis and cleansing. Some campuses will require more remedial efforts to ensure they have a stronger foundation for the process improvements.

Work has begun in earnest in the contracts and grants area. Under the leadership of Sarah Smith, Director of Sponsored Programs at GA, the process improvements recommended by Ernst & Young were already being developed. Working with Sarah and five subject matter experts from the campuses, the developed standards and templates required in the contracts and grants area are being pressure tested and validated. As a result, this area will be the first to be fully addressed by all the campuses. In addition to work in the contracts and grants area, during November strategic planning and design sessions will occur in the payroll arena and important decisions will be made to allow that project to proceed for the nine campuses converting from the current central payroll system to a university-based payroll system.

To ensure that the project is appropriately resourced for success, a request for funding has been included in the University's expansion budget now under consideration by the Board. The request for recurring funding is for \$3 million in the 2009-10 year with an additional \$2 million in the 2010-11 year.

The overall goal remains to have the short-term improvements (policies, procedures, checklists, and performance indicators) developed and rolled out to the campuses by the end of April 2009, provide monitoring and assistance during May and June, and have all campuses consistently reporting by July 1st. For the long-term improvements, the plan is to have a shared services environment designed and partially implemented by the end of this fiscal year with full implementation to be accomplished over a two to three year period.