

Improved Service Delivery at Iowa State University

Status Report November 14, 2018

Prepared for: Dr. Wendy Wintersteen, President

Prepared by: Institutional Effectiveness Leadership Team (IELT) Super Group
Pam Cain, Interim Senior Vice President for Finance and University Services
Kristen Constant, Interim Vice President and Chief Information Officer
Kristi Darr, Interim Vice President for Human Resources
Chad Gasta, Chair of the Department Chairs Council
Martino Harmon, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs
Megan Landolt, Assistant to the President for Communications (*ex officio*)
John Lawrence, Vice President for Extension and Outreach
Peter Martin, President of Faculty Senate
Sarah Nusser, Vice President for Research
Stacy Renfro, President of P&S Council
Beate Schmittmann, Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Jonathan Wickert, Senior Vice President and Provost

Preamble

Iowa State University is fortunate to have exceptional staff, faculty and administrators. We are also a lean institution; our staff and faculty work hard every day to advance excellence across our missions in the most efficient, effective ways possible. To support their efforts, it is critical that employees have the proper tools, technology, training and direction to be successful.

To that end, Iowa State is undergoing a comprehensive modernization effort to upgrade technology, improve business processes, and rethink the university's organizational structure. Specifically, the transition to Workday provides an opportunity to build on our employees' strengths by redesigning how we organize and deliver services in Human Resources and Finance. The goals of this Improved Service Delivery initiative are to:

- Improve the staff and faculty experience
- Better support the missions of Iowa State and our units
- Enhance our culture of service

We recognize that change of this magnitude can cause anxiety and uncertainty. Staff are understandably concerned how their jobs might be impacted. Faculty ask whether their administrative workloads might increase. We are committed to a collaborative, supportive, and transparent process with the ultimate goal of positioning staff, faculty and the university as a whole for a sustainable, successful future.

Background

In 2016, Iowa State University (ISU) decided to replace its outdated legacy systems with Workday, a modern Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. The Workday modules for Financial Management, Payroll and Human Capital Management (HCM) were slated for implementation first, with the Student module to follow later. A major implementation and change management process, branded [WorkCyte](#), was launched, including a comprehensive effort to implement Workday and streamline ISU's business processes. Workday will go live with the business modules on July 1, 2019.

In parallel to the Workday implementation and the business process improvement efforts, conversations also began regarding how to improve service delivery at ISU, specifically in the domains most impacted by the new ERP, namely finance and human resources (HR). A first effort to implement Improved Service Delivery (ISD) stalled in 2017 when key campus constituencies expressed concerns regarding insufficient information and input. A wider

discussion followed during the second half of 2017, including visits to the University of Kansas and the University of Iowa to learn about the models these institutions had adopted.

In February 2018, President Wintersteen charged a team of administrators to develop a plan to implement Improved Service Delivery at Iowa State University. The *Institutional Effectiveness Leadership Team* (IELT) was also asked to establish a strong stakeholder communication strategy to inform and engage staff, faculty and students. The team consists of senior vice presidents Pam Cain (interim, Finance and University Services), Martino Harmon (Student Affairs) and Jonathan Wickert (Academic Affairs); vice presidents Kristen Constant (interim, Chief Information Officer), Kristi Darr (interim, University Human Resources) and John Lawrence (Extension and Outreach); and co-chairs vice president Sarah Nusser (Research) and dean Beate Schmittmann (College of Liberal Arts and Sciences).

The IELT reviewed the history of ISD at Iowa State, reviewed the information gathered from visits to the University of Kansas and the University of Iowa, reviewed the WorkCyte project and its relationship to ISD, and discussed various potential models. Early on, the IELT placed a priority on supporting timely implementation of Workday and confirmed the WorkCyte project's assumption that new business processes would be performed by functional specialists. In visiting other institutions, the IELT learned that it is essential to also consider impacts on affected non-specialist employees and committed to considering these employees as part of the transition process in any approved model.

As the Workday implementation progressed, it became apparent that a merger of the Workday and ISD projects was essential to ensure seamless coordination and communication between the two efforts. To integrate discussions among ISD and Workday development and address the need to include key campus stakeholders, a larger group, called the IELT Super Group, was formed. In addition to the Workday Program Sponsors and IELT members, this group also includes Peter Martin, president of the Faculty Senate; Stacy Renfro, president of the Professional & Scientific Council; and Chad Gasta, chair of the Department Chairs Council. To facilitate outreach and communication, Megan Landolt, assistant to the president for communications, was also added to the IELT and IELT Super Group as an *ex officio* member. The IELT Super Group established goals for ISD, developed the models summarized below, and created the campus outreach plan and presentation.

The plan for campus outreach was to make presentations to several stakeholder groups and hold town halls early in the fall. During October 2018, the co-chairs delivered the ISD Campus Outreach presentation – which describes the case for change and the proposed models – at 16 different venues, including two campus-wide town halls. Information about ISD and FAQs

(frequently asked questions) were posted in a [special section of the WorkCyte website](#). Questions asked during outreach presentations were compiled and reviewed, along with questions and concerns submitted online through the WorkCyte website. The [FAQs](#) were updated to include information throughout the outreach period. In response to feedback and questions received, a third town hall was convened to provide more details on the ISD models with Interim SVP Pam Cain (Finance) and Interim VP Kristi Darr (HR). The IELT Super Group reviewed all feedback received through October 31, 2018, and incorporated it into this update for President Wendy Wintersteen.

Key features of proposed ISD models

The following principles guided the development of the proposed models:

- Staff should maintain knowledge of the missions and activities of the specific units they serve.
- Business processes should be completed by HR and Finance specialists, who are accountable for their work and provided with the tools and training to exercise good judgement.
- The level of service should be measured, with high-quality, reliable, accurate, consistent, and efficient support provided at each step along the entire process chain.
- Processes and policies should be practical, current, and transparent to all involved, yet flexible enough to enable exceptions where appropriate to serve the University's mission.
- ISU should strive to provide staff with career paths and opportunities for professional development and improved job satisfaction.
- The new ISD structure should ensure appropriate, balanced staff workloads.
- The new ISD structure should alleviate and support the administrative workload of faculty.
- The new ISD structure should be cost neutral at the institutional level, other than one-time expenses required for successful implementation.
- An advisory structure should be developed which reviews and provides input into overall performance, benefits and costs of the ISD structure.

In what follows, we discuss the major characteristics of the proposed ISD models. We describe new organizational structures which allow staff to work in teams led by supervisors with functional expertise and provide better opportunities for professional development, training, workload balancing, and backup. The teams will be aligned with the units they serve to ensure understanding of the specific needs, goals, and cultures of these units.

First, services in HR and Finance are best provided by staff who are experts in these areas. These *functional specialists* have job responsibilities which focus entirely on HR or entirely on finance. The transition to Workday eliminates many intermediate steps in our business process workflows which implies that the few steps that remain (from first entry into Workday to final approval) are critical and must be correct.

Second, these staff will *work in teams with supervisors who are themselves experts in HR or Finance*. This provides several benefits. Staff will have peers who are available to support and mentor each other, and staff will have supervisors who fully understand their work and are therefore able to provide expert guidance, professional development, constructive feedback and substantive evaluations. The new structure also provides opportunities for workload balancing and backup that are missing in today's organizational structure.

Third, the new models will create *unified service organizations*. In the HR domain, staff in the new organizational structure will deliver HR functions and services for the whole campus and report up through the VP for University Human Resources (UHR). In the Finance domain, staff will report up through the SVP for Finance and the new structure will support financial activities for the university related to financial accounting in Workday and compliance-related financial activities related to procurement, travel and post-award. High-level, mission-driven fiscal work (e.g. financial strategic planning and budget development, analysis and approvals for larger campus organizations such as colleges will remain directly within these organizations.

Notably, the new unified service organizations will be better positioned to provide consistent training and professional development for their staff, offer advancement opportunities to staff with excellent qualifications and leadership potential, and empower staff to provide the best possible service within ISU's policies and procedures.

Ensuring accountability and responsiveness

To support accountability and responsiveness to unit needs, the proposed new models will leverage *two types of supervisory relationships: the solid and the dotted line*. The solid line connects a supervisor and her/his direct report. The solid line supervisor is responsible for ensuring a culture of customer service and accountability to the mission of the unit(s) served, leading hiring processes and staff performance management in collaboration with dotted line supervisors, and managing teams to provide workload balancing and backup for supported units. The dotted line supervisor works with the solid line supervisor in hiring staff and managing their performance, ensuring a culture of service and accountability, and providing

operational direction in ensuring the unit's missions are being served, including input on procedure and policy development.

Another critical component for accountability and responsiveness is an explicit emphasis on deepening ISU's existing *culture of customer service*. ISU employees already exhibit a very strong commitment to the mission and the people of the units they serve, but ISU has not explicitly provided a dedicated training program that enables staff to expand their capacity to effectively serve the missions of units they support. Training will include developing expertise in relevant policies and guidelines, as well as best practices in serving customers in their assigned units.

The success of these relationships also hinges on close *collaboration* among employees in HR and Finance, and the units they serve, including explicit expectations about services provided and a continuous discussion on how to improve service in response to information that will be available through Workday on workload, turn-around and other metrics that are important to monitoring excellent service.

Feedback

Hundreds of comments were received via the ISD website, and all questions asked at the campus outreach sessions were noted. Many of them are addressed on the [Improved Service Delivery FAQ](#) web page. Some of the most common questions were:

- What do the job profiles (position descriptions) of the functional specialist roles look like? When will they be available?
- How are units defined?
- Will merit staff be impacted?
- What will happen to the jobs of staff who decide not to move into a specialist role?
- Who will make the decision on how to fill the new specialist roles?
- When will more information be available?
- How will ISD impact the P&S Classification and Compensation review that is currently ongoing?
- If my position changes, will this change my classification?
- How will these new structures be built into the ISU budget?

Numerous conversations with P&S Council showed that even while staff members are not opposed to change, they still experience a deep sense of uncertainty and feel that they cannot support the models until more information is available. A motion passed by P&S Council on October 31, 2018, articulated those concerns.

Going forward

In light of this feedback, the IELT Super Group has developed a path forward which includes incremental phases. This update provides a summary of the first phase and the current status of the IELT Super Group's work. Going forward, we plan to develop more information and specifics to clarify some of the currently unknown features of the HR and Finance models, which will be shared with the campus community. The IELT Super Group plans to complete and has begun work on the following topics:

- Continue to work closely with the WorkCyte program to ensure that Workday implementation and ISD activities remain coordinated and support one another;
- Develop draft job profiles for the new positions, including HR partner, HR coordinator, finance manager and finance specialist;
- Provide specifics regarding the financial and human resources responsibilities that remain with units versus the ones that transition to the finance and human resources service models;
- Develop a first draft of how units are defined; and
- Continue to emphasize campus communication and outreach efforts, including articles in *Inside Iowa State*, Improved Service Delivery emails, additional town halls, and other communication vehicles as appropriate.

The successful implementation of Workday is a very high priority for the university. In working with the WorkCyte program, the IELT Super Group learned that a commitment to two critical features of the ISD models is required by November 26, 2018, to continue making timely progress with Workday:

- Functional specialists will perform business processes associated with Workday, and
- HR specialists will have a solid line reporting relationship to University HR; finance specialists will have a solid line reporting relationship to the Finance Division.

The rationale for these features was detailed above, including the need for teams and supervisors with high levels of expertise and the benefits of unified service organizations for training, accountability and backup. They are also essential for framing responses to the most commonly asked questions. The IELT Super Group affirms its readiness to move forward with implementing these features.

Based on work to date, the IELT Super Group plans the following actions as part of its phase 2 activities:

- Begin initial hiring for associate vice president positions for UHR and Finance, who will lead the work for continuing to develop and implement ISD models;

- Continue identifying information needed for successful and timely Workday implementation;
- Clarify responsibilities performed by ISD teams vs. responsibilities performed by staff in units;
- Develop draft HR position descriptions, communicate to campus and complete final versions;
- Develop draft Finance position descriptions, communicate to campus and complete final versions;
- Draft unit scenarios for senior administrators to review, including estimates for number and sizes of ISD HR and Finance teams, communicate to campus and establish final form; and
- Submit second status update to President Wintersteen early in the new calendar year.

The IELT Super Group respectfully requests that President Wintersteen endorse this proposed approach.