EMORY UNIVERSITY 2012-2013 Assessment Report for Administrative and Educational Support Units Assessment Period Covered: September 1, 2012-August 31, 2013	

Unit: Business Practice Improvement (BPI)	**Date Submitted:** October 2013
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I.   MISSION STATEMENT

The office of Business Practice Improvement (BPI) serves Emory University as an internal project management and consultancy. Driven by a set of principles and values (see attachments), BPI works to help the university operate in a more efficient and effective manner.

The results of BPI's projects help to move the university forward in its operations and goals. We measure our success through the successes of our projects. This includes both positive outcomes that improve a broad university-wide function, as well as enhancements that enhance efficiency and effectiveness on a more local scale.

BPI additionally measures its effectiveness as a performance improvement facilitator across the university. This includes direct project work to drive outcomes, as well as facilitation of other schools and operational units in self-driven improvement efforts. BPI is further effective by changing performance, processes, and productivity across the institution, striving to instill a culture that seeks to improve administrative performance, adopt positive change, and embrace new opportunities.

II. OUTCOMES

Outcome #1: Summary

Project to manage the implementation of a new corporate card and refine and revise policies and controls around the card and travel and expense procedures. BPI provided project management resources to guide the change management and implementation of the new charge cards. Project management activities included:

- Design of the overall timeline of the project
- Provision of oversight over the technical and functional work streams
- Current state data and process analysis
- Future state design
- Communications and outreach to campus stakeholders
- Training plan development
- Post implementation reporting and evaluation

Among others, outcomes measured the adoption of the Emory corporate card for travel and appropriate local business expenses, which translated to time savings, efficiencies, and improved controls.

Outcome #2: Summary

As part of a comprehensive effort to improve and transform the university's research administration (RA) efforts, two specific efforts were undertaken:

- Simplification and standardization of job descriptions for research administration personnel within research administration services units.
- Development of a three-step methodology to objectively evaluate and place current staff into these new positions.

Outcomes measured the reduction of the number of job descriptions for research administration roles, as well as the effectiveness of the three-step process to place staff into new RAS positions.

Outcome #3: Summary

A project to improve and standardize the process for financial reconciliation of extramurally sponsored research programs and reporting to the sponsor was undertaken. This involved i) analysis of current processes, ii) determining best practice and defining a standardized process, iii) developing standard procedures to operationalize the best-practice process flow, iv) developing and testing of new computer reports and associated reconciliation template, v) developing a university-wide roll-out plan and training materials.

Outcomes sought to reduce the time taken for the reconciliation of federally-funded sponsored projects, to create and roll-out an efficient electronic tool to aid this reconciliation, and to standardize the related process. These would reduce time and errors, as well as improve efficiency and effectiveness in these processes.

III.   ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

OUTCOME #1:
BPI led a university-wide initiative to improve adoption and utilization of the university corporate card for travel and local business expenses. This included revision of policies and procedures to simplify operations and incent corporate card use in lieu of personal cards or cash.   It also included robust communication efforts regarding the benefits of corporate card adoption, as well as a transition to a Visa card from American Express. Increased usage of the corporate card (in lieu of personal cards or cash) would benefit the institution through improving efficiency, lowering processing costs, and enabling better controls.

Outcome: A significant increase in Corporate Card adoption by faculty and staff to reduce costs and staff effort required for processing travel reimbursements.

Supports School/Division Strategic Goals:
Meets BPI's goal of bringing 'evidence-based' improvements to the university's business operations, improving efficiency and effectiveness, and reducing the institution's costs.

Supports University Strategic Goals:
This result enhances overall university financial effectiveness, improves fiscal strength via better controls, and enhances effective stewardship of university resources.

FIRST METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #1:

Method of Assessment:
BPI collected data by shadowing 20 expense submitters in various schools and units. We measured the time required to process expense reports with charges made with personal payment methods versus charges made with a Corporate Card to determine the time saved per submitter/per report. We used average salary data to determine the value of the time saved per report. We then used multiplied the total saved/per report by the average number of expense reports submitted for personal card expenses to arrive at a total potential per year savings.

Achievement Target:
Reduce Emory costs related to submitting and processing expense reports by shifting Emory business expenditures away from personal card (or cash) to the Emory Corporate Card.

Summary of Assessment Results:
Total corporate cardholders increased significantly from 1,136 American Express cardholders to 2,935 Visa cardholders as of October 1, 2013. BPI found that on average, 38.6 minutes are saved per report when processing corporate card expenses versus personal card expenses. With the current increase in overall Corporate Card adoption (8.7% of population to 22.4%), this should save Emory over $200,000 per year in administrative costs.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
This data was used to support the outcomes of the BPI project, including enhancements to the Travel & Expense system, as well as policy changes that incent faculty and staff to use the Corporate Card.

SECOND METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #1:

Method of Assessment:
BPI tracked the adoption rate of the Corporate Card prior to the launch of the new card and the enhancements to the travel and expense system. This allowed us to establish a baseline for card usage, both in the numbers of faculty and staff cardholders and in percent of total applicable expense dollars routed through the card. Following the launch of the new card, enhancements to the travel and expense system, and related procedural and policy improvements, BPI tracked the increase in faculty and staff members obtaining a Corporate Card.
Achievement Target:
Significantly increase faculty and staff adoption rate of the Corporate Card, with a goal of at least doubling card usage.
Summary of Assessment Results:
Previously 9% of faculty and staff were Corporate Card holders.   As of August 2013, the adoption rate is approximately 23.4%, exceeding our goal of doubling corporate card adoption.
Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
This increases the number of managed expenditures and provides Emory with better data on its expenses. This improves our controls and business analytics. The success of the Corporate Card supports the need to continue to incent staff and faculty to use the Corporate Card as a preferred payment method for Emory business expenses.

OUTCOME #2:
As part of another project, BPI has led a comprehensive effort to improve and transform the university's research administration (RA) efforts. The most significant part of this project was the development of a set of Research Administration Services (RAS) units, which would be school-based, adopt RA personnel from the departments served, and provide consistent service to faculty.

A key element of this RAS effort was to simplify and standardize the job descriptions utilized for school-based research administration personnel as they move to a new research administration services unit (RAS) model. In addition, BPI sought to develop a method to objectively evaluate and place current staff into these new positions.

Outcomes: Appreciably reduce the number of job descriptions for research administration roles. Develop a process that effectively places existing selected staff from a myriad of prior RA-related positions into new RAS positions.

Supports School/Division Strategic Goals:
Meets BPI's goal of bringing 'evidence-based' improvements to the university's business operations, improving efficiency and effectiveness, and reducing the institution's administrative costs.

Supports University Strategic Goals:
Emory stewards its financial and other resources to drive activities that are essential, as well as drive those through which Emory can demonstrate excellence and provide leadership.

This outcome enhances overall university financial effectiveness, improves fiscal strength via better controls, and enhances effective stewardship of university resources. This outcome further enhances Emory's work environment through articulation of clear job descriptions, expectations, and potential career paths.

FIRST METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #2:

Method of Assessment:
To assess this outcome, baseline data was collected on the titles of staff performing research administration activities in schools and units. Specifically, a survey was sent out to all departments in schools and units asking for titles of staff performing research administration activities and the percentage of time spent on these research administration activities. This information was validated through numerous meetings with school and department officials.

This baseline data provided the number of different titles that were used for staff performing research administration related activities within schools and departments. (The RA-related

activities of these personnel would move the RAS units, resulting in the movement of those professionals who focused on RA to move to the RAS as well.)

Given the repetition, variability, and duplication of job titles, it was determined that over 100 different job titles were being used for department, and school professionals performing RA activities. To further validate this result, this 100+ number was compared to new research administration titles that had been recorded as created for staff in research administration positions in schools/units.

Achievement Target:
To achieve a significant reduction of the number of job titles (>100) used for school and department RA personnel. A severely reduced assemblage of titles would be applied to the new RAS units.

Summary of Assessment Results:
The validated list of over 100 job titles historically applied to school and department RA personnel was reduced to a formal set of 15 new job titles for these roles in the new RAS units. This is a decrease of 85% in the number of job titles for research administration staff in schools and units. This improvement eliminates duplication, improves clarity, and provides clear position structures and opportunities for RAS staff.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
The results of this assessment indicated that we were able to decrease the number of research administration titles. We have begun to transition staff from current titles to new titles as they migrate to RAS units from their departments. To date, about 40% of RA personnel in departments have transitioned to these new titles, which is on schedule with the overall rollout of RAS units across the university. It will be important to continue transitioning RA staff to these new titles as they become part of new RAS units.

SECOND METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #2:

Method of Assessment:
To assess effective placement of existing staff into these new positions, a comprehensive three-step process of mapping staff from current positions to new positions was developed. Then, a survey was administered to those who had gone through this process to gather feedback and improve the process.

To develop the three-step process, BPI worked with Organizational Development experts within Emory's central Human Resources unit. Key activities included:
- Sixteen competencies were identified that are necessary for success in each of the new job positions.
- A rating scale (with examples) was developed to allow managers to assess staff skills for

each of the 16 competencies.
- ▪ This created <u>Step 1</u> (of the aforementioned three-step process), <u>Manager Assessments of Staff.</u>
- Tests were developed for some of the competencies to supplement the manager ratings. Input into this process was provided by both Human Resources experts and also managers who would be participating in the process.
- ▪ This created <u>Step 2, Staff Assessments.</u>
- Finally, to ensure that the process was as objective as possible, it was determined that a calibration session will held with all managers providing input and Human Resources staff to ensure that similar interpretations of ratings occurred. Staff moving into the new job positions would go through this objective and standard process.
- ▪ This results in <u>Step 3, Calibration Meeting.</u>

To garner feedback on this process, two surveys were administered at the end of the assessments of the initial RAS personnel.
- ▪ One survey was administered to staff after they had completed Step 2 (Staff Assessments). The survey asked staff how relevant the assessments were to their position on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 indicates very relevant).
- ▪ The other survey was administered to managers after they had completed Steps 1 and Steps 3 (Manager Assessments of Staff and Calibration meeting). The survey asked managers how fair they felt the overall assessment process was on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 indicates very fair).

Achievement Target:
This process will be effective at mapping all current staff into new positions at RAS units.

The effectiveness of testing and evaluation processes similar to these have been validated by Organizational Development research. However, BPI recognized that our process must also be recognized as fair and effective for Emory and its RAS units. Specifically, we sought to understand and measure whether RAS staff feel the assessments were relevant to their positions, and whether managers feel that the overall testing and evaluation process was fair.
- ▪ For staff, if the average score (from the aforementioned staff survey) to the question "Relevancy of assessments to position" is greater than 7, then the assessments were viewed as relevant to the process.
- ▪ For managers, if the average score (from the manager survey) for the question "How relevant are the assessments to the position?" is greater than 7, then the process was viewed as fair.

Summary of Assessment Results:
As of September 2013, the staff from three RAS units, a total of 37 staff, have been mapped to the new positions. These staff were surveyed. For that staff survey, there were 20 respondents. The average score for the question "relevancy of assessments to position" was 3.25.

For the manager survey, there were 7 respondents. The average score for the question "How relevant are the assessments to the position?" was 8.29.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
Given the results of the manager survey, it appeared that the process that was developed to move staff into new positions was perceived as a fair process by RAS managers.

However, given the results from the staff survey, more work is being done to evaluate the assessments given to staff and determine which questions and assessments provide meaningful data to assess the competencies of staff needed to succeed in the new positions.

Moreover, potential bias is also being evaluated as a contributing factor to the low staff score to this question. Staff members are change-resistant, and this is a particularly strong cultural norm at Emory. Change is scary. Testing can be unsettling. There is some validity to the view that the staff score is low due to their resistance to the overall process, not a true reflection of the testing and placement approach.

OUTCOME #3:
Federal research grants require a final Federal Financial Report (FFR) to be completed and submitted within 90 days of a grants ending. To develop the FFR, Emory research administration personnel need to reconcile all expenditures on the grant, making adjustments and journal entries as necessary. For large federal grants, this can be a substantial effort. There had been no formal process developed to complete FFR reconciliation. Moreover, Emory's grants accounting system (PeopleSoft) did not produce one standard report to enable reconciliation, resulting in RA personnel having to utilize multiple reports to crosswalk and verify expenditures.

Outcome: The outcomes sought, and completed, were three-fold:
1. Reduce the amount of time it takes to reconcile a extramurally funded sponsored projects.
2. Develop an efficient electronic tool to aid in FFR reconciliation.
3. Standardize the process for financial reconciliation of extramurally-sponsored programs in order to reduce time and errors.

Supports School/Division Strategic Goals:
Meets BPI's goal of bringing 'evidence-based' improvements to the university's business operations, improving efficiency and effectiveness, and reducing the institution's administrative costs.
- Harmonization of business processes across the university's schools and operating units
- Ensure the highest quality of service to extramural sponsors and faculty in the prosecution of the University's missions.
- Develop the highest confidence in our compliance with sponsor requirements and regulations.

Supports University Strategic Goals:
Emory stewards its financial and other resources to drive activities that are essential and those through which Emory can demonstrate excellence and provide leadership. This outcome enhances overall university financial effectiveness, improves fiscal processes, enables clear controls, and enhances stewardship of university resources.

FIRST METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #3:

Method of Assessment:
BPI measured the time taken to collect relevant data, identify key data elements, and perform financial reconciliation for federally sponsored programs. BPI collected this information via a representative test sample of awards, which reflected the range of size and complexity of Emory's grant portfolio. These sample (test) reconciliations were performed by a group of 10 experienced research administrators.

BPI, working with the central Office of Grants and Contract Administration (OGCA), developed three critical items to improve FFR reconciliation:
1. A new PeopleSoft report that collects and collates necessary information for an award – by project – into a standard format that can be applied to:
2. A robust Excel-based financial tool, called the Award Review and Reconciliation Tool (ARRT), which uploads the aforementioned PeopleSoft report, organizes it by project, and provides a template and process for reconciliation and recording of necessary accounting journal entries.
3. Standardized procedures and processes, including detailed instruction guides and job aids, for FFR reconciliation.

Achievement Targets:
The target was to reduce the total end-to-end time for reconciliation by a 20% average across all steps in the reconciliation process.

Many individual workflow elements could not be targeted for reduction. However, it was determined that substantial gains in efficiency could be made in the overall FFR process flow. To achieve the overall 20% goal of reduced FFR processing time, the main elements within the total FFR process flow targeted for reduction included:
   a) Reduce time taken to collect relevant financial records by 80%
   b) Reduce time taken to identify costs incorrectly charged as direct costs to a grant by 80%
   c) Reduce time taken to identify errors in charges incorporated into the base direct cost used to calculate reimbursement of indirect costs by 80%
   d) Reduce time taken to locate source documents and verify allowability of identified charges by 20%
   e) Reduce time taken to make correcting journal entries in the university's accounting system of record for costs verified as disallowed by 5%
   f) Reduce time taken by central Office of Grants & Contracts to review reconciliations by 20%, as averaged across a representative range of grant complexities.

Summary of Assessment Results:
During testing and initial application of the new PeopleSoft report, the new ARRT tool, and the new standard processes, the time savings were evaluated for each element in the process flow and compared to the estimates/targets made at the start of the project.

The overall time savings end-to-end averaged out at 24% across the university's portfolio of federally sponsored research. This exceeded the desired goal of 20%.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
The positive results from the new PeopleSoft report, the new ARRT tool, and the new related procedures, has warranted the roll-out of the FFR Reconciliation Tool to all research administrators, university-wide.

SECOND METHOD OF ASSESSMENT FOR OUTCOME #3:

Method of Assessment:
The Business Practice Improvement Office will remain as a primary point of contact for users of the new ARRT tool for several months after the university-wide roll-out, prior to a handoff to OGCA. BPI will measure the success of the new PeopleSoft report, the ARRT tool, and new FFR procedures. To achieve this goal, there will be two outcomes collected and analyzed:

1. Collection of requests for modifications, improvements and enhancements to the tool, which BPI will incorporate into a subsequent release of the template in late 2013.
   - These requests will be qualitatively analyzed to identify issues that could have been identified and incorporated into the beta or first release version. This is a part of BPI's continuous quality improvement (CQI) efforts, further allowing judgments to be made as to the accuracy and efficacy of BPI's assessment, design, build, and implementation methodologies.
2. Follow-up survey with the initial testing and adoption groups to confirm that savings achieved with initial tests are replicated in the production environment.
   - This will also include "spot-audits" of a cross-section of a representative sample of sponsored award close-outs to determine not only the total timing but also the time/cost saving from error reduction due to standardization of processes.

Achievement Target:
Maintain overall time savings in excess of 20% during long-term operation.

Summary of Assessment Results:
Initial assessments of these desired outcomes are positive, yet preliminary. Additional information and more robust results will be available after full roll-out of these new enhancements, slated for late 2013 and early 2014.

Use of Assessment Results to Improve Unit Services:
BPI frequently has to assess operating processes that, historically, have had high error rates. This necessitates additional process-steps for quality checking. Ongoing analysis of the impact of the FFR Template on error reduction will inform the university of the potential benefits of implementing "zero-defect" design criteria at earlier stages in many other process flows.

IV. **What outcomes will your unit assess next year?**

Outcome: Successful launch of additional Research Administrative Services (RAS) units. These are directly linked to official FY2014 BPI Goals.	
Method: BPI staff to help drive the launch of between 3 and 5 additional RAS units in FY2014. It involves logistical, operational, fiscal, and personnel elements of launching these new units. BPI will both collaborate and provide direct support to the Associate Vice President (AVP) for RAS units in this process, bolstering her efforts with our knowledge and resources.	**Achievement Target: FY2014** • Successful of between three and five new RAS units during FY2014. • Continued successful support of the AVP-RAS in the launch and ongoing operations of RAS units, as necessary and appropriate.
Method: BPI staff will directly drive and support RAS-related implementation efforts. BPI efforts are expected to include (but not be limited to) assistance with: • RAS-Pediatrics implementation • RAS-Medicine implementation • Revisions of SOPs to accommodate changes and new NIH regulations • RAS Management Reports, Exception Reports, and/or Stakeholder Reports • RAS Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) finalization and roll-out • RAS Report Cards • Award clean-up and reconciliation metrics (development and implementation) for RAS • Workforce transition (with HR) • Communications • IT Access for RAS units • RAS-C&I and RAS-PH operations	**Achievement Target: FY2014** • Ensuring effective and functional operations for new RAS units. This can include space, IT, and other tactical matters. • Finalization and effective adoption of RAS KPIs. • Finalization and effective adoption of RAS report cards. • Monitoring of account clean-up for departments migrating to pending RAS units. • Successful hiring and staffing of RAS personnel to enable launch of pending RAS units. • Effective logistical and operational support to existing and new RAS units. • Successful launch of RAS-Medicine and RAS-Pediatrics in FY2014. • Successful launch of additional RAS units as directed by AVP-RAS.

Outcome:
Launch of BPI Fellows and BPI Scholars programs. These are directly linked to official FY2014 BPI Goals (confidential). See attached brochure.

Method:	Achievement Target:
Launch BPI Fellows program as part of new two-year staff development effort. BPI Fellows are recent undergraduates who seek training, experience, and knowledge in project management / consulting within a higher education environment, akin to BPI's core operations. This is a full-time, two-year program whereby Fellows join the BPI team, learn project management and business improvement, as well as complete a hands-on practicum project within an existing Emory unit. This is expected to include (but not be limited to) the following: • Finalize and launch BPI-based content instruction courses for Fellows. • Finalize and launch Lecture Series, given by key university leaders. • Determine practicum placements for initial two BPI Fellows. Practicums occur during second year of fellowship. • Ensure quality delivery and meaningful instruction for all coursework.	Fall 2013: • Recruit and hire two to four Fellows in FY2014. 2014: • Completion of FY2014 instruction courses. Successfully deliver courses to Fellows. • Completion of FY2014 Lecture Series recruitment and content. Successfully deliver to Fellows. • Place both initial Fellows in Practicum experiences.
Method:	Achievement Target:
Launch BPI Scholars program as part of new staff development effort. BPI Scholars are existing Emory young professionals (senior analysts or business managers) who seek training and knowledge in project management and wish to translate that knowledge to their home unit. This is a part-time, one-year program whereby Scholars remain in their home unit, learn from BPI, and complete a business improvement project for their home unit (with BPI guidance). This is	Fall 2013 / Winter 2014: • Screen applications and enroll four to six Scholars in FY2014. 2014: • Completion of FY2014 instruction courses. Successfully deliver courses. • Completion of FY2014 Lecture Series recruitment and content. Successfully

expected to include (but not be limited to) the following:	deliver.
- Finalize and launch BPI-based content instruction courses for Scholars (shared with Fellows). - Finalize and launch Lecture Series, given by key university leaders (shared with Fellows). - Ensure quality delivery and meaningful instruction for all coursework. - Assist each Scholar with selection and completion of his/her business improvement project.	Successful guidance to completion of each Scholar's projects.

Outcome:
Complete business plan and implement (if approved) the new ADVISE service for faculty.
This is directly linked to official FY2014 BPI Goals.

ADVISE is a new service to enable faculty to conduct advisory-related services to outside entities, such as government or private industry, within the Emory construct. ADVISE would provide direct support in contract negotiation, billing, and collections (among other services), as well as serve as a central point-of-contact for external parties seeking faculty expertise. Remuneration for faculty advice would flow back to the university, split among school, department, and ADVISE (to cover costs). ADVISE is being planned and would be operated jointly between Emory Innovations (EI) and BPI.

ADVISE would not manage "research" in the traditional hypothesis or discovery-driven sense; rather, faculty would be assisting the external entity with brainstorming, opinion, and problem solving. ADVISE will work closely with Emory's Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP), handing off opportunities that maintain characteristics that must be negotiated through OSP.

Method:	**Achievement Target:**
Finalize business plan, based on completed feasibility study, for ADVISE.	- Complete Business Plan for ADVISE in November 2013. - Obtain Board Approval (EI Board) to launch ADVISE by end of 2013.
Method: - Develop Implementation Plan for ADVISE, upon EI Board approval of business plan. - Launch ADIVSE as pilot project.	**Achievement Target:** - Complete Implementation Plan for ADVISE by February 2014. - Launch ADVISE in Spring 2014.

V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Please remember to attach supporting documentation such as surveys, questionnaires, charts, tables, spreadsheets, and detailed descriptions of assessment findings. If you have questions about what should or should not be included with the report, please contact the Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness.

Attachments:

1) BPI Principles
2) Emory's Values in Business Practice Improvement
3) Cumulative Visa Corporate Cardholders vs. Historic American Express Cardholders (2013) (Outcome 1, Method 1)
4) Research Administration Department Resource Survey (Outcome 2, Method 1)
5) New Research Administration Titles List (Outcome 2, Method 1)
6) Manager RAS HR Process Feedback (Outcome 2, Method 2)
7) Staff RAS HR Process Feedback (Outcome 2, Method 2)
8) Fellows Scholars Program Pamphlet (Outcome for next year)

VI. REVIEW PROCESS

Please forward your 2012-2013 assessment report to the dean of your college/school or the vice president/vice provost of your administrative division for review and signature. This review will ensure that the information included in this report is accurate and that your unit is engaged in a systematic process of continuous improvement.

_____   October 1, 2013
Dean/Vice President/Vice Provost   Date

VII. SUBMISSION OF REPORTS

Please email reports to David Jordan, Director of Institutional Effectiveness (David.M.Jordan@emory.edu) by October 1, 2013.