

Organizational Excellence

Benchmarking Study of Administrative Services

FAQs

1. What is Benchmarking?

Benchmarking is the process of measuring processes and services and assessing performance. Benchmarking provides an opportunity for us to gather information across all of the University so we have an understanding of the current administrative service structure and delivery and make comparisons with external, comparable higher education institutions and organizations.

2. Why are we doing a Benchmarking Study?

We have engaged in this study to learn about our effectiveness and efficiency in delivering administrative support services (i.e. procurement, information technology, human resources, finance, student services and research administration). The findings will give us a current state assessment, identify areas where we are high performing, and pinpoint areas for improvement. This study will help us best align our resources with the core missions of education, research and public service and to be a high-performing administrative organization.

Specifically, the study will:

- Measure resources utilized in providing specific administrative services
- Assess the quality of service that we are providing
- Assess our administrative performance by comparing ourselves to peer institutions and world-class organizations
- Pinpoint gaps in our performance so we can make improvements
- Allow analysis at the individual unit level, we can learn from each other

3. How are we benchmarking?

For a comprehensive assessment, we must capture where these activities are happening throughout the University. This requires collecting data from all schools and units about these processes. Additionally, stakeholder feedback will be solicited to provide insight from a user perspective about service quality and value. The Medical Center and the College of Wise are not included in this study. School-affiliated foundations are encouraged to participate in terms of their activities related to administration services.

5. How is 'high-performing' or 'world-class' defined or measured?

The definition of 'high-performing' is based on those organizations that are in the top quartile of performance in their peer groups. These organizations excel at delivering services at a higher quality, lower cost and in a manner that is most responsive to customer and stakeholder needs.

6. Why is the university working with the Hackett Group?

The Hackett Group is a global leader in benchmarking and has conducted over 8,400 benchmarking studies across higher education, private industry, and government sectors. Higher education clients include universities that are members of the Association of American Universities (AAU), such as the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, and Yale University. Hackett's process-centric approach and methodology allows direct comparisons because data are collected based on activities performed, regardless of where the activity occurs in the institution.

7. What will we do with the results?

The Organizational Excellence Leadership Council will review the results of the benchmarking effort with executive leadership and identify opportunities to improve the use of our existing resources with respect to institutional goals and priorities. This may result in redesigned processes, investments in new technologies, or the development new services.

The study results and subsequent activities will be shared with the University community.

8. Who from my unit or department is assisting with the Benchmarking Study?

The Benchmarking Study core project team is listed on the initiative summary. Data collectors have been identified in each school and unit and recently completed training on the methodology and data collection tools. The project team and school/unit data collectors will be working with others as needed to acquire the necessary information. Additionally, feedback from users of services will be solicited through surveys.