

College of Medicine Informational Resources Work Prioritization Process Improvement (UIC)

Business Case

The College of Medicine Informational Resources (COMIR) unit supports a large portfolio of IT services for faculty, clinicians, researchers, staff and students. While their customer base and portfolio of services has grown significantly over the last several years, their staff has not. They face challenges in meeting the expanding expectations and find that the majority of their time is consumed with minor operational issues. Little remaining time is available for planning and implementing IT solutions designed to further the missions of the college and the University.

Goal

Increase productivity of staff by identifying and adopting streamlined "best practices" for processing transactions (i.e., tickets, requests, identified issues), resulting in faster turnaround times and a consistent, improved customer service level.

Approach

Reviewed and analyzed current process for receiving and prioritizing work. Identified and discussed common issues experience during or as a result of the process. Brainstormed potential solutions to address identified issues. Categorized potential solutions as People, Policy, Procedure or Technology. Prioritized selected solutions and developed an action plan for implementing solutions.

Outcome

Secured assistance with establishing best practices and procedures for managing and prioritizing workload from the Project Management Office at the Academic Computing and Communications Center (ACCC) at UIC. ACCC will provide guidance to COMIR as they develop project documentation templates and establish project/work prioritization and governance procedures. ACCC will also provide hands-on project management guidance and training on an upcoming project as a pilot for the procedures.

Key Findings

- **Lack of procedures for prioritizing work and/or seeking input from functional units within the College regarding their perceived priority for work requests.**
- **Inconsistent categorization and tracking of work.**
- **Lack of communication regarding the status of work requests.**

Process Improvement Recommendations

- 1. Establish work categorization and prioritization procedures for all work requests –** provides guidelines for determining what activities should be assigned to each resource and what each resource should be focusing on given their current workload; provides the College with a better understanding of the current demand for COMIR resources; and enables the College functional teams to provide insight into the prioritization of work.
- 2. Create a COMIR Steering Committee to oversee work prioritization and to be comprised of functional leads within the college –** ensures that appropriate prioritization is given to the work requested of COMIR and that input from the College is key in making the prioritization decisions.
- 3. Create a COMIR Executive Steering Committee to provide high-level College oversight of the work that COMIR is doing and the major projects they are undertaking–** ensures that the strategic direction of COMIR is inline with the strategic direction of the College and gives appropriate support to the major activities COMIR is tasked with completing.

Implementation of Recommended Improvements

Developed an implementation plan for all recommendations starting in Q2 FY14 and completing in FY14. Created a draft proposal for the establishment of a steering committee to oversee project prioritization and the procedures and guidelines that will be employed to govern the steering committee. Initiated a project with the PMO at ACCC to further develop procedures and pilot a project in Q4 FY14.