Streamlining Administrative Processes
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It is very clear that the College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, and the University of Hawai‘i must continue to streamline its administrative processes. The single most cited frustration of faculty, staff and administrators in the college is the time and energy it takes to get anything done in the college. In order to make a significant difference in streamlining our administrative operations (without significantly increasing our administrative costs), I believe we need to have a change in philosophy about our administrative processes and procedures. We need to move away from the paradigm of 100% pre-audit and approval with Fiscal Officers being responsible for all transactions, to selective post-audits with the person requesting the item or service being responsible. Also, responsibility for approvals should be delegated to the lowest appropriate level in the organization to avoid multiple approval layers.

CTAHR has begun a process to streamline its administrative processes. It is clear that some of the processes cannot be changed without approval at other levels within the university system. It is proposed that CTAHR be allowed to pilot at streamlining project with annual benchmarks to determine if process changes do in fact streamline its operations. It is understood that some administrative/BOR rules would be temporarily relaxed during the project to allow for the streamlining of certain administrative processes. We plan to seek outside assistance on some of our federally mandated programs and would welcome the input, oversight and assistance of anyone in the university interested in this initiative. We would be pleased to share the results of this initiative to guide administrative process changes within the university system. We anticipate the pilot project to last three years.

The following are our initial thoughts on issues, areas to streamline and process we would use in the college.

Possible Issues:
Should we change the responsibility of principal investigators, fiscal officers and/or secretaries? Should principal investigators instead of fiscal officers be held personally accountable for expenditures? Similarly, should chairs, associate deans and the dean be held personally accountable? [Reassignment of responsibility negates the need for fiscal officers to tightly control each expenditure.]

Are there areas of responsibility that the President or the Chancellor can delegate to the Dean without affecting institutional accountability? [If there is little effect by having the President or Chancellor sign a document, that function should be delegated to the deans.]

Are fiscal officers compensated sufficiently for productivity and initiative? Are secretaries and clerical staff compensated for the type of responsibilities they are given? [Merit compensation can be used as a means to increase the productivity of workers.]
Do we have a sufficient number of administrative officers for the volume of work in this college? Is the mix of account clerks and administrative officers the right one? [It is common knowledge within the UH that the administrative staff for CTAHR, although seemingly large in number, is too small for the workload.]

Should the departmental structure include clerical and/or APT personnel with fiscal/personnel only responsibilities? [This might be a workable solution if the current fiscal office responsibilities are changed to only selective auditing.]

What type of pre-audit or review should we have at the college level? What is acceptable to UH? [Options are no audit, complete audit, and selective audits.]

What is the ideal processing time for documents? [Volume, workload and/or complexity are factors in processing time.]

Should we switch all transactions to electronic processing? [Mandated way of the future but expensive.]

**Possible Areas to Streamline:**
- Purchasing
- Travel
- Grant Processing
- Accounting
- RCUH
- Equipment
- Electronic information processing
- Filling Vacancies
- SF-5B/PNF
- Immigration
- Fringe Benefits
- Leaves
- Tenure and Promotion
- Faculty Evaluation
- APT Broadbanding

**Process:**
1. Identify possible issues
2. Retain services of non-University management consultant
3. Convene focus groups
   - Chairs
   - County Administrators (and their secretaries)
   - Secretaries (Including administration secretaries)
   - Faculty (Request committee from CTAHR faculty senate)
4. Management consultant to facilitate group sessions and prepare report of findings with recommendations.