

**From:** Gerald J. Baldasty

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 18, 2016 1:39 PM

**To:** Mark A. Pagano; Wolf Yeigh; Betsy Wilson; Cheryl A. Cameron; David L. Eaton; Ed Taylor; GABRIEL GALLARDO; Jeff Riedinger; Mary E. Lidstrom; Paul E. Jenny; Rovy Branon; Vikram Jandhyala; Connie Kravas; Denzil J. Suite; Elizabeth Cherry; Kelli Trosvig; MINDY KORNBERG; Paul G. Ramsey; Randy Hodgins

**Cc:** Ruth A. Johnston

**Subject:** Culture of Service program

Dear Colleagues:

As we discussed at the President's Cabinet in March, the Transforming Administration Program (TAP) is rolling out the Culture of Service program throughout central administration (units that report to vice presidents, vice provosts, and chancellors). Our goal is to create standards across administrative units to increase consistency, access, and overall satisfaction for those we assist within the University and among our external constituents.

The service standards are derived from a campus survey we conducted last summer. Through the survey, we wanted to get sense of what the central administrative units do well and what improvements would be useful. The survey results were clear: We need to be more responsive in many ways. Even small changes, a few of which are noted below, can be quite meaningful.

**1. Calendars.** When all central administrative units use Microsoft Outlook for email and calendar, we can schedule meetings and events much more quickly. Because many of us use different calendaring systems, e.g., Google and even paper planners, scheduling meetings can take longer than necessary, with many emails sent back and forth. Assistants often use Doodle to schedule meetings more efficiently. While that seems to be the fastest workaround, it is still just that – a workaround. Once we are all using Microsoft Outlook for our business meetings, Outlook can coordinate our schedules automatically and present meeting options within seconds, not weeks. I know that for everyone, having control of your schedule is a high priority. But I ask that people be a bit more flexible. Let's all use Outlook so that we can work more efficiently.

**2. Voice mail and email.** Standardizing our voice mail greetings and out-of-office email messages can be enormously helpful. We need to make it easier for people to do their work – without unnecessary delays. Both voice mail and email out-of-office messages, for example, should inform people how long a person is gone and when messages will be returned. Or, if that person is out of the office for an extended time, the messages should say whom to contact for assistance and provide that person's number and/or email.

**3. Response time.** It always helps to know when to expect a response to a voice or email message. Ideally, we all answer voice mails and emails quickly, given that so many of us get messages from people who truly need our help. Those of us in central administration need to commit to quick responses, and at the same time, tell our stakeholders what to expect.

So how are we implementing these and other changes?

The Organizational Excellence (OE) team, led by Ruth Johnston, will coordinate with programs across central administration. Based on the work of the TAP customer service standards team, the OE team will provide a clear set of documents, which will include standards, suggestions and guidelines, as well as a timeline, communication plan, and training materials. A separate central administration workgroup is developing a plan to evaluate the service standards starting in winter 2017.

In order to make this program a success, we need your involvement and support. I ask that you contribute to this work in several ways:

- Make a culture of service a priority for your unit.
- Lead the change by adopting these procedures yourself, and set the expectation that your staff will implement them, as well.
- Meet with Ruth and her staff to start creating a culture of service plan for your unit (Ruth's staff will initiate scheduling).
- Identify a central contact person who will work with OE to roll out the program within your unit. Please send this person's name and contact information to Lauren Witt at [lwitt@uw.edu](mailto:lwitt@uw.edu) by **Friday, May 27**.
- Announce the culture of service program to your staff by customizing the announcement that will be sent to you in the next few weeks.

I have attached a flyer for your review; more information will be available soon on the [OE website](#).

We look forward to working with you to further enhance the UW's culture of service.

Best,

Jerry

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