

**From:** Daniel Diermeier, Provost

**Date:** April 27, 2017

**To:** University Faculty and Staff

**Subject:** Spring quarter update on Administrative Modernization and Shared Services

I am writing with a quarterly update on the Administrative Modernization and Shared Services project. Over the past year we have had various conversations with faculty and staff to ensure alignment of the projects with the needs of the university community. These conversations have highlighted the importance of balancing service improvements with local needs and requirements. Moving forward, any changes to existing processes will be rolled out gradually accompanied by significant support and training. Whenever possible, process changes will be optional to the units, though some aspects, such as moving from paper-based to electronic processes, will be adopted across the university.

As a first step, we will focus on a core set of processes in human resources, finance and procurement. To support these efforts over the next months, a shared services office will be opened to perform specific routine transactional work and help desk support. The office will be staffed largely through a shift of staff from Human Resources and Procurement. This is purely a reorganization and there will be no layoffs as a part of staffing the shared services office. A limited number of additional hires will be made into new roles, in particular to provide better help desk support. New positions in shared services will be posted in mid-May

In the last few months, we began a series of meetings to review these proposals with each division, school and institute as well as with the administrative units. We have met with the deans and their senior leaders and will continue subsequent sets of unit-level meetings in the coming month. These meetings are helping to further refine processes and to identify staff in local units who will need additional training prior to any implementation. The input we have received from faculty, staff and unit leaders has and will continue to be vitally important in shaping this initiative.

We are also announcing other mechanisms for you to engage in the administrative modernization process.

- We will have another set of forums for faculty and staff beginning in May. These will be opportunities for everyone to review details of proposed changes and provide input on the project. Links to information and registration can be found [here](#). Note that there are separate forums happening in the coming weeks that discuss the [budget process](#). These are distinct projects, though both aim to provide a better foundation for continued growth in our academic pursuits.
- We hope to see you at the forums but are also happy to discuss this project individually or at other group meetings of staff or faculty. Please feel free to email us at [SharedServicesInput@uchicago.edu](mailto:SharedServicesInput@uchicago.edu).
- In addition, a new [Faculty Working Group on Administrative Service Improvement](#) will start its work this spring, succeeding the work of the Shared Services Faculty Working Group. We invite you to submit your suggestions of topics to investigate through the following [web form](#).
- We have also sent a questionnaire to chairs asking for their input on faculty administrative burden. Faculty can also respond individually to that questionnaire [here](#).

Thank you for your input and patience as we work to improve administrative service at the University. We hope that you will participate in the various forums and look forward to your input.