Project Updates from Huron Consulting

Huron Consulting representatives presented Final Phase I updates. They indicated that over the last month they have completed the assessments of Georgia Institute of Technology, Kennesaw State University, and East Georgia State College.

Georgia Institute of Technology:
• The Huron team concluded their on-site field work on March 22nd and conducted 43 interviews and 10 focus groups
• 3,268 Activity Assessments Complete (98%)
• 680 Opportunity Identification Surveys Complete (63%)
• Presented preliminary findings to Georgia Tech leadership on April 18th

Kennesaw State University:
• The Huron team concluded their on-site field work on March 22nd and conducted 30 interviews and 24 focus groups
• 1,694 Activity Assessments Complete (96%)
• 551 Opportunity Identification Surveys Complete (70%)
• Presented preliminary findings to KSU leadership on April 10th

East Georgia State College:
• The Huron team concluded their on-site field work on March 29th and conducted 19 interviews and 4 focus groups
• 112 Activity Assessments Complete (98%)
• 48 Opportunity Identification Surveys Complete (83%)
• Presented preliminary findings to EGSC leadership on April 30th

Update on trends

In reflecting on the first phase of the CAR project, Huron has identified the following project insights across each of the sectors. They emphasized that these lists are not comprehensive but that they represent a cross-section of Huron’s initial observations.

Research Institutions (Georgia Tech):
• Decentralization appears to lead to narrower spans of control when compared to other sectors
• Systems implementations are more complex as R1s utilize a wide variety of enterprise-wide systems that require integration
• There is an opportunity to further analyze the research enterprise to gauge the potential for collaboration amongst R1s to support research administration R1s have strong institutional brands as a result of strong communications and marketing offices
Comprehensive Institutions (UWG, KSU):
- High levels of organic growth put strains on resources and infrastructure
- Comprehensives cite pain points related to hiring, travel, and procurement processes
- The size of comprehensive institutions can create challenges around internal communications unless a strong framework is in place
- While growth in research funding is a common goal, the infrastructure to support research administration does not exist
- Board mandated reductions in tuition for online courses are presenting financial challenges

State Universities (UNG):
- Mergers and the management of satellite campuses create operational challenges for schools in these sectors.
- A central repository for HR policies and other procedural guidance is either non-existent or unknown to the majority of staff

State Colleges (EGSC, SGSC):
- The recruitment and retention of employees is difficult due to a) HR processes and b) rural locations
- Advancement and Alumni Relations are challenges given a lack of dedicated resources
- There is potential to leverage shareable resources across smaller schools within the system (e.g. auditors, legal services)
- A central repository for HR policies and other procedural guidance is either non-existent or unknown to the majority of staff

System-Wide:
- The “10% salary increase policy” appears to be having unexpected outcomes related to personnel administration (e.g. flexibility in retaining top performers, local financial and HR accountability)
- The hiring and retention of staff throughout the system appears to be a common challenge indicating an opportunity to focus on HR and Payroll policies
- An opportunity appears to exist to develop a more substantive purchasing cohort amongst the institutions, leveraging institutional expertise and spend volume to facilitate strategic sourcing negotiations and to gain economies of scale
- Updated P-Card policies are causing strain on purchasing within institutions across the system due to higher volumes of purchase orders and invoices
- An Online Education strategy should be formalized
- An opportunity exists to implement a system-wide employee onboarding program to familiarize employees with USG policies and increase adherence
- Skills supporting the Financial Aid function vary from school to school, indicating an opportunity to centralize or share these resources across system sectors
- The Information Technology Help-Desk function seems to be common a point of strength across the system
- Significant opportunity exists to expand the use of shared service centers to support core administrative functions related to Finance, HR and Research Administration.

Phase II Progress updates - CSU, VSU, FVSU, GCSU, SSU, Georgia Southern, Georgia Southwestern, Clayton State

Huron estimates being finished with the assessment of Phase II institutions by the end of 2018 with a draft report to be completed in early 2019.

They began on-site assessments at Columbus State University, Valdosta State University, and Fort Valley State University as summarized below:

Columbus State University:
- Began on-site engagement on April 30.
- Huron is in the process of conducting over 20 interviews and 4 focus groups.
- On-site engagement is expected to continue through late May.
Valdosta State University:
- Began on-site engagement on April 30.
- Huron is in the process of conducting over 28 interviews and 8 focus groups.
- On-site engagement is expected to continue through early June.

Fort Valley State University:
- Began on-site engagement on May 1.
- Huron is in the process of conducting over 25 interviews and 4 focus groups.
- On-site engagement is expected to continue through late May.

Huron began pre-engagement communications and survey deployment at Georgia College & State University and Savannah State University as summarized below:

Georgia College & State University:
- Began holding regular weekly check-in meetings.
- Huron plans to begin on-site work at Georgia College & State University on May 21.
- Initial data requests have been solicited and Huron has started the process of identifying potential interviewees and focus groups.

Savannah State University:
- Began holding regular weekly check-in meetings.
- Huron plans to begin on-site work at Savannah State University on May 21.
- Initial data requests have been solicited and Huron has started the process of identifying potential interviewees and focus groups.

Communications have already started with Georgia Southern University, Georgia Southwestern State University and Clayton State University with on-site engagement to commence in June.

Action Plan Response Updates

Vice Chancellor John Fuchko introduced an Action Plan Response guide. The guide provides an overview and examples of how to proceed after an institution receives its report. He requested that the Steering Committee members review the draft document and provide feedback to him. When reviewing, he asked that the members try not to let their familiarity with the CAR process affect their evaluation of whether the guide is understandable as to what needs to be done after a report is received.

Communication

President Marrero discussed the campus visits he and Vice Chancellor Fuchko conducted. Given the logistical difficulties of onsite visits, the increased number of institutions, and tight timeline for Phase II, they have decided to transition to WebEx meetings as opposed to campus visits. President Marrero felt that communication around this and other aspects of the CAR continues to improve as the initiative continues to move forward.
Discussion (Update Meeting Schedules and Discuss Workshop Focus)

President Marrero noted that the Steering Committee will not meet again until July. He emphasized that a progress report update will be shared in June and that other updates will still occur.

He reminded the committee members about the August workshop. He also shared some possible topics and encouraged feedback and input. The possible topics for consideration are:
- Deeper assessment of trend analyses
- Identify best practices utilizing Huron’s insights – opportunities for institutional, geographic, or system duplication
- Opportunities for improvement (Using Action Plan reports) – review current Action Plans
- Beyond CAR – accountability, annual reporting, monitoring
- Thinking about possibility of ranges of “operational spend” for sectors
- Communications strategy for telling the CAR story

Closing Remarks

President Marrero provided the meeting schedule for the next three months:
- June 6, 2018, 12noon-2pm - CANCELLED (Phase II update will be provided via email)
- July 11, 2018, 12noon-2pm - meeting as scheduled
- August 1, 2018, 10am-3pm - meeting and workshop

In particular, he asked steering committee members to attend the August 1 meeting in person.