

Shared Services

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Thank you

To the deans, project team and to all who have participated in the process

Here's a list of what each Utah university has closed due to the state's anti-DEI push

All eight public schools have taken a different approach to implement the law on their campuses. Some are getting rid of all cultural centers, others are keeping theirs open.

University of Utah president warns of 'extensive' lawmaker scrutiny next year — beyond expected cuts

"We're under extensive scrutiny right now by lawmakers," U. President Taylor Randall said this week.



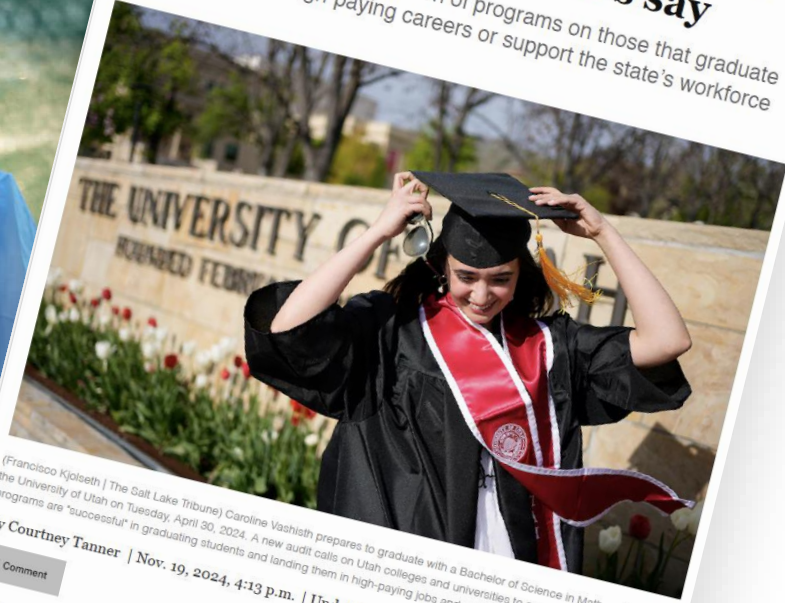
(Rick Egan | The Salt Lake Tribune) The historic Park Building on President's Circle, at the University of Utah, on Friday, Sept. 27, 2024. The U. and other public colleges in the state are bracing for a bruising legislative session in 2025.



Students, faculty, staff and alumni came together to support the state's new anti-DEI law. 5:00 a.m. | Updated: 2:49 p.m.

Utah college presidents should quickly start cutting 'inefficient' programs, state auditors say

The new audit bases its valuation of programs on those that graduate students, lead to high-paying careers or support the state's workforce needs.



(Francisoo Kjolseth | The Salt Lake Tribune) Caroline Vashish prepares to graduate with a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics from the University of Utah on Tuesday, April 30, 2024. A new audit calls on Utah colleges and universities to analyze which of their programs are "successful" in graduating students and landing them in high-paying jobs and cut those that don't show a return. By Courtney Tanner | Nov. 19, 2024, 4:13 p.m. | Updated: 7:41 p.m.

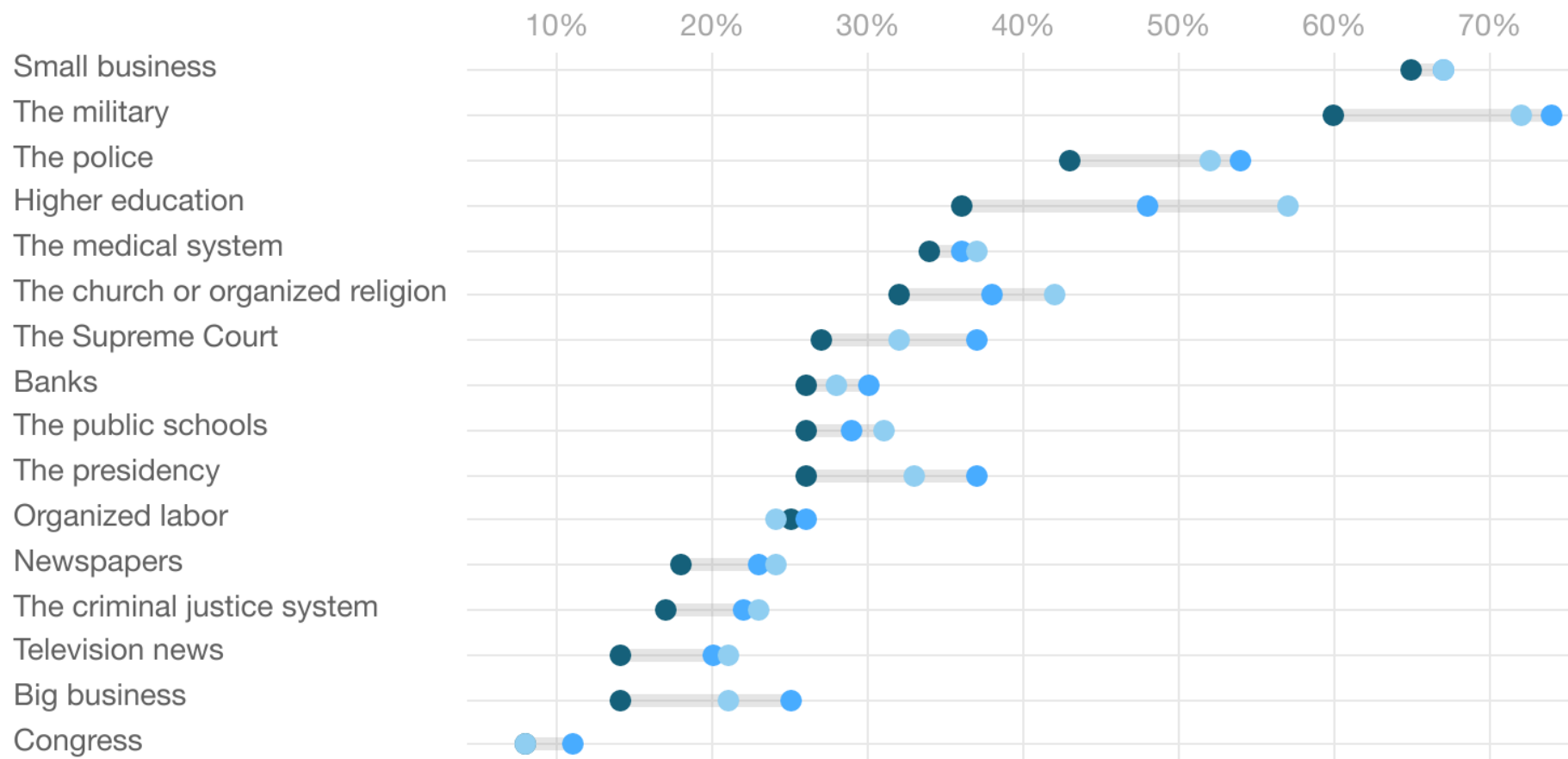
Utah's university and college presidents need to better scrutinize what programs they offer — and should cut those that are not graduating students, leading to high-paying jobs or supporting the state's workforce needs, according to a critical new audit released Tuesday.

Gallup - Confidence in Institutions, 2015 - 2023

Gallup: Now I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one -- a great deal, quite a lot, some or very little?

Displaying % of Americans selecting 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot'

● 2023 ● 2018 ● 2015





Investments in career readiness and student success

In FY25, career readiness initiatives experienced a 50% increase in resources. We've also built out Navigate U, increased salaries among advisors and hired more advisors and student success coaches.

Guiding Statement

The University of Utah drives unsurpassed societal impact by preparing students from diverse backgrounds to be leaders and global citizens who strengthen our society and democracy; generating and sharing new knowledge, discoveries, and innovations that supercharge our economy and improve lives locally, nationally, and globally; and engaging local, national, and global communities to promote education, health, and quality of life.

2030 goals

40k

students

80%

graduation rate

\$1B

research funding

90%

job placement at
graduation

Become a **top-10** public university
with unsurpassed societal impact

Impact lives of all **3.5** million Utahns

Shared services is about not just maintaining but **strengthening quality** – while at the same time navigating our challenges and **proactively defining our path** forward, rather than waiting for solutions to be imposed upon us.

Organizational Structure Update

Organizational Structure: Models

Model 1

Colleges of Humanities, Science, Social and Behavioral Science and Transform share services.

Model 2

College of Science would operate independently while Colleges of Humanities, Social and Behavioral Science and Transform share services.

Still in discussion

- Structural models
- Title for the senior leader who will oversee shared services
- Position descriptions for the senior leader and deans
- Name for the group of colleges participating in the shared services model (e.g., Liberal Arts, Letters, etc.)

Roles and Responsibilities

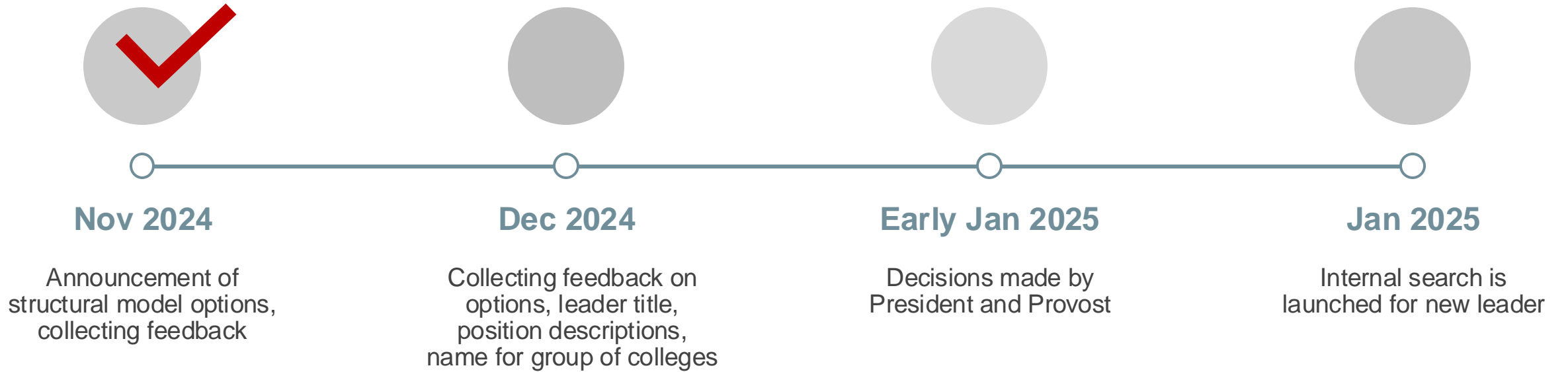
Senior Leader

Responsible for strategic alignment, resource optimization and advocacy across the units, ensuring shared services are effective and equitable.

Deans

Responsible for leading their colleges' academic missions; fostering excellence in teaching, research and faculty development; and advocating for their students, faculty and staff.

Organizational Structure Timeline



Data Collection & Findings

Responding to feedback

Shared Advising Feedback

- 1 Slower process
- 2 Opportunities to provide feedback
- 3 More communication about the changes

Shared Services Process

- 1 12-month process
- 2 Listening sessions, surveys, an online form, etc.
- 3 Regular updates to faculty, staff, Academic Senate, etc.

Shared services decision-making

President, Provost

- 1 Seek input and listen to counsel
- 2 Provide transparency in process
- 3 Make decisions to advance the long-term success of the U

Faculty, staff

- 1 Engage and provide input
- 2 Stay informed of project process

What's next in our agenda

- Data collection methods
- Findings
- Findings reflections (survey)
- Recommendations based on findings
- Feedback on recommendations (survey)
- Q&A
- Closing takeaways

Data Collection Methods

- Listening session series
- Online feedback form and SVPAA email inbox
- Survey
- Dialogue with groups on campus (e.g., Academic Senate, President's Leadership Council, project team meetings, etc.)

Methods: Listening Sessions

- 12 listening sessions segmented by job function.
- Invitations and reminders to participate were sent to faculty and staff through unit listservs.
- About 264 faculty and staff participated in the sessions.

Listening Session Registration

College	Faculty	Staff	Total
Humanities	20	66	86
Science	25	77	102
Social and Behavioral Science	39	44	83
Transform	13	5	18
Other	0	1	1
Grand Total	97	193	290

Methods: Listening Sessions

- Each session lasted 90 minutes.
- An environment where faculty and staff could be candid:
 - No project team members or senior leaders in the room.
 - Facilitators were university staff and faculty not affiliated with the shared services project or the participating units.
- Discussions were guided by open-ended questions about HR, IT, financial services, research administration, etc.
- Two note-takers were present at each session.

Methods: Online Feedback

- Between Sept 30 and Dec 6, we received 46 submissions through the feedback form and one additional submission through the Academic Affairs inbox.
- Submissions from:
 - 24 faculty
 - 15 staff
 - 2 graduate students
 - 5 unknown

Questions or Feedback Form

For questions, contact SVPA@utah.edu or complete the feedback form below.
Name and email are not required fields if you would like to provide anonymous feedback.

Name

First Last Email

Affiliation (check all that apply):

Faculty

Staff

Graduate Student

Undergraduate Student

Other

Please share your feedback on the potential for shared services and resources, as well as any thoughts on the ongoing planning process. *

SUBMIT

Methods: Survey

- Collaboration with the Office of Financial Services' Operational Excellence university-wide survey
- Survey instrument developed by HelioCampus, allowing cross-university comparisons
- Faculty and staff received a specialized version of this survey

Methods: Survey

- Surveys were distributed to over 1,300 .5 FTE+ faculty and staff members within the four units.
- In-field Oct 28 - Nov 8, with three email reminders.
- Responses are anonymous.

Methods: Survey

		Population	Responses	Response Rate
Humanities	Faculty	201	29	14.4%
	Staff	129	20	15.5%
Science	Faculty	279	31	11.1%
	Staff	399	43	10.8%
Social and Behavioral Science	Faculty	184	26	14.1%
	Staff	95	19	20.0%
Transform	Faculty	18	6	33.3%
	Staff	9	3	33.3%
Grand Total		1,314	272	20.7%

Findings Overview

- 1 Challenges shared services can address
- 2 Frustrations with centralized services
- 3 Concerns about morale and distrust of central administration
- 4 The need to preserve local expertise and college autonomy



Challenges shared services can address

- Lack of training and onboarding support
- Support gaps due to staff absences or turnover
- Operational silos
- Uneven distribution of resources
- Limited career progression opportunities for staff

Lack of training and onboarding support

- “I was astonished at the lack of training – HR training – beyond institutional requirements...Supervisors with no training. Hiring – no training that goes with it.” – Science staff member
- “I’ve been here for a long time, and I still don’t feel like I know all the systems. There’s no formal training on things like financial services or travel.” – Humanities staff member
- “CTLE is great, and you have all these workshops – and they’re great. It’s like, how to use AI in teaching – but then, no one can tell me how to use the scantron. Just these basic things.” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member

Support gaps due to absences or turnover

- “There’s a lot lost, and it’s not handed off well. It’s a fast turnover, just two weeks notice.” – Science faculty member
- “Because I am part of a collaborative advising team I am not all alone. I get case load support and am able to share my institutional knowledge with a team of people so if (heaven forbid) something were to happen to me others would have enough information to do my job.” – staff member (college affiliation unknown)

Operational silos

- “There’s my job in my department, and outside of that, there isn’t a lot of interaction with others and how things are run...It’s harder to have larger institutional knowledge when everyone is so closed off.” – Humanities staff member
- “[Because budget processes differ by college, when faculty try to collaborate] it’s a nightmare to figure out who’s responsible for what.” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member
- “Coming from a department that was wholly isolated, I had no support in how to be an advisor.” – staff member (college affiliation unknown)

Uneven resource distribution

- “Other colleges and units have a graphic designer on staff. We don’t have that. We have to piecemeal it together.” – Social and Behavioral Science staff member
- “Things are great in [my joint appointment college] for research support...I wish Transform had a similar person, but they do not.” – Transform faculty member
- “I’m in a small department. As a result, a huge amount is expected of a small number of staff.” – Science faculty member

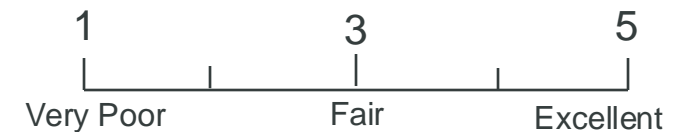
Limited career progression

- “Many of us have advanced degrees, but we don’t receive pay that reflects that, especially in the current career ladder – or lack of career ladder.” – Science staff member
- “One thing is important to me is staff wellbeing and progression. Maybe we only have two marketing staff and you have more – but what if we pool them, can we create career ladders for staff?” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member

Challenges with centralized services

Perceptions of Services

Service	Local	Central
General Administrative	4.36	3.64
IT	4.29	3.62
Research Administration	4.26	3.46
Marketing & Communications	4.25	3.56
Finance	4.17	3.57
HR	4.06	3.64
Facilities Management	3.94	3.55



Complexity of the U

- “This is a massive university. How do we know where to find the things?...How do we know who to work with on interdisciplinary collaborations? We don’t know who those people are or how to access them.” – Transform faculty member
- “Sometimes you don’t know who to go to, and even if you get to the right office, are you talking to the right person? Have they forwarded [your request] on?” – Humanities staff member
- “Information is so compartmentalized, you have to crawl over broken glass to get [answers].” – Science staff member

Inadequate communication

- “I feel like I spend more time trying to figure out the current process than actually doing the thing. It’s frustrating to keep finding out you did it wrong because the policy changed, and no one told you.” – Humanities staff member
- “We only find out about updates when something gets rejected. There’s no heads-up, no guidance – just a message saying you did it wrong.” – Social and Behavioral Science staff member
- “Policies change constantly, and there’s no way to know what’s new unless you run into a roadblock.” – Science staff member

Unresponsiveness of central

- “I got to the point where I was frustrated with not getting an answer. But if I turn something in wrong, I get a quick response because then – then they push it back! It’s the only way to get attention.” – Science staff member
- “I get lost in their system constantly. I put in a request, and it disappears, and it makes me feel crazy.” – Humanities staff member
- “Every time I call central IT, the first person I talk to is a student, and they don’t have the knowledge to help with anything complex.” – Transform faculty member

One-size-fits-all approaches

- “[Our IT team] is shackled by UIT.” – Science faculty member
- “We’re constantly told to follow central procedures that don’t work for how our department operates.” – Transform staff member
- “A uniform approach doesn’t work.” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member
- “Uniform approaches don’t work.” – Humanities faculty member
- “A uniform operation over four colleges where we don’t know who we call on the help line would be devastating.” – Science faculty member

“Why not spend the time and resources to improve services offered at the university level instead of ripping away successful, integrated services colleges have created to compensate?” – staff member (college affiliation unknown)

The importance of local contacts

- Variations of the phrase “know who to call,” “have a contact” or “need a contact” proliferated listening sessions, the feedback form and open-ended survey items.
- “If you don’t know [who to go to], you’re stuck for a long time.” – Science staff member
- “Efficiency is based on knowledge, and knowledge is local.” – Transform faculty member
- “I can walk students to our advisor’s office and get careful, specialized advising fast.” – Humanities faculty member

Low morale

- “We’re all just trying to survive at this point. There’s no time or energy to think creatively or improve processes when we’re buried under everything that needs to be done today.” – Transform staff member
- “Every year, there’s a new mandate or system to learn. It’s like we can never settle into a rhythm because everything keeps changing. It’s exhausting.” – Science faculty member
- “Just the feeling of being worn down...is profound.” – Transform faculty member

Exclusion from decision-making

- “We keep being sold wellness Zooms...We don’t need mindfulness practices. We need living wages and meaningful input into the decisions that impact our work.” – Transform faculty member
- “At this point, I really think any further feedback from me/from U faculty colleagues is going to meet more and more diminishing returns, so I don't really perceive a need to keep investing my own time and energy in giving you feedback.” – Humanities faculty member

Lack of transparency

- “Changes are being made, but it’s unclear why and what’s happening.” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member
- “We keep hearing that this is about efficiency, but no one has defined what efficiency means...It feels like decisions are being made behind closed doors.” – Transform staff member
- “Upper admin has had many "listening sessions," but without giving faculty some sense of what they are trying to achieve, we can have no useful input in these sessions. (We were not even told that "listening sessions" were about shared services specifically.)” – faculty member (college affiliation unknown)

Disconnection from local realities

- “I’m not a therapist. I have my research to do and my teaching to do, and now you have students coming to us because we are a school where they feel comfortable.” – Transform faculty member
- “That’s our ethical responsibility [to support the students who the centers previously supported], but there is a lot of burnout when that labor gets put onto us, when these centers are closed.”
Transform faculty member
- “Every time I walk past the library, it is so offensive and gaslighting when I see [the banner that reads] U BELONG. I don’t feel like I belong and neither do my students.” – Transform faculty member

Shared services can work if...

- “Collaborative advising can work great! And it can work great even when advisors are spread out physically. Lead Advisors must stay embedded in their departments to be able to do their job well.” – staff member (college affiliation unknown)
- “Our research administration team has been critical to supporting our grants. It’s a model of shared services done right.” – Social and Behavioral Science faculty member
- “What does that shared resource look like? It depends on how it’s set up – it could be beneficial.” – Humanities staff member

Reflections on Findings

Complete the short survey to clarify your perspective

Recommendation #1

What we heard

Maintaining local contacts who have deep local knowledge is of paramount importance to operations and community.

How we will apply it

Preserve local expertise and college autonomy.

Recommendation #2

What we heard

Faculty and staff feel their feedback doesn't matter and that decisions are pre-determined.

How we will apply it

Engage faculty, staff and students deeply in the design process.

Recommendation #3

What we heard

Faculty and staff feel burned out and exhausted.

How we will apply it

Address low morale.

Recommendation #4

What we heard

Some models of shared services at the U work – but many, especially centralized services, do not meet faculty and staff needs.

How we will apply it

Learn from existing successful and unsuccessful models, at and beyond the U.

Recommendation #5

What we heard

Faculty and staff are skeptical that a broader adoption of shared services will be successful.

How we will apply it

Implement shared services through a deliberate, phased rollout that includes testing, piloting and feedback loops.

Recommendation #6

What we heard

Faculty and staff feel there is a lack of transparency and clarity regarding the shared services project.

How we will apply it

Communicate clearly, effectively and frequently about the project's progress, goals and outcomes.

Feedback on Recommendations

Complete the short survey to share feedback

Q and A

Please use the Zoom Webinar Q and A feature to submit questions

Thank you

Please visit our project webpage for updates and FAQs

<https://bit.ly/AA-shared-services>