

IU President's Initiative to Reduce
Administrative Barriers to Academic Excellence
Second Annual Report

February 1, 2018

The President's Initiative to Reduce Administrative Barriers to Academic Excellence (PIRAB) working group continues its review of administrative policies and procedures in an effort to eliminate unnecessary or duplicative ones and to reduce the burdens they impose wherever possible

Based on input from faculty, staff, and administrators, the working group has focused on a wide variety of topics. While the working group meets every other week, the bulk of the work has been done by the staff in the responsible units. This is an on-going process and many of the issues identified are going to take more time to resolve fully. However, thanks to the cooperation, open-mindedness, and skill of the colleagues with whom we have worked, there has been tangible progress on a number of issues, which this report summarizes. The areas of improvement include purchasing and travel reimbursement, furniture purchasing procedures, booth rental, hospitality, consolidated HR orientation, new food options on the Bloomington campus, and automatic review of existing policies.

Progress on specific issues and the process that is bringing it about are indicators of a broader cultural change that is necessary to enhance efficiency and accountability. The working group is committed to fostering a culture of innovation that promotes academic excellence and creative ways of achieving it by empowering all members of the university community and then holding individuals responsible for their actions.

This report updates the university communities on PIRAB's activities over the past year. The committee's prior report and other information about the committee's work is available at better.iu.edu. Changes to policies and procedures described below are in effect as of January 1, 2018, unless otherwise noted.

Purchasing and Travel Reimbursement

Purchasing and Travel Management continue to review their policies and practices to lessen the burden placed on faculty and staff. Procurement Services is currently in the final stages of a policy review that will reduce the current 38 policies to approximately 18 policies. Travel policies are being reviewed as well, and will be restructured into a single travel policy document.

Chrome River, a leading travel and expense system, will be implemented in early 2018 to replace IU's current travel management system. The new state-of-the-art system will make expense submissions easier, allow the submission of expenses through a mobile app, eliminate the requirement for pre-approval of travel, and implement the decision announced earlier not to require receipts for most travel expenses under \$75, among other changes. The goal is to simplify travel management and provide greater flexibility and functionality for faculty and staff, while still allowing the university to maintain appropriate controls. For more information, please see <https://uits.iu.edu/projectrecharge>.

Procurement Services, along with faculty members, Financial Management Services, UITS, Office of the Vice President and General Counsel, Office of Research Administration, and Facilities/University

Architect's Office are currently finalizing a request for a proposal to implement a new Procure to Pay system that will streamline procurement activities and streamline and enhance internal controls. In response to a request by research faculty, VWR scientific products were added in December to the scientific punch-out catalog offerings. Additionally, a purchasing advisory group of faculty and staff has been assembled to partner with Procurement Services to help ensure that appropriate contracts are in place to support research activities, and to help guide the upcoming request for a proposal for scientific supplies, which will be released later this year.

Hospitality

Hospitality has been the source of many comments in the past. One particular area of concern was the requirement that a meeting must last four or more hours for food to be reimbursed with university funds. As reported earlier, this requirement has been eliminated and replaced with a new, more flexible policy.

The new policy, available at <https://policies.iu.edu/policies/fin-acc-50-hospitality-expenditures/index.html>, replaces arbitrary rules with a more flexible approach based on the principles of stewardship and fiduciary duty. The policy recognizes that "During the course of university business, it might be necessary to incur hospitality expenditures, for the purpose of promoting and furthering the mission of the university." The new policy includes three broad categories for allowable hospitality expenses, with examples under each category: (1) meals or refreshments served during business meetings; (2) meals for visitors, guests, donors, prospective employees, or students; and (3) university receptions and official functions. It then relies on individual responsibility, backed by better tools for detecting inappropriate uses of university funds.

Similarly, university policy in the past prohibited university employees from serving alcohol in connection with university business, instead requiring that alcoholic beverages be provided and served only by licensed caterers with an "off-premises" permit. This requirement has been eliminated for smaller events and a new, more flexible policy created in its place, available at <https://policies.iu.edu/policies/fin-ins-10-service-alcohol/index.html>.

Furniture Purchasing Procedures

Furniture purchasing procedures have been revised to permit the purchasing of small office accessories without recourse to the University Architect's Office. As long as employees have authorization from their unit head and an appropriate source of funding, they may purchase items such as lamps, clocks, garment racks, and picture frames without seeking any additional approvals.

In addition, there is an expanded list of furniture and related items that have been preapproved for purchase by units without a Request for Service review completed by the University Architect's Office. This streamlines a significant volume of furniture transactions. For more information about the new furniture purchasing procedures visit <http://www.indiana.edu/~purchase/resources/procedures.php>.

Booth Rental

University departments often have a need to rent exhibit booths at conferences and other events. Time is often of the essence in reserving booth space because in the majority of cases confirmation of the location in the exhibit hall is based upon how quickly you can reserve your space.

In the past, IU's requirements for contracting delayed faculty and staff when renting booths. Moving forward, the university has put in place the authority for Purchasing to approve booth rental and exhibit contracts up to \$2,500 without further negotiation of contract terms beyond those established by the conference itself. This should expedite and streamline the efforts associated with the vast majority of these opportunities.

New Food Options and Locations on the Bloomington Campus

The working group has heard from a number of colleagues seeking easier access to a wider variety of food options on the Bloomington campus. In response, the Bloomington campus is now working to provide expanded dining options. New offerings are available in the Memorial Union, Wells Library, some schools, and a number of dorms. More will be appearing soon.

In addition, the Bloomington campus has put in place a streamlined process to make alternative options easier to access for special events. The campus is providing a one-stop point of contact for units wishing to take advantage of food trucks, caterers, and other options. This point of contact can identify a range of options and then work with the various units on campus that need to be involved in an event or dining location. In addition, the campus is pre-certifying some outside vendors (e.g., restaurants, food trucks, etc.) to provide a full range of dining locations and options on campus.

Requests for assistance should be sent to: Andrew Smith, General Manager of Campus Cafes, RPS Dining Services, als@indiana.edu, (812) 856-1023.

HR Orientation

Human Resources has expanded its new employee orientation program on the Bloomington campus to provide a half-day training and orientation. This provides a consolidated, rather than fragmented, approach to training new employees and providing them with the resources they need to access benefits, technology, and important health, safety, and security information. It is also designed to help better connect them to the university's teaching, research, and service missions. This program builds on the success of IUPUI's longstanding new employee orientation.

Automatic Policy Review

IU has more than 400 policies, and while we are working to reduce and streamline that number, it is important that every policy be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is still necessary and still working efficiently. Regular policy review has long been required under IU policy, and in 2017, 55 policies were updated and streamlined consistent with this requirement. Beginning January 2018, policy owners are being notified annually of review deadlines and supplied with usage data from the university's policy website. The latter is particularly useful, because a policy that sees a great deal of use is worth examining not because it is necessarily in need of repair, but rather because we want to be especially sure that heavily-used policies are the best they can be.

Work continues on a number of other issues. At the same time, we invite all members of the university community to submit suggestions for other policies and practices we should be addressing through the

“submit feedback” link at the <https://better.iu.edu> website. These could concern administrative barriers, but we also invite you to identify academic policies that might be impeding the university’s pursuit of its teaching, research, and service missions. We also welcome suggestions for how IU might continue to foster a culture of innovation, empowerment, and accountability, and we look forward to working with you to make the goal a reality.

Respectfully submitted,

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