WPG#30a: Currently, the AIS reporting is generated monthly by the Financial Reporting function. Since the reporting is static, the University should generate reports more frequently (at least monthly) to improve reliability of data, better manage revenue, monitor spending trends, and improve the reliability of data for budget managers tasked with making strategic adjustments.

Recommendation: The Data Analytics subgroup, in collaboration with staff from Academic Affairs and CPAN, is developing a Power BI financial data dashboard solution that will give users direct access to transaction-level details for comprehensive analysis. The dashboard solution will provide convenient access to data, updated daily, after the transition and validation stages of implementation.

WPG #30b: Develop cross training and/or back-up support for AIS related functions. Currently, user functionality and technical support of AIS is primarily managed by the Assistant Director of Accounting. Although such efforts are also supported by the Assistant Director of Financial Analysis, the University needs to expand those who are knowledgeable about AIS functionality and develop desktop procedures for AIS reporting.

Recommendation: The workgroup concurs that cross-training and documentation are essential business practices that should be implemented across the entire University. Administrative Accounting has prioritized these practices and remains committed to continuing their focus on them.

WPG #9b: Consider a system audit of AIS to improve functionality until a long-term ERP decision has been reached. For example, automating the purchase requisitioning process can significantly reduce paperwork and processing timeline.

WPG #39a: Work with AIS consultant to leverage untapped functionality within AIS, potentially discovered as part of the SIU Technology Committee initiated by Dr. Daniel Mahony, SIU System President, involving representatives from all SIU campuses.

Recommendation (for #9b & #39a): The workgroup recommends that Administrative Accounting implement these changes as soon as possible:

1. Discontinue the APID form for purchases made against a Purchase Order.

    a. Transition to Planned POs, where departments release payments directly matching invoices.
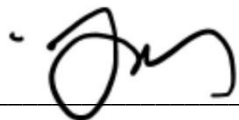
   b. The invoices will be matched to the corresponding PO releases, requiring no further action from the FO/Delegates.

   c. This change will streamline processes, reducing paperwork and processing time.

2. Increase the cost threshold for a mandatory P.O. from $5K to $10K.

   a. Payment for goods or services below the new threshold will require the submission of an APID.

   b. This adjustment will enhance efficiency by minimizing paperwork and simplifying the processing of purchase orders.

3. Increase utilization of the Excel invoice upload process in AIS. Currently used for SDM refunds, Cougar Buck refunds and other special circumstances, this functionality improves efficiency across multiple areas. Administrative Accounting will continue to explore further applications for this tool.

4. Redesign of the Travel Voucher

   a. Simplify the form to improve user experience.

   b. Simplify the first/last day travel per diem calculations.

   c. Improve the process for verifying mileage.

5. Explore expanding encumbrance categories to capture capital projects.

6. Maintain active membership on the Presidential ERP system committee which provides feedback to President Mahony on Ellucian/Banner Finance system.

These changes aim to improve overall efficiency, reduce administrative burden, and align with the upcoming ERP system implementation.

WPG #39b: Engage Banner users with financial reporting and budget responsibility to understand user proficiency and experience. Share feedback with Ellucian consultants to improve functionality.

Recommendation: The workgroup recommends that Financial Affairs implement this observation in conjunction with a decision on the new ERP system.

_____   March 12, 2025 _____

WPG #30, 9, 39   Date

Approved: James T. Minor, Chancellor