



Top-tier private research university modernizes its administrative model to improve service and increase efficiency

To increase investment in its long-standing academic mission, the leaders of a top-tier, private research university knew they needed to optimize the administrative services supporting it. They selected Deloitte to help create a model that would satisfy the diverse needs of the academic and administrative units across campus. What began as a shared services project became a comprehensive administrative modernization initiative that included technology rationalization, re-imagined administrative service delivery, and investments in areas such as training. The university now has a flexible, scalable administrative model to provide top-quality service to faculty, staff, and students.

A top-tier, private research university known for challenging conventional thinking wanted to invest more in its long-standing academic mission. At the same time, the university needed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative services that support it. University leadership determined a shared services approach would allow the institution to achieve both goals. They selected Deloitte to help them, based on our deep understanding of both their unique culture and the broader context of higher education, administrative modernization experience, and comprehensive technology strategy and implementation capabilities.

Collaboration is key

The first step on the shared services path was to work collaboratively with university staff to analyze the institution's current landscape, envision the future state, and build an implementation roadmap for the Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Procurement, and Research Administration areas. To better understand what the future could look like, Deloitte worked with staff to identify organization, process, policy, and technology challenges that existed in the current state. The team then considered leading practices and worked closely with staff to develop a proposed future-state service delivery model. This new model identified the activities that should move to shared services and also those activities that should remain in local units or in newly-established centers of expertise.

Stakeholder engagement and change management were critical parts of this project. This included a highly customized approach to meeting with deans and engaging with faculty and staff in academic and administrative units. This was accompanied by role-based information sessions and training to prepare the university for success.

Deloitte worked with the university to identify key performance indicators, develop partnership agreements with academic units, and deliver new help desk and dashboard technology to increase transparency across the university, reduce errors, and increase accuracy.

University leaders also asked Deloitte to help develop a rigorous approach to performance measurement that would support top-tier service. This customized, metrics-driven approach allowed leaders to have real-time visibility into operational performance.

Going beyond

True to the university's mission to empower individuals to question conventional thinking, the engagement team challenged the status quo.

The Administrative Modernization project team went beyond redesigning processes to further transform the administrative model through enhanced technology, policy simplification, and robust training for staff.

As a result of the improvement opportunities identified during the early stages of the project, the university expanded the initiative beyond shared services to full-fledged administrative modernization. This comprehensive approach allows the university to plan strategically for its administrative needs and sequence improvements over time while incorporating leading practices.

What began as a shared services project helped crystalize what the university needed to move its administrative infrastructure forward. By combining shared services with larger transformation, the university has not only freed up capacity to support its mission, it has also built a modern operating model to better serve its faculty and staff, both now and into the future.

For more information, please contact us at highereducation@deloitte.com

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