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The University Business Council (UBC) is stepping up its outreach efforts under the guidance of Richard Cate, vice president of Finance and Administration, to meet the changing needs of employees working on business-related issues in hopes of making their day-to-day practices more efficient.

Started in 2007 as the Division of Finance and Enterprise Services Advisory Group, the University Business Council came into being in March 2008 as an advisory body to the VP of Finance and Administration. It was charged with advancing the university's mission, vision and goals by identifying effective ways for employees to accomplish their daily tasks through the development of efficient, sustainable business practices, policies and procedures to solve business-related issues.

"The UBC is integral to improving and sustaining business practices at the university," said Cate. "The council is made up of the leadership of the central administrative offices and academic business offices, so my decision making is well informed by the diverse perspectives of this array of campus business experts."

Past projects have included the streamlining of budget management processes, the transition to PeopleSoft, rewriting procurement policies, and dealing with retroactive changes to employee salary distributions. Project ideas are encouraged from all employees and should focus on the improvement of a task-related procedure; affect more than one functional area; and require a significant level of support, possibly at the Board of Trustee level.

Project ideas are assigned to various committees whose members are comprised of academic and administrative unit business leaders, service group leaders from the Division of Finance and Enterprise Services, and other administrative offices. Committees change over time to address the evolving issues presented to the UBC and are flexible in nature. The Think Tank Committee, for example, focuses on strategic issues in support of the other committees while the iStructure Committee deals with infrastructure, chart of accounts, and security issues.

Additional committees, which occasionally work with students to give them practical experience and seek their input, include: Budget, Management and Reporting; Service Centers; Employee Life-Cycle; Communications; Procurement; Business Operations Manual; and IPEDS.

Project ideas should be sent to UBC chair Lori Bello, [Lori.Bello@uvm.edu](mailto:Lori.Bello@uvm.edu), or Julia Russell, [Julia.Russell@uvm.edu](mailto:Julia.Russell@uvm.edu). The new UBC website is expected to launch in June.

