Executive Summary

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Key Themes

1 Widespread manual entry and, at times, duplication of effort within research systems to capture, verify, and accurately report on data.

2 Multiple systems and processes are used across the university to accomplish similar functions, resulting in a lack of consistency across departments and colleges.

3 Many research systems do not adequately mirror business processes or contain needed functionality, which is currently mitigated by use of paper forms and routing

4 While the effort of those involved is not taken for granted, the university's PIs, administrators, and other decentralized research stakeholders expressed varying levels of customer satisfaction from central research administration/accounting offices.

5 IT support for many research systems is spread thin or 'single-threaded,' creating risk in continuing operations and future UR growth.

Approach
Assessment Phases

| Initiate Project | Current State Assessment | Develop Program Roadmap | Review and Finalize Deliverables |

- Initiate Project
  - Huron identified stakeholders, reviewed UR documentation and confirmed project scope to gain an initial understanding of the current business processes and systems in use.
- Current State Assessment
  - Huron hosted focus groups and individual interviews to better understand the identified research administration business processes and utilization of technology
- Develop Program Roadmap
  - Huron analyzed the draft research system catalog and related process and technology pain points to identify necessary investments to improve system and process performance
- Review and Finalize Deliverables

Key Themes

Multiple Systems and Processes to Capture Similar Functions
Customer Service Expectations from Central Research Offices

There is a lack of uniformity across the institution regarding the systems and processes used in proposal and budget development, finance tracking and reporting. Dissatisfaction exists regarding the transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness of both the ORPA and ORACS offices. Improvements can be made to better serve the research community.

Assessment Observations	Potential Solutions
• Departments often have vastly different internal processes, and the processes that work best are not often communicated to other departments and colleges. • Departments have developed their own methods of tracking grant finances, often with varying levels of sophistication. For example, the Chemistry department has developed a home-grown financial tracking system. Many other departments rely on URGEMS or less sophisticated shadow systems.	• An institution-wide research business process transformation effort. • Open forums to encourage more communication and sharing of best practices across departments and colleges.

Major Areas for Review
Purchasing and Commitments

A lack of integrations with UR Financials make procurement and tracking commitments a very manual and cumbersome processes. Purchase requests are often processed late and inaccurately, and there are few controls to prevent researchers from overspending on their projects.

Observations	Suggested Next Steps
• UR Financials data, URGEMS, and Excel-based models are utilized to compare encumbrance, budget, and actuals data. Department users often refer to shadow systems as their 'financial system of record.' • URGEMS is not used consistently across schools or departments. Shadow systems of varying sophistication are employed.	• Bring together various users and detractors of URGEMS to identify institutional best practices, fostering knowledge sharing for how to manage research financial statements in the short-term.

Major Areas for Review
Core Research Metrics

Measuring and reporting performance will allow Rochester to evaluate its progress relative to its objectives, equip management and operational personnel with the support they need to make appropriate changes in strategy, and provide the university with a foundation for continuous improvement.

Research Strategy	Research Administration Operation	Research Compliance/Risk Mitigation
• Funding success rates • "Effective" F&A recovery rates • Research Profit & Loss	• Proposals received by deadline (5 days) • Average number of days to set-up awards • Average number of days to prepare and set-up subcontracts • Monthly unbilled balance ($) • Average accounts receivable balance ($)	• Effort re-certifications • Cost transfers in quarter • Late cost transfers • Sponsored accounts in overrun • Delinquent financial closeouts

Addressing the Observations Together
Research Metrics

- What metrics does your department chair ask you to monitor?

- What metrics do your PIs ask you to monitor?

- Annually?

- Quarterly?

- Monthly?

Addressing the Observations Together
Spending , Monitoring, Reporting, Closing Out

- What Makes This Aspect Difficult?

  – People

  – Forms

  – Process

  – Application Systems

- What Have You Done to Ease the Difficulties?

Addressing the Observations Together
October and November Meetings

• What Makes This Aspect Difficult?

- – Award Initialization
- – Monitoring Effort Allocations and Commitments
- – Purchasing Supplies and Equipment
- – Monitoring Rate of Spending and Financial Position
- – Identifying and Correcting Errors
- – Monitoring Cost Sharing
- – Closing Out the Account

Addressing the Observations Together
December and January Meetings

- What Have You Done To Ease The Difficulties?

  – Utilization of Systems
  – Self-developed Practice Aids
  – Communication/Delegation

Addressing the Observations Together
Thought Tool

Please Take Tool With You

Bring to Future Meetings