



FAQs - Rapid Response Teams

What is the purpose of these teams?

- The Rapid Response Teams are a critical component in the university's strategic planning process.
- The purpose of the teams is to quickly evaluate all the university's services and processes and make recommendations for improvements. Teams are meeting weekly this summer to:
 - Identify opportunities for improving services, saving money and/or increasing the university's revenue streams
 - Quickly analyze those opportunities
 - Develop and prioritize recommendations
- Team members were recruited from across the university based on the skill set and experience needed to quickly and thoroughly identify solutions.

What is the end goal?

- The teams are charged with finding a total of \$7-10 million in cost savings/revenue enhancements, with a focus on addressing some of the "pain points" and structural issues that keep us from delivering top-notch services to students, faculty and staff.
- The process is not just about cost cutting. In addition to showing us where there may be room to save money and resources, the information gathered during this process also is revealing areas where *more* investment needs to be made to improve services.
- In short, the entire university community is beginning to make a strategic shift from simply *spending* to really *investing* in university priorities.

Why is all this necessary?

- Marshall University is facing a financially challenging future. State funding for higher education is being cut more every year and traditional revenue streams like tuition are being constrained.
- Up until now, we have covered deficits in our operating budget through attrition—eliminating positions as employees leave the university and not filling many positions that were already open. We also have delayed some projects, and used cash savings and other "one-time" money from various revenue accounts.

- This year, \$5.8 million in one-time money was used to balance the budget and fund raises for faculty and staff. But, just like a family that must dip into its savings to make ends meet, this course is not sustainable. **We have to find ways to close this budget gap every year and fund one of our top strategic priorities—investing in people.**
- We need to make changes to the way we do business now or we risk being in a financial situation that will require much more drastic measures.

Will the teams be recommending reorganization or cutting jobs?

- Some reorganization may be recommended to improve efficiencies and increase revenue; however, the goal is to make the most efficient use of the positions we have now and to find cost savings through attrition first, before positions are eliminated.
- Examples of the types of ideas being discussed by the teams include:
 - Transitioning to university-wide "business center" models for functions like administrative services, IT, and marketing and communications
 - Contracting out some services currently being performed in house
 - Revising the travel authorization and P-card processes to save time and increase efficiency
 - Implementing additional energy efficiency measures like upgrading lighting fixtures and closing buildings or parts of buildings that get little use on weekends or during the summer
 - Maximizing revenues from facility rentals and the sale of items with university trademarks
 - Eliminating underutilized computer labs
 - Consolidating purchasing of advertising and promotional items to take advantage of bulk discounts and to eliminate duplication and waste

What is the timeline?

- The Rapid Response Teams will submit their draft recommendations to the Steering Team late this summer.
- The initial phase of the Services Portfolio Review will wrap up on September 1, 2014, when the Steering Team presents its recommendations to the university's administration.
- Once recommendations are accepted and the determination is made to proceed, the Steering Team and Rapid Response Teams will be responsible for helping to implement them. This implementation phase could take months.