

Annual NCCI Conference Sparks Member Institution Partnership

Problem/Challenge: University of Washington is a sprawling, growing, and urban campus, and one of the world's preeminent public universities. Ranked No. 10 in the world in Shanghai Jiao Tong University's 2015 rankings, the UW educates more than 54,000 students annually. Diversity and innovation are hallmarks of the UW, and long-time membership in NCCI has positively impacted many at UW—particularly the administrative side of campus.

The UW's "2 Years to 2 Decades" initiative after the 2008-9 recession focused on preserving academic strength, while introducing the concept of "organizational excellence." An outgrowth of that has been the "Transforming Administration Program" (TAP)—dozens of projects and initiatives in all areas of the University. In June 2015, the Provost conducted a broad survey on Central Administration. Its aim was to get a quick take on issues to help prioritize near-term efforts and resulted in a broad spectrum of targeted improvements to campus services.

In 2016, UW's Provost and TAP leadership tasked a team to conduct a UW-wide TAP administrative services survey of faculty, staff, and a segment of central administrative services. The effort seemed monumental and complex to the team.

Solution/Intervention: NCCI's 2016 Conference featured a contingent from UC San Diego speaking on their campus climate- and customer-service surveys, which they were expanding to other California schools. UW conference participants were very impressed with what they heard from UCSD, and alerted them when the survey RFP was advertised.

Through a competitive-bid process, UCSD was awarded the contract and will administer this large-scale survey of over 80 support services in January 2017. The UW team is excited about the quality and sophistication of UCSD's process, and looking forward to receiving the data, analysis and recommendations that will come from UCSD's work...not to mention the ability to benchmark with other West Coast universities, some of which are also NCCI members!

NCCI membership is well known for providing ideas, support and development opportunities for individuals who are "change agents" at their institutions. What is less known is the institution-wide benefit—even for very large schools—that is possible when we share best practices and seek to apply it at our own institutions.

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