

Student Life

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH

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ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

Unit/Department

Office of Budgets and Personnel

Describe your department's year.

The Office of Budget and Personnel (OBP) has continued to provide stellar service to all departments in Student Life despite the significant challenges that the Covid pandemic has presented. OBP began 2020 working through an assessment of functions and realignment of roles and responsibilities. This exercise was critical to our creating specialized work groups that could robustly meet the needs of Student Life departments. Our team was still moving office spaces and beginning to engage in their new responsibilities when the pandemic forced major changes to our working arrangements. Despite this, the OBP team rose to the challenge and worked tirelessly to support the Division of Student Life and continuously pivot in response to University needs and requirements while learning new roles. COVID, budget challenges, an extensive audit that covered all departments, the need to provide responsive remote virtual support and a RIO program that saw the departure of many members of Student Life and 2 of our team highlighted the year and created the basis for the narrative of our progress.

Summarize the impact of COVID-19 on your unit's operations.

COVID-19 created many challenges and opportunities for our team to provide essential support and service to the departments and staff within Student Life. Our HR and Payroll Team was tested unlike ever before, and they more than rose to the challenge. Every day brought new directives, changes to rules, many unanswered and never before imagined questions, and a heavy dose of uncertainty and even fear. Through this all, staff was supported, payroll was processed, procedures were created and recreated, processes were rolled out, performance appraisals were completed and cataloged, and the team remotely engaged all staff in Student Life to create a new "normal". Our Finance team also worked tirelessly to step into new roles throughout the Division as other staff members retired from their positions. Our shared service support level increased in many departments including ODI, RSOP, and the Kirby Student Center. The Finance team diligently worked to create standardized processes ensuring best practices were being followed. They successfully did

COVID-19 impact, continued

all of this remotely in a time of much uncertainty and change. Our Cash Room staff also stepped up to the plate to support the University in new ways. The team continued to meet the needs of those departments utilizing traditional cash room services while also providing administrative support in the Student Life suite. The OBP improvised, used creativity and a healthy dose of grit to support Student Life, support each other, and meet the needs of the University.

Provide an assessment result that was important and informative for your department. What did you assess and what did you learn?

Our FY21 strategic plan included the goal of finishing the reorganization of job functions and responsibilities for OBP staff and exploring opportunities to adopt a shared services model when appropriate. Our assessment tool of this goal was successful implementation of our new teams and greater support for Student Life departments. The OBP team attained this goal and took on even greater shared services responsibility given the popularity of the RIO. We learned that our capacity and subject matter expertise increased with the specialization of our new teams. OBP also gained a better understanding of the tools and education necessary to create more robust shared service arrangements.

Summarize the condition of your departmental budget at the end of the year. Discuss revenues, expenses, and (if applicable) refunds in broad terms.

The OBP budget is a unique creature with multiple funding sources and strings. We remained solidly on target with our anticipated expenditures which primarily exist in the form of salary. The OBP team supports all departments within Student Life, some to a greater extent than others. However, our funding is primarily through the auxiliaries, with a small component of O&M funding. Due to the retirement of two staff members, we are anticipating that our expenses will be below budget until volumes and needs on campus increase.