The MSU Way Excellence in Campus Operations and Services (ECOS) Project

- The MSU Way ECOS - **Initiative requested** to facilitate efforts focusing on operations and services which are provided to campus clients

- “The MSU Way” is the delivery method that (optimally) all partners would agree to follow consistently and collaboratively, **exceeding customers’ expectations**...

  - **Content**
    - Focus Group Participants
    - Themes of the Customer Feedback
    - Questions for Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities to Answer
    - Considerations
MSU ECOS Focus Groups

Academic Participants

• College of Engineering
• College of Osteopathic Medicine (including Macomb University and Detroit Medical Centers)
• College of Natural Science
• College of Music
• Department of Theatre and Performing Arts
• Veterinary Medicine
Non-Academic Participants

- Athletics
- Residential and Hospitality Services
- Office of the VPFO
- Land Management
- Infrastructure, Planning and Facilities
TRUST

- Many customers do not trust that they are receiving all of the information needed to make informed decisions
- No consistent communication of the status of their project.
- When customers ask for more information, many feel the project reps are not forthright in delivering it

What is the promise we make to customers?

- Not a known standard of documented processes for delivering a capital project – or any major construction project – on campus.
- This is true for those with exceptional experience as well as very little experience with these types of projects - “Chaos?”
“Its Knowing Who to Call”

- Customers who do know the process (at least to some degree) are not necessarily confident about it.
- Some are satisfied because they know who to contact, what processes to utilize, timelines and approval step process, etc.
- *Those who are unfamiliar with processes, however, consistently feel lost and frustrated*.

**Stewardship**

- It is constantly assumed that customers know more than they actually do and that they can easily find out information they need.
- Assumed that customers would/should **not** want to know as much information as they ask because it is handled for them.
- *Could there be more of a focus on the customer when delivering services?*
Clarity of Expectations
- Most customers would like a single point of contact throughout the project
- Leadership hand-offs are perceived as harmful to the project and confusing to the customer

“Our Project Isn’t Important”
- Customers are aware when they are pushed down the priority list for another, more high-profile project
- They are given the impression that their project is less important and inhibits building trust

Close Out and Acceptance
- There is a general lack of clarity regarding finishing a project
- Customers do not know when their projects are complete or, most importantly, who “approves” its completion
MSU ECOS Customer Themes

Supporting the Core Mission

- Customers in the science/medical/research facilities tend to want an expert on the capital project delivery staff to advise them throughout their project
- Want the best value and practices
- Feel the need to produce an in-house expert of their own.
MSU ECOS Customer Themes

The Bottom Line

• Many customers do not feel that MSU Service Providers advocate for them and their best interests

• Service providers work to protect funds and/or other contractors and business partners.

Cultural Change –

• Whether these perceptions are true or not, we must acknowledge that they exist

• The perception of the client is our reality
What do service partners want to promise customers?

- Should all requests (facility, ATS, Telecom, Land Mgt. projects) go to the Infrastructure, Planning, and Facilities? or are there services that would be better provided by other parties (because of workloads or best value considerations)?
- Could this be defined so it can be communicated to the campus community in a more comprehensive style?
What is the appropriate balance regarding project delivery?

- How many resources?
- How much communication?
- How much money can be allocated to the management of the project delivery process?

How documented should our processes be?

- Is there a balance regarding rigid procedures that leave no leeway for individual approach
- *If it is not documented in some way, how do we communicate to customers that they are getting good service?*
MSU ECOS Facilitator Questions

Is there appropriate protocol and training in best practices?

How much emphasis is on communication throughout all phases of the project with the customer?

Should the software solely drive the process and terminology? (FAMIS, Unifier, Meridian)
  - Customers may not necessarily understand or care about internal systems

What is the expected level of service, communication, competency and engagement
  - How is it provided?
High Priority Considerations

Considerations - Immediate

- Document the **project delivery process**
- Improve delivery process as it is documented - “The MSU Way”
- Provide published guideline **for all customers** of roles & responsibilities
- Send all process participants through same **delivery process training**
- Publish a **fee structure & make consistent with no exceptions**.
- Develop format to provide a detailed breakdown of **Preliminary Cost Assessments (PCA)**.
  - Provide breakdown for customer with brief explanation of job attributes along with scope of what is included and excluded. Include statement about JIT status, building service capacities, and potential haz-mat risks as part of the PCA.
Considerations – How we perform the task

Considerations

• **Set Expectations** - publishing an analysis of average duration of projects

• **Core Mission** - Establish subject matter experts in **programming**
  ➢ Consider developing specialized project managers or zone managers with expertise in research/science/medical facilities. Maintain a level of consistency with who manages those projects.

• **Transparency** - Publish internal guideline for **communicating spending** during entire course of project with customer organization.

• Develop a standard protocol for **closeout phase** of projects.
  ➢ Develop a training program for those involved in the close of projects. **Provide the customer with a published guideline** of what needs to take place during move-in, building start-up and operation, and the warranty period.

• Establish **standard project documentation template(s)**
  ➢ used consistently to effectively communicate throughout projects and services. (i.e. charter, program statement, detailed estimate sheet and budget tracking sheet, meeting notes, service slips, etc.) Train individuals to hold themselves and others accountable.
Considerations

- Establish a **customer support center** that will field all customer inquiries for all service units
  - Train **customer service reps** (CSRs) and/or customer service advocates to be the central point of contact for all requesting levels of service

- Develop an **online “library” or database of projects and services** completed so same people can be consulted on recurring problems

- Establish **training workshops** to help customers use service requests, statements during/after projects, access online repository of shutdowns, etc.
  - *Increase outreach and customer engagement*

- Consider using a **standard or set pricing strategy**.
  - white board or bulletin board hanging, hardware installation, electrical installation, “window shaker” air conditioner installation, (increase the list *ad infinitum*)

- **Address shuffling of projects/customers to accommodate high-profile and fast timeline** projects to ensure all customers feel that their project is important and high priority