In order to foster a working environment that encourages continuous improvement, the Vice Chancellor for Business & Finance (VCBF) unit has developed an Assessment and Evaluation Program that includes three elements:

- Customer service satisfaction
- Employee workplace satisfaction
- External comparative analysis and feedback

**Customer Service**

To develop a systematic, comprehensive assessment and evaluation plan for Customer Service Satisfaction of the VCBF unit, periodic customer surveys were implemented with the goal of identifying processes and procedures that work well and those that need improvement.

Based on objectives identified by the VCBF departments, an assessment instrument was developed in collaboration with the Office of Research. The survey included the ability to ask department specific questions.

After receiving IRB approval, the following surveys were first administered in 2005/2006, results were compiled, and reports were submitted to the Vice Chancellor for Business & Finance. Based on items identified from the surveys, improvements were made where necessary.

Surveys were again administered in 2009 and in 2011/2012. Results from the second and third round surveys were compared to the first round. Areas needing improvement were identified and action plans put into place.

**Employee Satisfaction**

All VCBF employees are invited to participate in an employee survey every three years. The purpose of the survey is to identify any workplace issues that can be addressed to improve employee satisfaction. This is based on the belief that employees who are well satisfied with their workplace will deliver a higher level of service to our customers. Based on the findings, action plans are developed to address issues identified in the survey.

The second VCBF employee survey was conducted on November 1, 2005 and the last one was October 2011.
External Comparisons
In spring 2006 the VCBF Directors adopted the VCBF External Comparison Model, which is one of three pillars supporting the VCBF Assessment and Evaluation process.

Within the external comparison model, there are three focus areas: 1) local, state and federal laws, regulations and statutes, etc.; 2) professional and association standards; and 3) comparable best practices and benchmarking. Based upon our agreement, the directors pledged to use these various forms of external comparison data to enhance and continuously improve their individual department’s processes and activities and collectively, the VCBF area’s overall effectiveness and efficiency, over time. Because of the diversity of VCBF department missions and activities and a lack of identified peer institutions, the following approach was agreed upon:

- Initially, each department will review operations manuals; self-audits; local, state and federal rules, regulations, codes, laws and statutes that pertain to their area, as well as University policies and guidelines to ensure basic departmental and organizational compliance. Compliance examples include electrical code, Clery Act, GASB, UM SPG, state and federal employment laws, OSHA and MI-OSHA environmental laws, criminal code.
- Next, each department will review their staff’s collective experiences along with applicable professional and/or association standards for the purpose of identifying standards and/or best process/activity practices to adopt. Some examples include the American College of Sports Medicine; National Association for College Auxiliary Services; Michigan Association of Physical Plant Administrators; and National Association of Educational Procurement.
- Next, each department will review the literature to identify and incorporate additional appropriate best process/activity practices. An example, Recreational Sports Journal.
- As the assessment and evaluation process become more mature and sophisticated within the VCBF area, each department will attempt to identify appropriate benchmarking standards and best practices from similar and/or peer institutions. In addition, a recent suggestion was made to consider the Six-Sigma Approach: Define, Measure, Improve, and Control, as we become more experienced and sophisticated in assessment and evaluation.

The VCBF departments have focused their attention on local, state, federal and University guidelines, rules, regulations and laws to ensure compliance, with some departments reviewing applicable professional and association standards for the purpose of enhancing departmental and VCBF effectiveness and efficiency on an ongoing basis. In summary, the VCBF group is striving for continuous improvement. While much has been accomplished, much remains to be done. Our goal is to continue moving along the continuum.