Administrative Program Review:
Surplus

Western Carolina University

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I. Executive Summary

The Surplus Property Department at Western Carolina University is charged with managing items that are no longer useful to the university’s many departments to ensure it is rehomed, recycled, sold or disposed of in a timely manner according to the laws, policy and procedures of the university and the state.

II. Response to Criteria: Surplus

1. State the primary purpose and key functions of the unit.

The surplus property unit is responsible for disposing equipment and supplies that have outlived their usefulness, are out dated, damaged and or broken in accordance with NC State Surplus rules and regulations. Surplus Property also assists departments who have a need for item(s) that have been sent to surplus that can be utilized by another department.

2. List the top 3-5 goals/priorities of the unit.

- Dispose of unwanted, damaged equipment and/or supplies in a timely manner. Most of the items are sold at a monthly yard sale that is open to the public. Other larger items are disposed of through the bid process and directed by the Department of Surplus Property;
- Assists departments in repurposing surplus items (Computers, laptops and tablets not included) Request for IT items to be surplused are sent to the IT department. IT processes the surplus tickets, picks up the items and determine if they can be used in another location on campus or are they truly surplus items. If it is determined that the item can be surplused, they are taken to the secured location for IT items at WCU’s warehouse. If the item surplused has a hard drive, it is removed from the machine and destroyed;
- Recycle any unusable items that cannot be sold or repurposed. Items that are broken beyond repair are not sold at the yard sale. Those items if they can be recycled are sold to the appropriate vendor. An example of this is vehicles that have no worth are sold for scrap metal. If there is not a recycled value these items are put in a dumpster and taken to the landfill.

3. Summarize the history of this unit on campus.

Surplus Property is situated in the Purchasing Department, which is part of the Division of Administration and Finance. To the best of my knowledge, in the 1980’s, surplus property was a combined position within the purchasing office. The person who was in charge of disposing the university’s surplus property was also in charge of keeping up with the university’s assets and inventory. At some point in the late 1990’s, it was decided that this position should be more of an accounting position and the entire position was moved to the controller’s office. It was quickly determined that this was not a good situation and the decision was made to return the duties of Surplus Property and the tagging of the university’s assets back to purchasing. All items surplused were either re-homed to another location on campus, given or sold to other state agencies, sold to an approved 501c3 charity, bid through the state’s state surplus bids or declared trash and taken to the landfill. In approximately 2005, Western Carolina University was given the authority to begin holding Surplus Property Yard Sales. At first the sales were not held on a regular basis. After the positive outcome of the sales, it was determined that the sales should be and are still held on the first Wednesday of every month. The sale is a first come first serve basis. All items are sold as is for a nominal cash transaction. It is the person who purchases the item to transport it to its new home.
4. Describe the structure of the unit and how it is situated organizationally within the institution.

*Division - Administration and Finance*

*Department - Purchasing and Accounts Payable (AP)*

*Unit - Surplus Property*

5. Provide an organizational chart of the unit with every employee identified by the title name. Attach a brief list of the primary duties carried out by each employee on the chart.

**Vice Chancellor Administration & Finance**

Mike Byers

- Overseas all functions of Administration & Finance Division

**Director of Procurement and Accounts Payable (AP) Services**

Cindy Nicholson

- Oversees the AP Manager, Purchasing specialist and Systems Coordinator positions
- Oversees the purchasing and accounts payable functions of the university

**Assistant Director of Procurement (Purchasing Specialist)**

Ricky Hooper

- Oversees Purchasing Agent 1 & 2 positions
- Oversees the Surplus Property position
- Purchases for departments with vendors (A-N)

**Surplus Property Manager (Administration Support)**

Regina Cowan

- Processes all the surplus property requests for the university
- Manages the surplus property after it is transferred to the warehouse
- Coordinates items to be re-purposed in a different department
- Coordinates the monthly surplus property sales
- Coordinates the sale and pick up of items that are bid through the state surplus property office in Raleigh, NC
- Tags the fixed asset items
If applicable, describe the number and contribution of student employees or graduate assistants to the unit’s programs and services.

None

Alignment with WCU Mission, Vision, Values
1. How does the unit mission align with the university mission with specific reference to support of the QEP, UNC Tomorrow and the academic colleges/schools?

N/A

2. How has the purpose of the unit changed in the past 5 years?

No

3. How do you expect the purpose to change in the next 5 years?

To be more proactive in helping Western Carolina University leave a smaller carbon footprint.

Demand for the program
1. Who are the key users/participants of the unit’s programs or services?

Any office that has items they no longer need.

2. How do you identify and measure demand for the unit’s programs or services?

By the number of surplus property request that are received by the Surplus Property Coordinator.

3. List those other units on campus that interact most with this unit. Briefly describe the nature of those interactions.

- Facilities – Scrub Team: Scrub Team is the group of individuals who pick up the items being surplus and bring them to the warehouse;
- Grounds Team – Assists with loading metal recycle product and taking to the vendor in Sylva on and as needed basis;
- IT- Technical Support – This group of individuals handles all the request for IT items being surplus. They pick up the item. Determine if the item can be used in another department. If not they follow their procedures and take item(s) to the warehouse where it is stored in a secured area until it is either sold or disposed of;
- List other units on campus that provide related programs and services. WCU Police and Parking provide security and assist with parking during the monthly surplus “Surplus Sales”;
- Describe the unique contributions of this unit.

Quality
1. How do you identify and measure quality of the unit’s programs or services? List the top benchmarks used to assess quality.

How fast the items sent to surplus are either re-homed, sold or disposed of.

2. How do you use the results of quality assessments to improve programs and/or services? Provide specific examples.
Most of the time it’s listening to suggestions received from participants and looking at what other universities do and seeing if what they do would possibly make our processes better.

3. What were the major accomplishments of the unit in the past 5 years? Include those directly related to unit functions AND/OR other contributions related to University goals.

   *WCU started having the surplus sales on a monthly basis instead of once every 3 to 4 months. We’ve started using the new Surplus, Disposal, Cannibalization forms to make it easier to separate items that need to be taken to the warehouse vs. items to be taken to the landfill. Currently we’re working on getting a team together to do surplus pickups during the day so that the Surplus Property Coordinator can be present as the items are brought to the warehouse and can keep a more accurate account of surplus items.*

**Cost Effectiveness**

1. How do you identify and measure cost effectiveness of this unit? List the top benchmarks used to assess cost effectiveness.

   *To the best of my knowledge this question has never been addressed.*

2. Attach an itemized spreadsheet (see template) outlining ALL revenues/resources generated and expenses incurred (including salaries) for the unit for the past 3 years.

**Opportunity Analysis**

1. How can programs or services offered by the unit be enhanced?

   *Examples might include:
We are investigating was to be more proactive and letting university departments know when items become available in order to reduce the physical effort by only moving items once vs. multiple times.*

2. How do the activities of other units advance or hinder the effectiveness of your unit? Focus should be on those units that were identified in item #3 in the section on “Demand for the Program”.

   *Western Carolina does not have a team that is dedicated to moving items on the campus from one location to another. Surplus Property has to rely on the Scrub Team to move the items declared surplus from the department to the warehouse. This is done after normal business hours and has to be coordinated and worked in with their assigned duties. Also, the Grounds Team assists with loading metal recycle products and hauling to the vendor in Sylva as requested by housekeeping and/or purchasing. Since the more regular yard sales have started occurring, this request has decreased.*

3. What programs and services offered by the unit are redundant or outside the scope of the unit’s primary purpose?

   *Bringing items that have previously been determined trash or items that can be disposed of by taking them to an appropriate dumpster vs. bring these items to the warehouse with the usable surplus property and having to be handled again by taking them to the appropriate dumpster or landfill.*

4. What are similar units at peer or aspirant institutions doing that this unit would like to do or should be doing?

   *Have a dedicated moving team that would work with the surplus property coordinator to move items more efficiently during normal business hours. They could also help the surplus property coordinator arrange and organize items that are to either be bid or sold at the monthly surplus sales.*
5. What additional cost-savings could be achieved in this unit?

*None that we are aware of. The operating budget for surplus property is $5,000 (not including the salary for the surplus property coordinator.)*

6. What external funding opportunities (grants, contracts, etc.) exist that could be pursued by this unit? If applicable, describe any efforts to pursue such funding to date?

*None that I am aware of.*

7. What would it take to make the program exemplary?

*We believe the program could be exemplary if we had more funding, more staff, more space and a better way to display and sell the items that might offer some additional income. This should also include more communication and educational awareness to help our campus community better understanding why items are surplused, and how items have to be handled.*