Institutional Effectiveness Report – 2011-2012

**Assessment Summary**

**Administrative Unit:** Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER)

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**Assessment Cycle:** 2011-2012

**Goals for Unit from 2011-12 Institutional Effectiveness Plan:**

- To increase the awareness and utilization of the GA-REAP Project
- To increase the awareness and utilization of research services and assistance provided by CBER
- To more widely distribute CBER’s quarterly publications, *Cost of Living Index* and *South Georgia Business Outlook*
- To continue working with First State Bank & Trust to produce their (now-annual) publication, *Commercial and Residential Real Estate Analysis for Lowndes County, Georgia*
- To increase the visibility of CBER in the community by partnering with the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce for the 2012 Valdosta-Lowndes County Economic Symposium.

**Measures** (provide a specific measure of success - how will you know when you have achieved your goals?)

- CBER will seek an increase in year-over-year usage of the GA-REAP project
- CBER will seek an increase in the number of faculty research projects

**Assessments/Methods** (include how, when, and to whom these are administered, and align outcomes with specific assessments or measures):

- CBER will monitor (monthly) visits or “hits” to the GA-REAP project to determine if the site is being increasingly utilized
- CBER will monitor all ongoing projects and actively seek out new projects for faculty through public relations, personally selling, and direct mail activities
- CBER will monitor number of mailings distributed each quarter, both electronically and through the US Postal Service
Data/Evidence Results (qualitative or quantitative summary; raw data should be included in an attachment):

- The Center for Business and Economic Research co-hosted the Lowndes County Economic Symposium, presenting an overview of and distributing the entire report, “Lowndes County by the Numbers,” to the more than 100 economic developers, elected officials, and community stakeholders.

- CBER continued distributing all publications via e-mail and social media each quarter, rather than simply disseminating to the local media and direct mail. As a result, the quarterly cost of living and economic forecasts are being distributed more widely, to 152 unique recipients consisting of chamber and development authority members, elected officials, media outlets (including television, radio, and newspaper), and other interested stakeholders throughout the 41-county VSU service delivery region. This information is also being disseminated outside of the service area as requested and as evidenced by national recognition (USA Today reporter Dennis Cauchon contacted CBER for information on the ongoing impact of the nation’s economic crisis, and the interview was directed to Dr. Tori).

- CBER staff attended or participated in the following events:
  - Valdosta Rotary Club luncheon presentation (July, 2011)
  - Georgia USG/BOR Social Business Summit (Atlanta, October, 2011)
  - Lowndes County Board of Realtors Luncheon (January, 2012)
  - Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber Business Outlook Breakfast (February, 2012)
  - Georgia USG/BOR Social Business Competition (Atlanta, March, 2012)
  - Langdale Lecture Series & Reception (March, 2012)
  - Video interview with Valdosta CEO Magazine, posted to their web site (March, 2012)
  - Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber Economic Summit (April, 2012)
  - Georgia Power Regional Economic Forecast, Atlanta (May, 2012)
  - Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority Target Business Analysis (June, 2012)

- CBER Economist Cynthia R. Tori was interviewed, and quoted, in the June 5, 2012 edition of USA Today, regarding the ongoing economic crisis and its effect on state and local governments.

- CBER Director Scott Manley continued serving on the business advisory board for VSU’s chapter of Students in Free Enterprise (S.I.F.E.), taking a hands-on role in the creation of Project CleanSweep for Lowndes Associate Ministries to People, Inc. (L.A.M.P.).
• CBER Director Scott Manley worked with Dr. Phyllis Holland, Head of the Department of Management and International Business, to propose (and receive approval) for a minor in entrepreneurship. This will be the first minor offered by LCOBA.

• CBER Director Scott Manley successfully completed his first-year doctoral coursework, and began his second-year coursework.

• Attached are the usage reports for the Georgia Reap Project for the period beginning July 1, 2011, and ending June 30, 2012. The REA Project was utilized by 347 different users, who generated 193 unique reports during that time period. This is a slight decrease from the prior period, when 381 (-8.9%) different users generated 204 (-5.4%) unique reports.

Use of Results to Make Improvements (provide a brief explanation for each instance of usage of results to make improvements, clearly connecting each to data/evidence results above)

• Revisions made to both the CBER web site (http://www.valdosta.edu/lcoba/cber/) and the GA Reap web site (http://georgia.reaproject.org/) significantly increased traffic, which apparently peaked in the prior (2010-2011) period. As the current period (2011-2012) saw a slight decline in the utilization of the web portal, it is possible that the decrease is a result of changes that have been made to the site in an effort to increase its utilization. However, it is more likely a result of the ongoing fiscal and economic uncertainty. These results will be monitored going forward to ensure the site’s continued utilization, particularly given CBER’s implementation of the new DataZOA / DataZephyr Project.

• The compilation and utilization of the electronic database of community resources, service providers, and media outlets throughout the 41-county service region has resulted in more timely, cost-effective, and widespread distribution of the CBER publications. Specifically, the number of unique recipients increased from 143 to 152. This database will continually be revised, updated, and utilized to disseminate information and publications as appropriate.