Traveling "LEAN": A Streamlined Guide to Business Process Streamlining at UCR

❖ A <u>business process</u> is a series of activities designed to provide a specific service or product to a specific customer or client (or group thereof).

❖ A *"Lean"*, or <u>streamlined</u>, business process is one that delivers all of the value that its customers or clients desire, while eliminating all non-essential steps. Such a process is considered to "flow" without interruption, like a <u>stream</u> of water.

❖ The value in a process (what is desired; by when; and in what form) is determined by its customers, and it may vary from one process to another, or from one customer to another.

❖ The steps in a business process are the responsibility of those who perform it. Each step in a process may or may not provide value from the viewpoint of its intended client(s). Steps that do provide value are known as "value-added" steps.

❖ Some steps in a business process may not be "value-added" from the perspective of its customers/clients, but are essential in order to comply with requirements of parties external to the process, e.g. government regulators or granting agencies.

❖ A step in a business process that does not provide value to its customer, and is not essential for compliance purposes, is considered to contain <u>waste</u>. There are various forms of waste, involving expenditures of time, money, expertise, and materials.

❖ A "process map" is a graphic method of describing the steps in a business process. A "Value Stream Map" (VSM) is a specific form of map that uses "metrics" to measure the expenditures of time, money, personnel, and materials that are included in each step, and symbols to portray the route that a process takes.

❖ The goal of a VSM is to point out the steps in a process that contain the most waste. This tool allows for a process to be transformed from its "current state" to a streamlined "future state" in which customer value and "flow" are maximized, while waste is eliminated.

❖ At UCR, many business processes that impact large numbers of customers are being analyzed - using the "Lean" principles of value, waste, and flow - by groups known as "Lean Thinkers" who have been trained in "process mapping". The <u>ultimate</u> goal: "perfect" processes that respond to client demand ("Pull").   For <u>now</u>: more "Lean Thinkers" needed!