

ANNOUNCEMENT 1

UNC Payroll Project

UNC Payroll Recommendation

The Challenge

The State Controller's Office is in the process of converting all State agencies to a new central payroll system (called BEACON); nine UNC campuses are currently on the old central payroll system. (Note: The N.C. School of Science and Mathematics has already converted to BEACON.) Since there was no plan to include the central payroll campuses on BEACON, the University would be required to manually interface with BEACON, requiring duplicate data entry of human resource and payroll data, a process that would be highly inefficient. This would mean that by December 2009, the nine campuses must be processing payroll effectively and efficiently in a non-central payroll environment. The optimal solution should be in line with the future vision described below.

Future Vision

UNC should begin the process of providing hosted services for the nine Banner campuses to take advantage of cost savings and provide more effective computing services.

In a hosted services environment, the Banner database and associated programs would be physically located on a centralized computer at a regional data center (center of excellence). The campuses would be connected to their Banner systems through a high speed network. The "host" would provide system administration, database administration, backup and recovery and network connectivity to the campus.

All UNC campuses would be on the same versions of Banner and related ancillary software.

If all campuses were on the same version of Banner, the system could work collaboratively on upgrades enhancements, and would implement best practices. Consolidation of computing would provide the opportunity to better utilize the functionality within the ERP tool and would allow better sharing of processes between campuses, as well as the creation of centers of excellence, not just for hosted products, but for ancillary products.

UNC should work towards a centralized data warehouse for reporting.

Each campus owns the Operational Data Store (ODS) product, a data warehousing tool. Some campuses are using this data warehouse tool and others are considering using a different one. A consolidated data warehouse would allow for the collection and analysis of standardized data from all UNC campuses. The information stored in the warehouse would allow for improved reporting and decision making system-wide.

Timeline

Challenges, timelines and costs associated with establishing a hosted environment are much larger than the immediate payroll challenge; however, the solution to the payroll challenge should be consistent with the long-term opportunities derived from such an environment. Since the State's central payroll will no longer be available after 2008, the payroll project must be implemented by December 2009.

Recommendation

UNC should create the capacity to centrally process payroll for the nine campuses currently utilizing central payroll. Each campus must be fully operational on the Banner Human Resource system to enable payroll to be processed in a consistent and centralized mode.

- Each campus would adopt a single, unified and standard set of best practices for processing payroll as determined by a project team of campus and General Administration personnel. Best practices to be embraced would include those recommendations in the current study of university practices by Ernst and Young.

- Each campus would adopt a common set of benefits.

- Each campus would utilize the necessary Banner functions to prepare for payroll processing.

With the adoption of common practices, the nine campuses would be in a position to have their payrolls processed in a centralized manner without the manual and duplicative entry required if using the central payroll system.

Centralized processing would require the creation of a “payroll group” to execute the processing of payroll in collaboration with the payroll staffs at the campuses. This group would provide training/certification of staff to ensure that all personnel are knowledgeable about all the steps for payroll processing and ensure the campuses are in compliance with all reporting and regulatory requirements. Once established, this group would assist the campuses by providing on-going training for new staff, providing legal and tax updates, and helping reconfigure payroll-related tables, when needed.

Establishment of UNC Payroll Team

A Banner Functional Support Team, headed by Les Davidson, has recently been established. Les began with General Administration in November 2007, the staff was hired in May 2008. Staff members include Connie Long, Bonnie Howard, Janine McDuffie, and Autumn Carpenter.

The Team’s mission is to provide functional support to the end users of Banner (and eventually other ERP systems) on the campuses. Part of that mission will be to play a leading role in the implementation of the Ernst and Young recommendations and the transition to a new payroll system for the central payroll campuses.

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