Table of Contents

An Agenda for University Business Systems, Part 2 ....................................................3
An Agenda for University Business Systems, Part 2

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Last month [http://docweb.cns.ufl.edu/update/u0511d/] we described four of the eight large scale initiatives that are underway to significantly improve the university’s ability to get work done using its business systems.

This month we conclude the overview of the agenda by describing initiatives five through eight.

A fifth major initiative is underway to significantly simplify all aspects of job actions – hiring, termination, job change, variable pay and cash outs. These are being simplified by consolidating the offices that are authorized to perform these actions directly while simultaneously introducing online forms and workflow to greatly reduce the number of screens and the complexity currently required. The new forms are collectively known as ePAF – electronic Personnel Action Form. The new forms and processes will go into effect in February of 2006.

The sixth initiative improves grant budgeting. Currently, principal investigators can not manage their money in PeopleSoft at the category level for projects controlled at “Level 3” – that is, projects where budget control is required only at the direct/indirect level. Most projects are controlled this way and investigators may only see two line items in PeopleSoft, direct and indirect. The sixth initiative allows budgets prepared by investigators to be loaded into the system at award time and provides investigators with the tools they need for moving money within categories without the need for a TR20. Additional reports will be available to provide investigators current information regarding their budgets and expenditures. New budgeting capability for projects will be available in February 2006.

Significant improvements will be made to on-line recruiting. The current tool, eRecruit, will be replaced with a new on-line recruiting tool – PeopleAdmin (www.peopleadmin.com). This new tool will be interfaced to PeopleSoft and will provide a much improved interface for job applicants, search committees and support of selection and hiring processes. The new on-line recruiting tool will be in place in June 2006.

Lastly, improvements are being made in training. The training staff at Human Resources has been augmented and new approaches to development, delivery and accessibility of training materials are being planned. These new approaches will be used as the strategic initiatives are implemented.

The eight initiatives described here are the beginning of an on-going process to mix larger improvements with existing processes for smaller continuous improvements of the business systems. In the past two months additional significant improvements have been made.

- A fringe benefits calculator has been introduced in grants pre-award to calculate actual fringe benefits for key personnel in grant proposals. This standardizes and simplifies the calculation of fringe benefits for all UF proposals.
• The data warehouse is now refreshed 4 times a week. Additional work is on-going to increase the refresh rate to seven times a week and meet the goal of a current data warehouse each and every day.

• Time and Labor approvers can now create “supervisor groups” to list the specific people for whom they approve time. No longer must time approvers search large lists of people for “their” people. All time approvers can have supervisor groups specific for their needs.

• Self-service access is now available for leave accrual. All employees can use My Self Service in myUFL to see their accrued sick and vacation time.

• A data dictionary for the data warehouse has been created. Folks who create ad hoc queries in the warehouse can use the data dictionary to find data elements and their definitions appropriate for the construction of their queries.

• Finally, a new back-end storage system has been in place for the enterprise business systems. The new storage system provides additional data storage capacity, lowers the cost of system operation and will improve system performance.

The agenda is a work in progress. As items are substantially completed, additional items will be added.

Lastly, we want to thank the many people across the university who have worked so hard this year to make the transition to new business systems and processes. There has been much to learn and much to improve. In the coming year we will increase our efforts to involve people in decision making, in design, in testing as we continuously improve the systems. Best wishes to everyone for a peaceful and productive new year.

Your Comments are Welcome

We welcome your comments and suggestions on this and all CNS documentation. Please send your comments to:

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