

Project Details

Title	CST: Computer Software Training	Status	REVIEWED
Category	6-Supporting Institutional Operations	Updated	08-27-2010
Timeline		Reviewed	09-24-2010
Planned Project Kickoff	03-16-2010	Created	03-16-2010
Target Completion	07-01-2011	Last Modified	09-24-2010

- 1: **Project Accomplishments and Status**
- A:

The NeSIS (Nebraska Student Information System) project to replace the existing student information systems (SIS) at both the University of Nebraska (NU) and the State College System (NSCS) and to have both NU and NSCS use a common student information system (SIS) is continuing almost on schedule.

A major impetus for both NU and NSCS to implement a new SIS was that the vendor of their current systems (SIS PLUS) was no longer enhancing this product and would discontinue maintenance of the PLUS system by December 31, 2011. Wayne State College was advised in 2007 that its current student information system (SIS) would not be supported after December 31, 2011.

The *Oracle/PeopleSoft Campus Solutions* product was selected as the new Student Information System. *Campus Solutions* is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) product designed to integrate the needs of the various campuses with flexible, adaptive processes, increased capacity and cost efficiencies. ERP's also allow current and anticipated changes in technologies to be embraced well into the future.

To prepare for the student registration go-live for the fall 2010 term registration, all of the campuses except for UNMC made their portals available in February and March and began to educate users about logging in. The faculty and Advisor Center self-service application was made available in each portal, which gave faculty and advisors more information about their classes and/or advisees.

Each campus held training sessions for faculty and advisors on these self-service applications and the student registration process to prepare them for assisting students. They also prepared websites with training resources and distributed communications about the new systems.

Wayne State College identified key personnel and faculty from each academic department and support unit on campus to attend specialized "train-the-trainer" software application trainings on the new NeSIS system software beginning in March 2010.

Traci Heiser, WSC programmer analyst, was the head trainer and conducted these face-to-face trainings for the key personnel and faculty. The trainings were conducted using small group settings with personnel who required knowledge of similar parts of the software conversion package trained together. A mock version of the software was used in the trainings with several different scenarios presented to provide for adequate practice and understanding. Step-by-step procedural online video tutorial guides were created and posted on the campus Web site. These tutorials were designed to provide all users of the NeSIS software with additional reinforcement and assistance on navigating the new software. The tutorials are accessible any time through the campus Web site at <https://ecampus.wsc.edu/wildcatsonline/training/files/toc.html>.

After receiving their training, the identified key people became the trainers and conducted trainings for all the other members of their respective departments. Separate trainings were provided for office assistants and professional staff on aspects of the software which they would use.

Due to the uniqueness and specialization of some aspects of the software, several employees were trained by the software consultants in specialized trainings at off-campus settings. These employees returned to campus and provided training to others in their specialized units.

A huge hurdle for the NeSIS Project was successfully crossed when all seven campuses had their online registration functionality live and were able to begin enrolling students for the fall 2010 term beginning in late March and early April of 2010. Enrollment began for Wayne State College students on the new systems on April 12, 2010. For the most part, the go-live was without incident and the system is performing well. All campuses have completed the process of loading ISIRs (Institutional Student Information Record), which gives information about the financial need of each student applying for financial aid. Each campus has also completed “packaging,” which is the process of developing a financial aid package for each student based on their need.

The NeSIS Project Manager, Don Mihulka, congratulated the NU and State Colleges campuses for a successful student registration and financial aid packaging roll out in April in an article he authored for the May 2010 monthly newsletter “NeSIS News.”

Development and testing of modifications continues to be in full swing. Out of the approximately 160-modifications that were originally identified, about 85 have made it into Production, and most of the others were started by the end of May. The EPM (PeopleSoft’s Data Warehouse) team successfully has a production instance available and the University and College resources are currently testing the EPM. WebFOCUS (suite of report development and management tools) is now running and available to all campuses.

Several critical milestones were also achieved for the NeSIS project in June, including the go-lives for CashNet and TouchNet payment gateways, billing processing, and tuition calculation. The payment processing was completed in late July.

This transition process is an exciting time for Wayne State College. The new system provides faculty, staff and students with increased functionality, while making everyday tasks much simpler. The transition process has been at times, disruptive and even frustrating. WSC has relied on the support of everyone working together to make the change run smoothly and efficiently.

Wayne State College went live with Academic Advising (AA) in July and will be used this fall. The final software implementations are due to be completed by the end of August 2010. Post implementation plans, trainings, and strategies for maintaining and continuing the enhancement of NeSIS are being drafted.

- R:

Congratulations on this successful implementation! Wayne State College's proactive approach was no doubt responsible for the smooth transition to the new system.

The college exhibited several principles of a high performance organization in its plan for this conversion. High performance organizations have institutional foresight and make meaningful changes to improve services and operations; the college clearly demonstrated foresight in this implementation plan. Wayne State College also showed characteristics of collaboration as it worked with other colleges and the software vendor through this project. By adopting a "train-the-trainer" approach, Wayne State has shown that it values its people and encourages its staff to grow.

In addition to supporting AQIP Category Six, Supporting Institutional Operations, this action project also supports the AQIP categories of Valuing People, Leading and Communicating, and Building Collaborative Relationships.

- 2: **Institution Involvement**
- A:

Several key personnel were selected to serve as Wayne State College functional leads. These WSC functional leads worked very long and intensive hours with CedarCrestone software conversion consultants for each of the following areas: Admissions, Financial Aid, Academic Advisement, Student Accounts, and Student Records.

WSC technical employees have also been working incredibly hard and are responsible for many aspects of the project including working with CedarCrestone consultants to complete conversion of legacy data into PeopleSoft, programming of application system interfaces, and reporting.

- R:

Identifying key areas of responsibility to work directly with the software consultants is a natural approach to this project. In addition to these areas communicating independently with the software consultants, it is also important to collaborate across functional areas to

determine if there are process improvements that can accompany the new NeSIS installation.

- **3: Next Steps**
- A:

As the NeSIS implementation draws to a close, reflection will be made on the relationships that WSC has built over the last few years, and the hard work and dedication it has taken to make the NeSIS conversion process successful. Our CCI and Oracle partners have helped us build the foundation of a robust student ERP system that will be with us for many years to come. It will soon be entirely in our hands to sustain, grow and enhance this new system as we move forward into the future.

During August, we will focus on this transition process – from implementation to sustaining, growing and enhancing NeSIS. While we don't yet know all of the details of this new organizational structure and the processes that will be needed, much like the implementation itself, we will work together to define and communicate the 'what, how, when and where' aspects of the post-implementation NeSIS.

Additional training will be available on newly implemented processes and for new employees on a continual basis.

- R:

Wayne State's commitment to continuous improvement is evident in this response. Rather than viewing the successful implementation of the SIS as an end, the college views the completion of this installation as a step in a process of continuing to improve the NeSIS and related college processes.

The college demonstrates the high performance organization quality of agility in its approach to the next steps of this action project. Rather than following a rigid plan, Wayne State seems willing to adapt its organizational structures as needed to take the best advantage of the capabilities of the NeSIS software. The college also recognizes and is planning for ongoing training on the new processes that will result from this installation.

- **4: Resulting Effective Practices**
- A:

From first contact to graduation and beyond, successful higher education institutions are focusing on the best way to communicate with students. There's a new emphasis on the whole range of events and touch-points that make up the long-term relationship a student has with a college or university. This relationship can be defined as the student life-cycle. The student life-cycle is the focus of Oracle's PeopleSoft Enterprise Campus Solutions Release 9.0. PeopleSoft Campus Solutions is helping WSC manage the entire student life-cycle seamlessly-from recruiting to admissions, through student services and alumni

relations-in a secure, stable environment. When fully implemented, this software will provide WSC the following:

Improved efficiency throughout all our administrative processes.

- High functioning student system and effective transaction processing.
- Built in functionality is best suited for multi institution environment, easily configurable to have multi location data in one centralized system.
- Appropriately sized product for universities.
- Campus Solutions being an integrated solution removes any barrier to business to manage better relationship with current as well as future students.
- Campus Solutions connects people, data and departments in campuses. Ensure the security of sensitive and personal information. Empower users across systems to make better decision with real time data.
- Most effective student Self-Service module in Campus use.

PeopleSoft Enterprise campus solutions software is providing our students, alumni, faculty, and staff with immediate access to real-time information and connects that information to specific action. Some specific aspects of the new software for various departments include:

Recruiting and Admissions

Recruiting and Admissions helps you plan, manage, and track recruitment and admissions activities. This recruiting software solution provides comprehensive and flexible data collection, processing, and control to enhance your institution's academic service and meet your goals.

- Plan and coordinate independent recruitment programs targeted to specific student populations.
- Match recruiters to prospective students based on region or special interest and monitor your progress toward enrollment targets.
- Load transcripts, tests, and applications from external agencies and central application services.
- Capture and analyze student recruiting information from multiple sources, including test loads.
- Tailor your admissions system according to your institution's varied requirements and evaluation practices.
- Enable students to apply, track application status, accept or decline admission, and pay deposit fees—all online.
- Set and monitor enrollment targets, track progress toward recruiting efforts, and analyze admissions decisions and patterns.

Campus Community

Campus Community provides a common source of campus data, coordinating all forms of communication to help you manage your administrative services. It captures all

prospect, applicant, student, alumni, and organizational data, then secures it, tracks it, and delivers what you need upon request.

- Establish rules or events to trigger automatic assignment of sets of communication-oriented records throughout Student Administration.
- Track all incoming and outgoing communication.
- Create event templates, identify staffing needs, track attendance, and review results.
- Create degree audit reports to summarize progress.
- Define committees, identify members, and maintain history.
- Define reciprocal relationships and manage joint communications.
- Maintain multiple names and addresses with effective dates, email addresses, and URLs.
- Manage other demographic data—residency, medical and emergency contacts, and extracurricular activities.
- Enable constituents to maintain their own data via the web.

Academic Advisement

Academic Advisement gives students and faculty timely access to academic records and reports. With less time spent on administrative tasks and information gathering, advisers have more time to interact with students in meaningful ways.

- Customize course and non-course degree requirements.
- Establish and track degree requirements for each student.
- Customize academic programs for individual students.
- Create degree audit reports to summarize progress.
- Compare student academic records to program requirements.

Financial Aid

Financial Aid automates federal and institutional financial aid processing to ensure more efficient operations. Department of Education regulations are built into the software, so your institution remains in compliance.

- Tailor financial aid management to your business rules and practices.
- Track applications, control Institutional Student Information Record (ISIR) loads, and maintain an ISIR audit trail.
- Design a cost-of-attendance assessment, create student budgets, and calculate needs analysis.
- Automatically generate aid awards and packages.
- Ensure that an award complies with eligibility, then disburse it to the student's account.
- Process and track federal, state, university, and alternative loans.

Student Financials

Student Financials is an essential tool for managing student and external organization

accounts. You can manage and calculate all student financial information, including tuition, fees, receivables, billing, payment plans, and refunds.

- Open new accounts easily.
- Monitor and update student and third-party accounts.
- Calculate tuition and fees on an individual or group level.
- Check account balances and post transactions.
- Generate unique bills for students and third-party sponsors—by department, cycle, and "account past-due" messages.
- Automate receivables management.
- Tailor payment plans.
- Monitor delinquent accounts

Student Records

Student Records helps you manage all aspects of enrollment, including catalog and class schedule maintenance, transfer credits, requisite restrictions, class start and end dates, wait lists, academic programs, transcripts, and analysis.

- Expedite enrollment by processing all permission, deadline, and other course requirements online.
 - Administer enrollment by creating and assigning enrollment appointments to customized student populations.
 - Build dynamic academic calendars for self-paced classes to calculate significant dates, such as drop and withdrawal deadlines.
 - Evaluate course credit transfers and make adjustments to present the best-case scenario.
 - Calculate academic statistics and report results.
 - Customize transcript production and process multiple requests.
 - Establish customized grading guidelines.
 - Improve record maintenance and organization.
 - Maintain course catalog, enrollment, and grading information in a single database
- R:

Wayne State College selected software using the needs of its students as its primary focus. Using the categories listed above as a beginning point, Wayne State might consider establishing some baseline measurements by which it can judge the effectiveness of the initial installation and future revisions.

It appears that this response is directly copied from the marketing brochure provided by the software vendor/consultant. This appearance causes us to question the extent to which all of these items have actually become newly-realized effective practices at Wayne State, or which new practices resulted from this action project. Wayne State should discuss the specific practices it has implemented and how well they have worked.

- 5: **Project Challenges**
- A:

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents and the Nebraska State College System Board of Trustees approved Oracle USA to provide a new student information system (NeSIS) to serve students at the four campuses of the university - Kearney, Lincoln, Medical Center and Omaha - and the three state colleges - Chadron, Peru and Wayne State. With seven organizations in NeSIS, communication will continue to be a challenge. We are currently developing communities of practice to help organize communication channels for each functional area.

As the CedarCrestone consultants begin to transition off of the project, WSC will need to continue learning and training as the campus completely takes over operations of the system. Post implementation plans and strategies for maintaining and continuing the enhancement of NeSIS will be important in refining and evolving this vital, on-going process.

- R:

The development of communities of practice should serve as a valuable resource as the NeSIS is fully implemented. Wayne State College's plan for ongoing collaboration exemplifies a characteristic of a high performance organization and is aligned with AQIP Category 9: Building Collaborative Relationships. The college clearly recognizes that communication will be a challenge, and is making plans to address this ongoing need.