Fridays @ first

January 16, 2009

CUNYfirst is Coming Soon!

The following contains the latest information on the CUNYfirst Project and upcoming activities. Please share with your colleagues and co-workers who will be interested in its contents.

This edition of Fridays @ first updates the current status of the project and answers a number of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for those just learning about the project.

❖ *Student Administration – Campus Solutions*

Project Co-Leaders Brian Cohen and Ron Spalter and Project Director Suman Taneja updated Campus Executives this week of the Go-Live calendar for the Vanguard College implementation.

They wrote, "The Go-Live date for this initial process entitled "Course Catalog" is March 30th. Following a rigorous period of system and user acceptance testing and subsequent user training, Vanguard users will be able to work with the Course Catalog module, the first building block from the Campus Solutions pillar to be implemented. The phased roll out of this module calls for the catalogs from all CUNY colleges to be added, following system stabilization, in early summer.

"The CUNYfirst team and its Oracle and campus partners continue to work diligently on finalizing and testing the other administrative applications that will allow the Vanguards to create Class Schedules, admit and register students, charge and collect tuition and fees, and interface with our legacy financial aid systems. Go-Live dates for these implementations will be announced soon."

Also this week, the Financial Aid team of Ali Morgan and Suwen Brunot released the upcoming schedule of configuration, fit/gap and validation sessions (Conference Room Pilot) that begin February 17 and end May 28th. These sessions are for Vanguard and Wave Two college Financial Aid Subject Matter Experts only. The CUNYfirst Financial Aid module will go live concurrent with the launch of student processes for the first two waves of Campus Solutions implementations.

❖ *Human Resources – Human Capital Management*

On Tuesday, January 13, HR Subject Matter Experts from around CUNY met to provide valuable input for the upcoming User Acceptance Testing (UAT). The goal was to document the conditions within the current HR work environment so that test scripts can be created that mirror the work currently done by professionals. The next step is for the CUNYfirst Testing team to write step by step instructions for testers to see if the CUNYfirst system can replicate output in the new environment.

Earlier this week Core team members have been discussing shadow systems and report readiness activities with HR Directors and IT professionals from several campuses. These discussions have helped campus staff members develop plans to ensure continued service levels to their faculty and staff as they prepare for HCM go-live. Jim Russell (james.russell@mail.cuny.edu) and other members of the core team are available for additional discussions with any campus.

Fridays @ first

❖ *Frequently Asked Questions*

As we did in last week's edition, we're listing a number of common questions we've received from college Town Hall meetings or from emails that have been sent to the Core Team (cunyfirst@mail.cuny.edu). We encourage any question, any time.

➢ *What are the processes under CUNYfirst?*
There are three main areas at CUNY where new processes will be implemented – Finance, Human Resources and Student Administration.
Finance: General Ledger, Procurement (Purchasing, Accounts Payable, Expenses), Planning and Budgeting, Accounts Receivable, Asset Management, Cash and Deal Management.
Human Resources: Base HR Processes, Base Benefit Processes, Recruitment, Time and Labor, Leave Management and Payroll (interfaces with NY State and NYC).
Student Administration: Academic Structure, Course Catalogue, Schedule of Classes, Student Financials, Student Records, Financial Aid and Admissions.

➢ *Can't we just implement the software immediately? Why will it take so long?*
If we had a community of only a few thousand people, possibly, but this is something that is affecting over 35,000 faculty and staff and over 400,000 students at 23 campus locations. It'll take time. We have chosen to implement this in phases - like a building, we must first build the base for our Financial work, our Human Resources, Payroll and Academic structures. Later, we'll add on more detail - Purchasing, Accounts Payable and Expense, Benefits Administration, Student Admissions, Financial Aid, Time and Labor. The building will take time so we get everyone's input on what it should look like, and then train everyone on how to use what they need.

➢ *Will there be tracking of purchases, budgets?*
Yes. The new procurement module, which is now in its business process configuration and validation phase, will have a tracking feature that will allow everyone who is involved in a procurement, from requestors to those who will track packages and deliveries, as well as the payment for procurements, will be able to see its status. There is also a feature in the Procurement system that will allow checking of budgeted funds against the purchase order. A screen in the module will be the LifeSpan page (see graphic below). That shows the timeline of a procurement from Requisition to Payment.

➢ *Will Research Foundation employees be part of the CUNYfirst system?*
If their work is such that they need access to CUNYfirst processes, then yes. If an RF employee manages CUNY or campus people, then they'll need access to the managerial functions in HR. Otherwise, they'll be part of a group of employees that have a tangential relationship to CUNYfirst, as they do now.

Fridays @ first

➢ *Under the Student/Campus Solutions module, I see that Financial Aid and Admissions is not a part of the initial Go-Live. When will they be added?*
Our student implementation comes in four phases or waves. The first is the Vanguard Colleges (Queens and Queensborough CC). During the second wave, the plan is to have a new CUNYfirst Financial Aid system for the Vanguard and Wave Two Colleges. Wave Three and Four schools will implement FA with their other students systems. CUNYfirst Admissions is planned for Wave Three and beyond.

➢ *What backup systems are in place to make sure the data won't be lost?*
The CUNYfirst system is hosted by our partners from Oracle at a site in Atlanta, Georgia. That means our data and processes are going back and forth on the highest quality data lines from New York to there. Each day, current CUNY data is replicated at a second site every 15 minutes, also in Georgia, but far enough away to ensure that any compromises at the primary site (weather, natural disaster, etc.) will not be replicated because of proximity. The systems are backed up every night. In case of a shutdown at our primary site, a recovery plan has already been created to ensure a smooth transition to the backup data, and, when our technical teams have it available again, a smooth transition to our primary site.

➢ *I heard about Employee Self-Service and the ability to work with HR to make sure my personal information is correct. Is there anything that cannot be changed?*
When the CUNYfirst Human Resource module is available to all employees, we will encourage everyone to check to make sure their data is correct from spelling of name, to addresses, family information and current benefits. If anything is not correct, employees should contact their local HR office to make sure it is correct. In that data, information like a social security number, which is needed for tax reasons, name changes, new degrees, etc. must be confirmed by HR professionals.

➢ *Do all colleges participate in CUNYfirst testing?*
Yes and no. While some testing requires us to get a wide range of experiences as we put the processes through their paces, we may have some campus experts participate in one test while others are called for another. Since we are creating common business processes to be used across the university, we want to make sure we will use something that works at every campus.

➢ *Will we have multiple systems (old and new) up and running at the same time?*
When we retire systems like CUPS (City University Personnel System) or SIMS (Student Information Management System), we will no longer be using both processes. The systems may be up for data reasons only until CUNYfirst stabilizes. But once we launch new CUNYfirst processes for Finance, HR and Student, there will be no need to do processes twice.

Submit your questions to cunyfirst@mail.cuny.edu

❖ ***Week of January 19 - 23***

Next week – The CUNYfirst Core Team will meet Wednesday to receive a Project update. Our student team will hold a session Thursday on admissions for Wave Two College representatives only.

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