Cognos-Banner Reporting Tool

Along with Banner (the new Finance, Student, Human Resources/Payroll, and Budget software system) the Health Sciences Center and the University have purchased Cognos as the new reporting tool. According to the company, they are “a world leader in business intelligence” and “the world’s number one BI vendor.” Cognos is a web-based program that allows users the ability to build comprehensive reports or run quick ad-hoc queries. Cognos’s simple drag-and-drop functionality will provide end-users/departments with better query and analysis capabilities. Cognos also has the capability to create charts, maps, and graphs by utilizing information from the various Banner systems. Cognos reports will be replacing our current M^RS (SQL Reports), Ledger Reports, TFIM query screens, and the eFIM/Data Warehouse.

Currently IT personnel along with functional users from the ConnecTECH team are attending trainings to learn how to utilize this new reporting tool and model Banner data for Cognos query and report building. End-users can expect more information about this exciting product in late summer or early fall. You can also receive more information from the Cognos website at http://www.cognos.com/products/cognos8businessintelligence/index.html.

Imagine an Electronic Timesheet!

Banner from SunGard Higher Education offers an online electronic time entry and payroll system as part of its Banner HR module.

Web Time Entry (WTE) is an electronic approach to reporting time worked for non-exempt employees’ payroll processing. In May 2007, the HR Co-Op members, comprised of TTU and TTUHSC participants from Human Resources, Payroll, and Budget Offices, learned the details about the Web Time Entry system and how Texas Tech might effectively use this tool.

How does WTE work?

The non-exempt employee enters and submits time worked using a keyboard and computer instead of using pen and paper. Once the employee submits the timesheet, the supervisor or time approver has electronic access to the completed timesheet and is able to review and approve it for payroll processing.

Benefits of WTE:

- Records actual time worked versus estimated time that may require frequent corrections.
- Reduces lost or missing timesheets.
-Documents how the timesheet is routed and approved.
- Posts and updates leave taken to leave balances such as vacation and sick leave automatically through payroll processing.
- Retains electronic timesheets from past pay periods.

You will learn more about this exciting new tool as the implementation grows closer. There will also be a similar system to record exempt employees’ leave!
Lubbock ConnecTECH Kickoff

Representatives from the Finance, Budget, Human Resources, and Student systems held the ConnecTECH Kickoff for the Lubbock campus on April 19, 2007. Kickoffs were previously held at El Paso, Amarillo, and Odessa and mirrored the Lubbock event. Cookies and punch were provided as well as insightful information and question & answer sessions.

Penny Harkey began the Kickoff with a discussion of the entire ConnecTECH project and the various programs purchased to integrate with the Banner system including SciQuest, Cognos and Extender Solutions, to name a few. She also discussed the proposed timeline for Finance, Budget, HR, and Student. She concluded with a very informative question and answer session. Her presentation also included numerous door prize raffles for lunch totes filled with mystery goodies.

Laree Bomar then detailed the new proposed chart of accounts. She began with a recap of all events leading up to the proposed chart of accounts. Laree then explained the FOAPAL elements as well as their hierarchy. She concluded with a TechFIM to Banner comparison and a project testing and implementation discussion. You can view the “Banner Chart of Accounts” PowerPoint presentation at www.fiscal.ttuhsc.edu/bannerfinance/training.aspx.

The Kickoff was an important link in the ConnecTECH communication chain. Banner will affect all faculty and staff at the Health Sciences Center and it is important that two-way communication be maintained. There are several communication channels available including the Banner information website www.fiscal.ttuhsc.edu/bannerfinance. This site has a confidential form you can fill out for comments or suggestions and a subscriber’s list for those of you who would like email updates.

Continue to page 3 for pictures of the Lubbock Kickoff!

Implementation Timeline

Finance:
Sept 08 - GO LIVE!
• New chart of accounts
• New budget revision process
• New purchasing process
• New reporting
• New cost transfers

Student:
Oct 08 - GO LIVE!
• New admissions system
Spring 09
• New registration system
• New system for recording grades
• New student billing
Summer 09
• New Financial Aid Process

Human Resources:
Dec 08 - GO LIVE!
• New employee self-service
• New PAF process

Banner Summit 2007

ConnecTECH team members from the Health Sciences Center and Texas Tech University took to the streets of Las Vegas for the annual SunGard Summit 2007 Conference March 18th -22nd. Now usually what goes on in Vegas stays in Vegas - but we all came back with great insight, inspiration and motivation that will be shared through our training efforts and will positively impact the quality of our conversion project.

Representatives from across the nation gathered to share their knowledge, understanding and wisdom which provided a great opportunity for the members of our team to learn from the experts. We were able to visit with other institutions and learn all the ins and outs of processing information in Banner as well as some great implementation tips and tricks which will help us to utilize the complete suite of software that has been purchased for the ConnecTECH project.

Carole Wardroup, Director of Accounting Services (below) and Jerry Sparks, Property Manager review their sessions for the afternoon at the SunGard Summit Conference in March.

Suzanne Dean, Section Supervisor (above) and Rebecca Aguilar, Assistant Managing Director of Accounting Services discuss their morning sessions over lunch while attending the SunGard Summit Conference in March.

Have Banner Comments or Suggestions?
We are requesting your comments about financial reporting, processes, policies, or any other aspect concerning the current or new finance system. Please visit the following link!

www.fiscal.ttuhsc.edu/bannerfinance/comments.aspx
Left: John Berry, Pediatrics Administrator, celebrated the Banner implementation during the Lubbock Kickoff.

Right: Close to 15 mystery lunch totes were given out during the door prize raffle.

Left: The audience paid close attention to both Penny Harkey’s and Laree Bomar’s presentations and asked many insightful questions.

Right: Everyone enjoyed the cookies and punch provided for those in attendance.

Left: Representatives from the Budget and HR offices helped break down decorations after the Kickoff. They were instrumental in providing door prizes and decorations for the event.
What is a FOAPAL Hierarchy?

As you may recall, the Banner chart of accounts is made up of six elements (Fund, Organization, Account, Program, Activity, Location) which we call the FOAPAL. The FOAPAL will be replacing our current TechFIM fund, area, organization, revenue, sub-revenue, object, sub-object, and balance sheet codes. Although this is quite different than we are accustomed to, the FOAPAL will allow us to provide better internal and external reporting.

One of the key elements in the design of the FOAPAL is the hierarchy. The hierarchy is built into the chart of accounts and allows users to pull information at a detailed level or a summary level. For example, a department could pull a report for all postage expenses, all supplies and materials expenses, or total expenses. The account code is not the only hierarchical FOAPAL element. The fund, organization, account, program, and location are all built into a hierarchy! Therefore, an administrator could also pull a report by fund. For example, you could pull all transactions for E&G Cultural Diversity for Lubbock, E&G Diversity for Lubbock, E&G Diversity and Multicultural Affairs for Lubbock, E&G Diversity and Multicultural Affairs for all campuses or E&G transactions for all campuses.

Now we know all of you who enter transactions are trying to figure out how this will affect you. The hierarchy only truly affects those pulling reports. All data entry is done at the lowest level of the hierarchy. This level has six characters and contains minimal alpha characters. Although change can be scary, you will quickly learn your new FOAPAL elements as you did your TechFIM accounts and enjoy all the benefits our new chart of accounts has to offer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of the COA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fund</strong>-Defines net asset, what is owned and who owns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong>-Defines who spends-Org chart-division-department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Account</strong>- Defines the Asset, liability, fund balance, revenue, or expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Program</strong>- Defines the Function-instruction, acad. support, research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong>- Defines inter-fund or cross institutional activities (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong>- Defines the location for fixed asset tracking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Texas Connection Consortium Conference

On May 22, representatives from the Health Sciences Center and the University traveled to San Antonio for the TCC 2007 Spring Conference. The Texas Connection Consortium represents 37 state universities, colleges, and community college districts that currently use SunGard Higher Education products. The consortium works together with SunGard HE to provide solutions for state reporting requirements with the minimal amount of cost and time for the members. In addition, the TCC has a Technical Support Center that develops and maintains the programs and software required for Texas state mandates and the uniform Texas requirements and provides training material, courses, and conferences.

Two representatives from Finance and two from Human Resources began the conference on Monday with hands-on training for modifications to the current system. They learned how to navigate through the new modifications as well as how the modifications integrate with the full banner package. The current modifications are essential for state reporting requirements and the success of the Banner project.

The following morning a team of representatives from Student, HR and Finance attended a BETA testing work session. This team will be instrumental in testing and providing feedback to the consortium and SunGard on future modifications. During the BETA work session, the TCC representatives discussed the requirements for BETA testing and reviewed the materials the team will use to test the modifications. The team will begin BETA testing important modifications in the Fall of 2007.

The actual conference began on Wednesday afternoon and concluded on Thursday. The conference consisted of several lectures on various product updates and rising policy expectations. There were also two break-out sessions in the afternoon to discuss current and future modifications. The representatives who attended the conference came away with valuable knowledge on the current system and the future of the project.

Acknowledgements

Electronic Timesheet article provided by Gina Ketcherside and edited by Janet Coquelin, Human Resources.

Pictures provided by Patty Conner and Jan Edmister, Business Affairs.

All other articles written and edited by Denise Sober, Laree Bomar, Patty Conner, and Mike Crowder of Business Affairs, Penny Harkey of the Budget Office and Gina Ketcherside of Human Resources.