

From my perspective...

Benefits of getting involved with ConnectND

—By Lee A. Vickers

I understand the state government's side of the project is proceeding well, but my perspective is that of a campus president who is privileged to be closely involved with ConnectND. Dr. Donna Thigpen, president of Bismarck State College, enjoyed this opportunity for more than a year and now it has been my honor to chair the Higher Education Executive Steering Committee for the last four months.

Our pilot sites at Valley City State University and Mayville State University have paved the way. Institutional implementation teams and the project staff made many personal sacrifices to meet the project implementation challenges and deadlines. Their hard work, dedication and commitment will make implementation of the project much easier at the remaining campuses.

The time has come for the rest of us to help guide, assist and prepare for the implementation that will be coming soon to our campuses. We learned a great deal from the implementation at the pilot campuses. One of the most significant factors we learned is related to the advantages that can be realized later from early involvement in the project.

Most of the formal training for the new system will need to be on a just-in-time basis because testing processes will not be finished until next spring. Many campus personnel, however, can get a head start. In addition to those working as members of the project teams or as subject matter experts, many others can and should participate in important sessions that compare their current processes and practices with those provided in the PeopleSoft systems or help configure data from their respective campuses for conversion into new tables and formats. The project teams are providing "to-do" lists of tasks that should be addressed now and the campus implementation teams are urging campus personnel to become engaged in the project implementation process.

We pride ourselves on the work we do and the way we do it. We must, however, be open to changes in the way we perform our duties and serve our constituencies. None of us hails from the time of quill pens, but many of us remember using manual typewriters. We have moved ahead from there and we will continue advancing.

It always takes time to adjust. This will not happen overnight, and we will be learning as we go. There is an incredible amount of work to be done. We can expect frustrations and stress. With ConnectND, some work processes will be slower until people become proficient with the new systems and not everything will be in place right away. But change will come and "best practices" will be put in place—apathy or even denial will only make the challenges more difficult.

ConnectND belongs to us—our campuses and our people, those who work, teach and get their education on our campuses. Those who stand aside and hope somebody else will handle this transition will end up at a disadvantage. Campus implementation teams are a local source of information. Check the ConnectND newsletter, ConnectND Web site and your campus communications to remain current. Attend the general IVN updates and the IVN topical discussion sessions. Watch for training information, tips and advice. Talk about ConnectND in your staff meetings. Share information, but do not automatically believe rumors. Make sure you are on the appropriate e-mail lists and network with your colleagues and your counterparts on other campuses.



Dr. Lee A. Vickers

Announcements

State technical team gearing up

The state government ConnectND technical team has conducted a PeopleSoft Query training session for some of the state's information coordinators. Additional human resources query training sessions will be scheduled later this month and training geared toward financials personnel will be conducted in the spring of 2004.

State technical developers and ConnectND functional members are reviewing lists of systems with potential interfaces and conversions. The lists, which were compiled from functional surveys and responses from state agency IT coordinators, will be relayed to state agencies for review and approval after the ConnectND project team analyzes the information.

November/December ConnectND IVN sessions

The ConnectND general updates are captured and recorded through Web streaming. Due to their increasing importance as the project moves toward implementation at the non-pilot campuses, the other NDUS system updates will now also be Web streamed by the Interactive Video Network starting with the session on Thursday, Nov. 6. The video archive on the ConnectND Web site can be accessed to view a missed session at a later date. However, everyone interested is encouraged to participate in the sessions at the IVN sites whenever possible.

- Thursday, Nov. 6 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDUS Financial System
- Thursday, Nov. 13 (9-9:50 a.m.)
—ConnectND Project Update
- Thursday, Nov. 20 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDUS Human Resource Management System
- Tuesday, Nov. 25 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDUS Student System
- Thursday, Dec. 4 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDUS Financial System
- Thursday, Dec 11 (9-9:50 a.m.)
—ConnectND Project Update
- Tuesday, Dec 16 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDSU Student System
- Thursday, Dec 18 (8-8:50 a.m.)
—NDSU Human Resource Management System

Everyone is invited to attend the IVN update sessions. Specific locations are indicated on the [calendar](#).

* **Note:** The IVN sessions are captured and recorded through webstreaming. Use the [video archive](#) to view a missed session at a later date.

Continued from page 1

I urge you to make ConnectND implementation a priority over the next several months. By seeking out opportunities to be informed and involved, you can be more prepared for implementation on your campus. We need your participation and expertise.

I'm impressed with the effort, talent and dedication of everyone involved on the ConnectND project staff and from the campuses, and I am confident that with all of us participating as a NDUS team, implementation of ConnectND will be successful. Thank you for your help and patience.

Lee Vickers, Dickinson State University president, chairs the ConnectND higher education Executive Steering Committee.

NDUS training information provided

A plan developed by a NDUS committee outlines how ConnectND documentation and training information will be delivered within higher education.

The Documentation and Training Committee has looked at user proficiency and skills needed, audiences and types of training, infrastructure required, resources available and related communication needs. The plan is intended to support and build upon training efforts of ConnectND project managers, module leads, subject matter experts, campus trainers and pilot campus programs.

Of immediate interest, the plan identifies navigation tutorials available free from a PeopleSoft Web site that will help individuals become familiar with PeopleSoft computer screens and terminology.

Starting this month, resources will become available on basic computer skills including the use of an Internet Explorer Web browser, employing such programs as Microsoft Excel and Word and generating letters and macros through PeopleSoft. Link to this and other training information on the [ConnectND Web site](#).

Other more specific information will be announced as it becomes available.

NDUS Implementation Team active

NDUS campus implementation team chairs are meeting monthly over the Interactive Video Network to review campus progress, discuss issues and concerns and share solutions. They are also gathering at Valley City State University on Nov. 12 to share information and hear from pilot site personnel. Jean Ostrom-Blonigen is coordinating those discussions in her new role as NDUS Implementation Team chair for ConnectND. Many of the duties she handled as ConnectND communication manager (project newsletter, Web site content, promoting IVN updates, etc.) are now largely the responsibility of Bob Jansen, NDUS Common Information Services communications coordinator.

Higher education rollout schedules become more specific

Date	Human Resources and Financial Systems	Student System
November – December 2003	1st cycle configuration and testing for Financial and Human Resource Management Systems as it pertains to each module.	1 st cycle configuration and testing of the Student Administration modules. 1st cycle of conversion testing in all modules.
January – February 2004	2nd cycle configuration and testing within Financial and Human Resource Management Systems.	2 nd cycle testing for Student Administration modules and conversions.
March – April 2004	3rd cycle (project) configuration and testing for Financial and Human Resource Management Systems.	Continue testing and begin training on certain Student Administration modules.
May – June 2004	Regionalized training for the non-pilot campuses for both the Financial and Human Resource Management Systems.	“Go-Live” for Admissions and Recruiting, Financial Aid and Student Records. Continue training on various Student Administration modules.
July 2004	“Go live” on all non-pilot campuses of Financial and Human Resource Management Systems.	“Go-Live” for Student Financials. This will coincide with the rollout of Higher Education’s Financials. Specific conversions will continue, as they are required for school year. Post-production support for previously rolled out modules on the non-pilot campuses.



Pilot campuses honored

Mayville State University and Valley City State University were presented plaques during a Board of Higher Education meeting recognizing the leadership of the two pilot campuses in ConnectND implementation. On hand to accept the campus awards were VCSU representatives Lee Kruger and President Ellen Chaffee and Mayville representatives President Pamela Balch, Keith Stenehjem, Mary Iverson and Angela Uhlenkamp.

ERP—“Enterprise Resource Planning” System or “Enterprise Resource Package.” Essentially, it means an administrative software system that covers the entire enterprise – from students to employees to financial management. While our current administrative systems (commonly known as the “legacy” systems SAMIS or CICS) were developed long before “ERP” was even thought of, they are essentially our ERP today.

Web-streamed—Recorded live and broadcast real-time via the Internet to those who cannot be at the event location.

About ConnectND

What is ConnectND?

The CONNECT ND project is the implementation of *PeopleSoft's* ERP system that will replace North Dakota's current administrative computer systems. The ERP system will serve as the administrative systems for the entire enterprise – from students to employees to financial management.

Who is involved in ConnectND?

All of North Dakota State Government, including the North Dakota University System, is involved in this project.

How is the ConnectND project organized?

The project has been organized by module (functional area) into three state groups (Financial, Human Resources Management System, and Technical) and four higher education groups (Financial, Human Resources Management System, Student Administration, and Technical).

Links mentioned

- **Calendar:** www.nodak.edu/connectnd/index.php?module=PostCalendar
- **Connect ND:** www.nodak.edu/connectnd
- **MAXIMUS:** www.maximus.com/public/virtual/home
- **North Dakota University System:** www.ndus.nodak.edu
- **PeopleSoft:** www.peoplesoft.com/corp/en/public_index.asp
- **Rollout Schedules (these schedules will reflect changes as they occur):** www.nodak.edu/connectnd/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&sid=57
- **State of North Dakota:** <http://discovernd.net/>
- **Video archive:** <http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd/modules.php?op=modload&name=Downloads&file=index&req=NewDownloadsDate&selectdate=1066243606>
- **Web-streamed:** <http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd/modules.php?op=modload&name=Downloads&file=index&req=NewDownloadsDate&selectdate=1066243606>

Fyi & updates

What is the current status of ConnectND?

While the overall status remained “green” on Oct. 24, 2003, the project oversight team reflected the project schedule and risk in a cautionary status, but noted that higher education staffing issues are being addressed. The report also indicated that a significant number of state government and higher education tasks were more than two weeks overdue.

How is ConnectND being implemented?

Under the leadership of a State Executive Steering Committee (co-chaired by Lee Vickers, president, Dickinson State University and Pam Sharp, director, Office of Management and Budget) and with the help of our implementation partner, *MAXIMUS*, the project is being implemented using a four-component approach.

Components 1 and 2:

These components include the five-phases of Initiation, Design, Development, Migration, and Post-production phases at the pilot sites.

Components 3 and 4:

These components include the five-phases of Initiation, Design, Development, Migration, and Post-production phases at all the non-pilot sites.

When will ConnectND be implemented?

The *ConnectND Rollout Schedules* contain specific information related to these rollouts.

Has end-user training been scheduled?

Project managers are scheduling end-user training using a just-in-time approach, within 60 days prior to implementation. The training can only be done effectively after procedures and process to design, develop and configure the systems have been completed.

Comments and suggestions regarding this publication are welcome. We encourage questions about this newsletter or the project. To facilitate this process, you may ask a question electronically through the Web site FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section. It's also a place to view the questions others have asked and the responses of the project teams.



More information, questions or comments: www.nodak.edu/connectnd
 Bob Jansen, NDUS Common Information Services Communications Coordinator
 701-231-5805; e-mail bob.jansen@ndus.nodak.edu

Preparing for implementation

Things to do...

During the most recent discussion over the Interactive Video Network, higher education subject matter experts from various Student Administration modules shared tips to help campus colleagues prepare for ConnectND implementation. Some of the suggestions mentioned apply to specific offices and functions and others more broadly. Here's a sampling:

- Look for the how-to-get-ready documents provided by project teams.
- Know your campus implementation team.
- Note hardware and software recommendations.
- Respond to information requests—your participation will be beneficial when your campus goes live.
- Include ConnectND on staff meeting agendas.
- Collect dates of birth, e-mail addresses and other information as required for the PeopleSoft programs.
- Prepare personally for the change to two paydays per month.
- Prepare for the stress and pressure that will accompany implementation.
- Familiarize yourself with rollout schedules when planning vacation times.
- Become familiar with PeopleSoft terminology.
- Get on appropriate e-mail lists.
- Participate in IVN updates, read the monthly eBulletin newsletter and look at the ConnectND Web site.
- Recognize the urgency of preparing campus data for configuration.
- Watch for training information.
- Recognize that some business practices and jobs will change when information is accessible from anywhere and at any time.

Recommendations for users

Based on experience at the pilot sites, the following minimums are recommended for frequent or “power” users of ConnectND PeopleSoft systems:

- **Browser**— Internet Explorer 6 for use with Windows 2000 and XP. Internet Explorer 5 or 5.5 may work on Windows 98, but some problems might be encountered. Internet Explorer 5 on Mac OS 7.6.1 or above
- **Memory**— 256 MB RAM
- **CPU**— 800 MHz
- **Display**— VGA with 800X600 resolution or higher and 16-bit colors

Casual users can access ConnectND systems with other browsers and less than those minimums but will see slower results.

MS Office (Word and Excel) will be used for various administrative functions. Recommendations concerning those software programs will be provided later.