

**Amy Richter: from my perspective...**

## Students play active roles in ConnectND

As the student member of the NDUS Executive Steering Committee, I'm involved in many aspects of the Connect ND project. The success of this massive change in administrative computer systems is dependent upon student, faculty and staff collaboration. Students have a voice in these systems by participating on campus implementation teams.

While financial and human resource management components are also included in ConnectND, student functionality and benefits are significant. With the new Web-based software, students will see a big difference in how they register, get permission for classes, pay bills, deal with financial aid and obtain transcripts. Rather than going to an office across campus, students can take care of everything through their system login.

Students will be able to see their full unofficial transcript online rather than going through ALFI "the access line for information, ALFI." (Those who have registered via phone know this phrase well.) Students will also be required to get new identification numbers and ID cards.

ConnectND will also accommodate more users at a time. We students know how hard it is currently to get on to the system at the beginning of the semester.

Instead of filling out paperwork to accept or decline financial aid, students will be able to complete that process through their system login. They will also see their past and current financial aid statements and eventually pay tuition online.

Over the past year, major components of the ConnectND system were implemented on two campuses, Mayville State University and Valley City State University, as well as in the North Dakota University System Office in Bismarck. These two schools were chosen as pilot campuses for the system to essentially have a "test run" prior to being implemented on the remaining nine NDUS campuses.

The pilots have worked through many of the bumps, making the transition to the ConnectND system smoother for the other nine campuses. But, as with any new computer system, every part will not run perfectly right away. Each campus is different and will have unique needs and problems when the system goes live. The project teams recently looked to student assistance in alleviating staffing crunches by hiring two student interns to work on the continued configuration of the system.

This summer, major portions of ConnectND will be implemented across the remaining nine campuses. Students should take advantage of opportunities to see



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## Draft report includes calendar and NDUS business process list

A draft Higher Ed Calendar and Business Process List is being finalized as a tool for campuses and project staff to plan for ConnectND implementation.

The comprehensive document will be updated following review and discussion by the campus implementation teams and the higher education Executive Steering Committee.

The report includes a daily calendar listing tentative testing and training schedules and dates when the Student Administration, Financial and Human Resources Management Systems modules will be live on the PeopleSoft systems.

The document defines whether specific processes are in place at the pilot institutions, whether they will be employed at the non-pilot campuses and, if so, when that will occur.

The Higher Ed Calendar and Business Process List will be accessible from the ConnectND Web site after it is updated into more final form.

## View ConnectND information

Videotapes offering information and perspectives about the higher education side of ConnectND and its PeopleSoft software systems are now available from the project Web site. There are four segments:

—*ConnectND Overview*: Jean Ostrom-Blonigen introduces the presentations and provides the “What, Who, Why, When & Where” of ConnectND.

—*ConnectND at VCSU*: Ellen Chaffee of Valley City State University talks about a campus president managing the first year of the ConnectND project.

—*ConnectND Elsewhere*—James Kennedy of North Dakota State University shares his experiences with PeopleSoft at Emory University and the University of Minnesota.

—*ConnectND Payroll*—Jean Ostrom-Blonigen provides the sequence of events leading up to the Board of Higher Education’s decision to amend policy and establish a 15-day payroll lag.

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the system as more demonstrations and training sessions are conducted.

Students currently pay a ConnectND fee of \$36/semester, last year paid \$42/semester and next year will pay \$63/semester. As the project moves forward, there are several functionalities—such as housing, parking, facilities management and cost of new ID cards—that weren’t included in the initial project but will now be implemented. Those use a significant portion of the student fee increase.

Students wanting more information can contact me [Amy.Richter@ndsu.nodak.edu](mailto:Amy.Richter@ndsu.nodak.edu) or their local campus implementation team student representative, or visit the ConnectND Web site at [www.nodak.edu/connectnd](http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd).

## State modifying payroll software, adjusting some go-live dates

The ConnectND state government team is moving ahead with modifying PeopleSoft software to maintain the current payroll cycle for salaried general state government employees. These changes require adjustments to the original go-live date of July 1 for some components of the state government systems. Financial modules will be changed to Sept. 1. The payroll system has been live with PeopleSoft on the state government side since April 2003. Updated time entry functions will be implemented in September, paid Oct. 1. However, benefits administration, training administration and recruit workforce implementations will occur July 1 as planned.

A supplemental payroll will continue to be used for hourly employees and adjustments. Software modifications are being written by developers from the state Information Technology Department (ITD). While doing so, they will also enhance the state time entry process and prepare to implement the PeopleSoft expense module. The expense module, which was not originally scheduled for implementation, will more automate the expense reimbursement process and increase employee self-service.

ITD will absorb overtime costs incurred by the developers working on the modifications. Added compensation for Maximus, the project’s consulting firm, will be paid by the Office of Management and Budget. The expense module will likely be implemented in pilot agencies Oct. 1 and made available later to other state government agencies.

## March and April IVN sessions

ConnectND general and topical updates are recorded by the Interactive Video Network through Web streaming. The temporary [video archive](#) is now on the IVN site at <http://streaming.ndivn.nodak.edu/ndivn/>. Click “recorded calls” to locate archived video stream.

The general updates of the overall ConnectND project are held the second Thursday of each month over IVN. The monthly NDUS system (financial, human resources management, and student administration) sessions are held on a rotating basis. All the March and April sessions will be at 9 a.m. The upcoming schedule is:

- Thursday, March 11  
—ConnectND Project Update
- Thursday, March 18  
—NDUS Human Resources Mgmt System
- Thursday, March 25  
—NDUS Student System
- Thursday, April 1  
—NDUS Financial System
- Thursday, April 8  
—ConnectND Project Update
- Thursday, April 15  
—NDUS Human Resources Mgmt System
- Thursday, April 22  
—NDUS Student System

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

***Vision Statement:*** *The NDUS supports a service-oriented environment where the focus is on providing students, faculty, staff and others access to information and services, at any time, from anywhere.*

## PeopleSoft navigation tutorials, training materials available

Future ConnectND users should take advantage of free PeopleSoft tutorials that show examples of how systems will look on screen and provide navigation technology concepts and terminology.

Finance and human resource navigation tutorials can be accessed through the NDUS Documentation and Training Web site. Find the heading “See Free PeopleSoft Tutorials” under Microcomputer Topics at <http://www.und.edu/dept/cndtrain/>. The site is also linked to the ConnectND home page (see NDUS Training Site on the Featured Items menu). The tutorials can be taken online or downloaded onto a local computer, and the information can be accessed without logging onto the PeopleSoft site.

Faculty members can get information and brief demonstrations about online learning management, class schedules, class rosters and faculty advising under the Student Administration link on the training site.

In addition to familiarity with the tutorials, higher education staff and faculty users should also be comfortable with Internet skills (information available at <http://www.und.edu/dept/cndtrain/>) and may be required to review records and data privacy information requirements (Family Educational Privacy Act, etc.) before they are granted security access to use ConnectND systems. Details on those security/privacy provisions are being finalized.

A variety of other resources to help prepare ConnectND users are on the Web site. Personnel from Maximus, the project consulting firm, are working with higher education trainers and project managers to finalize details for functional training, to be conducted close to the time processes start up. Campus representatives are getting a head start through participation in testing of the various systems.

## Stay tuned—

### Portal purposes posted in new FAQ

Information you may want to know about Campus Connection, the ConnectND higher education PeopleSoft portal, has been assembled and is available on the ConnectND Web site: <http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd>. The frequently-asked-questions document highlights the purpose and most important features of the Campus Connection portal.

### Feds, state trying to block Oracle merger

North Dakota is one of seven states joining the U.S. Justice Department's lawsuit to block Oracle Corp.'s proposed \$9.4 billion takeover of PeopleSoft Inc. The lawsuit contends that the proposed merger between two top business software companies would lead to higher prices, less innovation and fewer choices for customers.

"Oracle's actions pose a threat to state government and taxpayers," said North Dakota Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. "State agencies currently use PeopleSoft software to perform the state's most basic business functions, including payroll, general ledgers, accounts payable and receivable, and student administration at our universities and colleges."

### HEUG presentations available

Several representatives from the ConnectND project team and campuses are participating in the Higher Education User Group Conference 2004 in Atlanta. HEUG, which represents more than 400 institutions and more than 4,500 individuals, is a not-for-profit organization and source of information from higher education systems and campuses using PeopleSoft products.



Conference 2004 presentations are available online to download at <http://www.heug.org/index.php?mo=do&op=sc&catid=25>. A user name and password (available by e-mail from [support@heug.org](mailto:support@heug.org) if you don't have them) are required to access the presentations.

### Campuses have implementation Web sites

North Dakota's two largest campuses have initiated their own ConnectND implementation Web sites.

The first issue of the UND ConnectND Newsletter and the Frequently-Asked-Questions document about the upcoming payroll change are currently featured on the University of North Dakota site <http://www.und.nodak.edu/cnd/>. The North Dakota State University site <http://connect.ndsu.nodak.edu/> has several categories of information specific to NDSU's implementation. Both campus sites contain links to the ConnectND Web site and various related resources.

### NDUS Help Desk gets technical questions

The University System Help Desk is gearing up to field general technical questions relating to ConnectND including problems with user name or passwords, navigational issues and system errors.

The NDUS Help Desk can be reached toll-free between 8 a.m. and midnight at 1-866-457-6387 or by e-mail at [help.desk@nodak.edu](mailto:help.desk@nodak.edu). Problems can also be reported over the Web via an online ticket submittal form available at <http://www.help.nodak.edu>.

In the near future, the Web site will post frequently asked ConnectND technical questions and their answers. General questions about ConnectND can be submitted to the project Web site: <http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd>.

### Student fee increase approved by board

The North Dakota Board of Higher has set the student fee for ConnectND at \$63 per semester for the 2004-05 school. The fee is currently \$36 per semester, and was \$42 per semester in 2002-03. The North Dakota Student Association opposed the increase.

### Implementation teams coordinate on campuses

At the chancellor's request, each campus has assembled an implementation team to help guide the administrative computer system changes and enhancements. A list of team chairs is available under [Project Overview](#) on the ConnectND Web site.

## Words & acronyms

**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 SAMIS or CICS) were developed long before “ERP” was even thought of, they are essentially our ERP today.

**Legacy System**—An application in which a company or organization has previously already invested considerable time and money. Examples of legacy systems to be replaced by ConnectND are CICS (used by NDUS staff), ALFI (used by students) and SAMIS (used in state government).

**MAXIMUS**— Founded in 1975, serves as the implementation partner on the Connect North Dakota Project, and will be responsible for developing an implementation and deployment plan that addresses the major business areas, key agency and campus participants and critical project completion dates.

**PeopleSoft**— Founded in the mid-1980s, this company builds applications on a client-server platform instead of using the traditional mainframe. This product should provide both the state and the university system with the ability to operate within a real-time environment on a system-wide basis.

**WebEX**—A licensed program for interactive communication over the World Wide Web and telephone. Sessions can be recorded and archived.

**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).

## Fyi & updates

### What is the current status of ConnectND?

The latest oversight report listed the project as “not applicable” because the reviewer, due to the temporary absence of key personnel, was unable to obtain the information necessary to do an evaluation.

### 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.

### Has end-user training been scheduled?

Project managers are scheduling functional/content end-user training using a just-in-time approach. The training can only be done effectively after procedures and processes to design, develop and configure the systems have been completed. For additional information, please see the article on tutorials and training.

### Links mentioned

- **Calendar:** [www.nodak.edu/connectnd/index.php?module=PostCalendar](http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd/index.php?module=PostCalendar)
- **Connect ND:** [www.nodak.edu/connectnd](http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd)
- **MAXIMUS:** [www.maximus.com/public/virtual/home](http://www.maximus.com/public/virtual/home)
- **North Dakota University System:** [www.ndus.nodak.edu](http://www.ndus.nodak.edu)
- **PeopleSoft:** [www.peoplesoft.com/corp/en/public\\_index.asp](http://www.peoplesoft.com/corp/en/public_index.asp)
- **State of North Dakota:** [www.discovernd.com/](http://www.discovernd.com/)

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](http://www.nodak.edu/connectnd)  
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