Decision Support/Data Warehousing/Reporting Needs

Focus Group Results

Banner Issues

1. Controllers office -- all the financial data that Banner has -- on line in real time -- Banner prod -- provide data in reports through Mine -- monthly reports -- tools that allow you to know what is Banner -- no tools to demonstrate the data structure -- not a good end user or technical schema available.

2. We would like the ability to do our processes supported by technology in ways that we don’t now support those processes. We have the data/knowledge, but we are struggling with the process support.

3. We must do research for the university - i.e. data on students, data, staff, courses, etc. Our ability/support to do this is grossly inadequate - it’s a hindrance (ball and chain around our hands). If we can get to the data, it’s hard to use. Reporting is difficult. We can’t retrieve the data for longitudinal studies or simple reports. Data is not in an environment that it can easily be retrieved. Banner provides most of the data for the IR office -- other data is available on desktop. The primary hindrance is Banner—it isn’t an easy mechanism for bringing data back. We need to enable individuals to use the information - recognizing security issues.

4. Data for financial aid needs -- getting to it in Banner is o.k. -- hard to pull information -- Brio and Webfocus are neither capable to get the information we need -- in effect, we have a shadow database system.

5. Key is using the correct data -- no one understands the structure of data in Banner.

6. We receive a paper report from Banner, scan it, then bring to desktop, add to the database for a mail merge -- letter to deans list students -- takes three days of manual work.

7. Legitimate system that feeds to Banner, but we don’t get anything back -- facilities -- project accounting system -- must precede Banner.

8. When you post more information in Banner, it deletes the previous.

9. Goes beyond Banner where we have the components that reside separate from the other data.

10. When Banner occurs, everything else stops...a statement made relative to IT Services and upgrades to Banner.

11. Need to work with new systems to integrate with Banner.

12. Banner -- only the core accounting system has been implemented -- no stream and no flow -- there has been no further projects to extend it out to real work.

Information Needs

13. We need the ability to make business decisions from data that can span several systems -- facilities, personnel, finance, etc. We can formulate the questions, but the technical aspects of how to join the data into tables, etc. is an obstacle right now. Information doesn’t do any good if we’re 6 month later in getting it - timeliness is needed.

14. Everyone needs to look at the information, but it is sliced and diced differently.

Access Issues

15. What does the data mean and how do you get security in less than two months to access what you need?

16. We need to be able to access information over a period of time from several different sources -- financial reporting and funds -- access what we’ve spent from multiple sources.
**Problem Statements**

17. Don’t have a coherent problem statement for this decision support issue.
18. Don’t have a way as a university -- to go find out why people feel the need that makes the individual departments have to manually overcome -- we don’t know why -- lack of understanding of data. Data is incorrect, timing issue -- can’t solve what we don’t know.
19. Indirect impact on students and faculty -- the ability to get classes -- deans and chairs to manage resources -- timely graduation, consumption of resources.
20. Need to be able to see trends.
21. University is data rich, but information poor.
22. Operates with far less information -- manage by anecdote, feel, and intuition -- information is out of date, slow.
23. We have a lot of data, but no information. We don’t have information to make decisions, especially when it crosses the functions through the Banner transition. Analysts are occupied with manipulating data. We need a system that takes care of data structures, and then the analysts would be able to analyze the data.
24. Uploading info into the central systems is an issue -- no defined procedure (look into the VA Tech solution) -- electronic loading of journal vouchers.
25. Trouble with the complicated way that data resides.
26. We need a bridge between data and information to assess if we are we making the right decisions such as production type questions we routinely want to know and ad hoc type questions.
27. Not user friendly when we have to get at the data -- takes a lot time to get at the information.
28. Complex database and lack of knowledge to get at that data.
29. To get to the information -- takes too many people to pull the data together.
30. Analogy -- to find out what time it is - we have to build the watch.
31. End up relying on information brought into a spreadsheet.
32. Consumes a lot of time for a lot of people across the institution.

**Reporting Issues**

33. In personnel, we need help in ad hoc reporting.
34. Can tell you what everyone makes, but can’t print a report (have to get at it person by person/screen by screen).
35. Use MINE to get a lot of student information -- question accuracy of the data - we get from two different methods -- numbers not the same -- forces us to look at information methodically which takes time.
36. We have to open up multiple reports -- open one report, print or save, close...and so on for up to 7 reports to get the information you need -- process to combine the data is not easy for the end user.
37. Trying to move to a paperless environment. Not working right now.
38. Reporting should be simple -- codes in Banner should be easy to use.
39. Reporting-- need to select which pieces are actually important enough to include in reports.
Shadow Systems

40. Need to get rid of the shadow systems -- but the good ones, legitimize them and support them.
41. People are being creative and innovative in their solutions -- we have no university strategy and no cohesiveness -- no one central plan.
42. Now, we have a possibility of getting multiple versions of the "truth" -- easy to make mistakes (variations of interpretation) of the information -- summary report differs that other report -- various logic used.
43. Inventory of the systems that are being used -- capture the information they are trying to get at.
44. Spend time reconcile shadow system with Banner -- put information into spreadsheets -- rolling process to keep those going -- re-keying, reconciling, etc.
45. Support requested for tools that have been purchased to deal with the data.
46. Don’t have a good feel for all of the areas that are using the shadow systems.

Archival/Preservation of Information/Data

47. Preservation and reporting of data that is being used to make decisions -- are the data linked to the reports so that we could get back to that data later?
48. Archiving of information -- how we do it and how we have access to that -- still have reporting needs against that archived data?

Possible Solutions

49. We lack a data dictionary.
50. Hamilton campus -- created their own dictionary -- anytime they need to go outside of the system they had to wait several weeks to get permission to use the data, so the created their own dictionary.
51. Need to understand what information we need -- and then figure out a way to get to that -- we’re focused on our own areas -- need to find out what’s best from the university perspective.
52. Need training for everyone who is using the data to understand it.
53. Change the structure to make sure it is more easily understood.
54. Safety and security in the system is critical.
55. Get away from manual solutions.
56. Take some of the business rules to calculate the correct factor/ratio -- then get people the results-- to try to get consistency on reports that are generated.
57. We need identified solutions and tools and a way -- need the traction and support to move forward.
58. Need a strategic approach to how to handle these issues.
59. Divide the problem into its components -- specific problems -- and ways to address those.
60. Other systems need the support.
61. We have data residing in multiple systems -- information spans those systems.