

# The PeopleSoft On Campus Program Implementation Into An Information Systems Curriculum

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## Abstract

This paper presents an overview and the ongoing process of the implementation of PeopleSoft and ERP courses into the Information Systems curriculum at Dakota State University. The paper discusses how Dakota State was able to partner with Mutual of Omaha and PeopleSoft to implement PeopleSoft into the Information Systems curriculum with a first year addition of two courses. The objectives and topical outlines for two courses are presented, as is a look into the future implementation plans.

**Keywords:** PeopleSoft, ERP, Business University Partnerships, Curriculum

### 1. PeopleSoft's On Campus Program

The PeopleSoft Website states the purpose of the On Campus Program to be as follows:

PeopleSoft On Campus is a comprehensive industry-academic partnership that supports the integration of PeopleSoft into the curriculum of colleges and universities. It was designed in collaboration with PeopleSoft's Academic Advisory Council to ensure that the program meets the needs of the academic community. The program provides students with real world enterprise management tools and experience, the faculty with development and curriculum resources, and participating institutions with commercial enterprise-class software that they would otherwise not be able to afford. Its primary goal is to increase the pipeline of graduates knowledgeable about PeopleSoft and Enterprise Management technologies and concepts.

#### What Participants of the On Campus Program Receive from PeopleSoft

According to the PeopleSoft Website the following is what PeopleSoft provides to campuses participating in the On Campus Program:

Commercial, "academic use" single-user versions of our HRMS and Financials software

Faculty and technical staff training opportunities

Application User training software, a demonstration database, and instructional materials

Technical support through the institutions' existing PeopleSoft services contract

#### PeopleSoft's Outcomes from the On Campus Program

The PeopleSoft Website describes the benefits that PeopleSoft hopes to receive from the On Campus Program as being:

The shortage of skilled IT professionals is an issue that affects PeopleSoft, our customers, partners, and many institutions of higher education. The recruitment and retention of IT staff is an issue cited by CIO's across all industries. By collaborating with colleges and universities to provide state-of-the-art Enterprise Management software, enhance curriculum and support faculty development, PeopleSoft is working to produce a ready workforce that is able to successfully utilize our enterprise solutions and tools. The program benefits students by providing real-world, hands-on experience, making them more competitive in the job market. It benefits participating institutions by providing current

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commercial software and faculty development opportunities. And, it benefits PeopleSoft, our customers, and partners by developing the next generation of IT professionals.

#### **What is required of schools that participate?**

The PeopleSoft Website states institutions that plan to participate in the On Campus Program need to:

- Prepare a short plan or proposal on how they intend to integrate PeopleSoft into their courses

- Designate a primary point of contact or faculty representative to coordinate the planning and implementation

- Budget \$10K for the annual program fee

- Commit to faculty training

- Submit a plan outlining how the school's Administrative IT or MIS group will provide first level technical support

- Complete a pre-installation survey and sign the "academic use" licenses  
Current PeopleSoft customers are given preferred consideration.

#### **What if our school is not a current PeopleSoft customer?**

The PeopleSoft Website states because we provide a commercial version of our enterprise applications, it does help to have experience using our software in order to provide the usual, ongoing maintenance and support. It is most likely that our customers will have this level of experience. However, we have worked with institutions that are not customers and are open to hearing creative solutions or partnering ideas (e.g. links with major PeopleSoft customers or Implementation Partners, etc.) that could address support issues.

Dakota State University is not a PeopleSoft customer but is able to participate in the On Campus program because of the partnership that was formed between Dakota State and Mutual of Omaha from Omaha, Nebraska. More details on this partnership are provided later in this paper.

#### **What should be included in the proposal?**

The PeopleSoft Website states a short overview of your vision or plan for using PeopleSoft

- A list of courses/departments in which you expect PeopleSoft to be used

- Acknowledgement of a commitment to faculty and technical staff

- A short plan or statement on how the IT or appropriate technical staff will support the software

Your perspective on the impact or benefits of incorporating PeopleSoft into the curriculum.

Finally, we typically need to know the TOTAL number of students enrolled at the institution and an estimate of the number of students that will actually utilize the PeopleSoft software over the course of an academic year.

#### **How much does it cost?**

The PeopleSoft Website states that PeopleSoft provides

A single-user versions of its application software at no charge along with Application User training software, documentation, and support materials. In addition, faculty participating in the program can take courses through PeopleSoft's Education Services on a space-available, no-charge basis. Primary technical support is provided by the institution's own IT staff, but for those schools that are PeopleSoft customers and have a current services contract in place, there is an escalation process and access to PeopleSoft's Advantage services. There is a \$10K annual fee to offset program administration costs.

#### **Recap of what are the specific steps that we would go through to join the program?**

School designates a point person or primary program contact from their institution

Initial discussion are: departments that are interested, types of courses, which software is needed, timelines, etc. are held with PeopleSoft's program director

Institution develops/submit a formal program plan and implementation proposal

A short, pre-contract survey is completed by the institution; the returned information is submitted to PeopleSoft's legal department to develop the appropriate contract and "academic use" licenses

Contract is reviewed and signed-off by appropriate representative of the institution

Software is ordered and shipped

Designated faculty and eligible technical support attend training courses

Software which is self-installable is set up, typically in a computer lab environment

Work on development of courses to utilize the PeopleSoft software begins (this can be either an integration into an existing course or the creation of a new one).

## **2. A Brief History of PeopleSoft**

In 1987 Dave Duffield and Ken Morris founded PeopleSoft. The PeopleSoft Website states the original mis-

sion of the company to be: "The company is dedicated to building client/server applications that redefine traditional approaches. These applications put power in the hands of users, are adaptable to the ever-changing nature of modern business, and are supported by the highest-quality customer service"<sup>2</sup>

It was 1998 when PeopleSoft introduced their Human Resources Management System that today accounts for 50% of the Human Resources market. It was the same year when the financial products were released and by 1992 the Financial Products were leading the multinational enterprises. In 1995 the Student Administration System was released.

During the year 2000 PeopleSoft delivered their newest version of the product called PeopleSoft 8. PeopleSoft 8 represents a paradigm shift for the Internet and enterprise software architecture. This means that there will no longer need to be any code residing on the client machines only a web browser. PeopleSoft 8 includes over 60 new collaborative applications as well as 100 re-architected applications. In addition, the PeopleSoft eCenter was launched which provided for in house application service provider services.

### **3. Dakota State's Business Partnerships**

#### **Dakota State University and PeopleSoft**

Dakota State University became a part of the On Campus Program with PeopleSoft in the spring 2000. In September of 2000 the alliance with PeopleSoft, Mutual of Omaha and Sun Microsystems was announced at a statewide press conference. At that time, it was announced to state and to the region that Dakota State University was going to become an active participant in the On Campus Program with PeopleSoft through the assistance of Dakota State University's corporate partner Mutual of Omaha.

As part of this relationship with Dakota State University, PeopleSoft provided a contribution equaling \$1.5 million. This contribution to the University is in the form of PeopleSoft software for Human Resources Management Systems and Financials as well as training for faculty.

#### **Dakota State University and Mutual of Omaha**

Mutual of Omaha's involvement within the On Campus program has included many and varied contributions. It has included involvement with faculty and students of Dakota State University. This involvement has included multiple trips for faculty to see how Mutual of Omaha has implemented PeopleSoft within their enterprise. There has been a trip for a group of 12 students and faculty to see again how PeopleSoft is currently being implemented within the day-to-day business operations of Mutual of Omaha.

In addition, Mutual of Omaha has been a consistent provider of internship experiences for Dakota State University students. Following the completion of these internship experiences at Mutual of Omaha these same students are given priority for open positions within Mutual of Omaha.

Since the inception of the partnership between Mutual of Omaha and Dakota State University all students who have been placed at Mutual of Omaha have been assigned to PeopleSoft project teams. Mutual of Omaha has provided these students with additional PeopleSoft training. With the addition of the new courses in PeopleSoft products on the Dakota State campus the amount of additional training is anticipated to decline.

### **4. Dakota State's Commitment to Training**

Training has been provided for faculty staff and students on both the technical and functional sides. Training has been conducted both on campus and at PeopleSoft training centers located across the country

All of the faculty from the College of Business and Information Systems, some support staff, and selected students were trained in an on campus training session. The administration at Dakota State University made the decision that classes would be cancelled to allow for two full days of training in PeopleSoft applications. All of the staff was given a one-day overview of the PeopleSoft environment by two of the faculty who had received extensive training from PeopleSoft. The second day included training by PeopleSoft trainers from the Midwest Region who taught the Dakota State group People Tools Overview on the technical side and the Introduction to Financials on the functional side. All 25 of the people that completed the training were awarded PeopleSoft training credits.

Faculty, staff and students have received training in the functional areas of General Ledger and Introduction to Human Resources Management Systems at PeopleSoft training centers. On the technical side, other faculty and students have been trained in People Tools I and PeopleTools II.

The author of this paper had the opportunity to participate in 38 days of training within a 12-month period. The classes emphasized PeopleSoft programmer analyst training and server administration. The following is a list of courses that the author has completed:

People Tools I, People Tools II, People Code, Introduction to Financials and Distribution, General Ledger, PeopleSoft Security, Query Basics, Query Advanced, Crystal Basics, Crystal Advanced, Application Engine/Mass Change/Import Manager, Process Scheduler, People Tools I Delta 8, People Tools II Delta 8, PeopleSoft Server Administration on UNIX/Oracle and Data Management Tools

All of the costs of training for faculty and staff at Dakota State University have been paid for by a special allocation from the President. All transportation costs, meals, lodging and expenses for the training, are fully reimbursed by the University. This is opposed to only partial funding provided by the University for other professional development activities. This is another display of the President's commitment to the PeopleSoft project.

## 5. The PeopleSoft Curriculum at Dakota State

Currently within the College of Business and Information Systems there are two classes offered. They are BUS 270 Special Topics ERP and CSC 206 Advanced Computer Applications PeopleSoft

### BUS 270 Special Topics ERP

This course is taught by John Webster and is a three-semester hour course. The course has been taught for two semesters.

#### Course Objectives

The concepts of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP).

An overall picture of eBusiness and how it works in today's business world.

The capabilities and necessity of ERP in today's corporate operations.

Know who the ERP vendors are in today's eBusiness world and what parts they play.

Be able to work with the PeopleSoft eBusiness solutions.

What are the advantages of using the ASP delivery model?

The operation of Sun Microsystems servers, Sun Rays and Ultra 5.

The concept and importance of Unix to PeopleSoft.

#### Course Topics

Tomorrow's technology workers.

Concepts and components of ERP and eBusiness.

Why do companies need an ERP?

ERP problems and promises.

Using ERP for a corporate planning.

Managing data in the ERP.

Implementing an ERP.

How does ERP change company management?

Supply chain management.

Future of ERP.

PeopleSoft introduction.

Human Resources module.

Financial module.

PeopleTools.

ASP applications

Sun Microsystems servers

Unix operating environment.

### CSC 206 Advanced Computer Applications: PeopleSoft

The CSC 206 Advanced Computer Applications: PeopleSoft course is a one-credit course taught and developed by the author of this paper. This course was taught for the first time in Spring of 2001.

#### Course Objectives

Understand the fundamentals of client-server architecture and relational database technology.

Know how to change the "look and feel" of your PeopleSoft applications.

Know how to expand the functionality of the delivered PeopleSoft system.

Take advantage of techniques to enforce your company-specific business rules.

Control access to sensitive data.

Understand how PeopleSoft Workflow is used to promote the flow of information.

Understand the available reporting options.

Understand how PeopleSoft Web Client is used to promote the flow of information.

Understand the effect of customization on later upgrades to new PeopleSoft releases.

Understand the structure of a relational database.

Determine the impact of client/server architecture on day-to-day processing.

Differentiate between user-defined prompt tables and the Translate table.

Distinguish between prompts from the Translate table and prompts from a prompt table.

Identify tables that benefit from effective-dating.

Coordinate the use of effective-dating and authorized user actions to maintain data integrity.

The purpose of PeopleSoft application objects.

The nine steps of application customization.

How developers can use projects to organize objects.

How to navigate within Application Designer.

How to open and close existing objects.

How to save an object.

Object properties.

Change field labels to match your company's terminology.

Select the best way to display information for data entry purposes.

Move fields around to meet business requirements.

Remove unnecessary fields.

Comply with panel definition ordering rule.

Establish default values to reduce the amount of data entry required.

Track additional information by adding additional fields to records and panels.

Validate data against a prompt table.

Implement auditing controls.  
Enrich your applications by adding PeopleCode programs.  
Make optional fields required.  
Limit access to sensitive data by creating custom panels.  
Modify menus to accommodate user requirements and business needs.  
The different types of security working together to secure your PeopleSoft system.  
Operator and class security profiles.  
How to modify a security profile.  
Creating simple queries using PeopleSoft Query.  
Using a predefined Crystal template to design your Crystal reports.  
The concepts of the Web Client and how they apply to PeopleSoft systems.  
Sources of information used to determine the impact of proposed customization

### **Course Topics**

Signing On to a PeopleSoft Database  
Navigating the PeopleSoft System  
Retrieving Data  
Assigning Favorites  
Modify Data  
Adding Data  
Inquiry Panels  
Working with Grids  
Using PeopleBooks  
Relational Databases  
Client/Server Architecture  
Prompt Tables  
Effective-Dated Tables  
Training Location Table  
Translate Table  
Student Data Table  
Understanding the “Big Picture”  
Nine Steps of Application Customization  
Application Designer  
Manipulating Object Definitions  
Object Definition Properties  
Customization Overview  
Preparing Your Project  
Panel and Record Definitions  
Record Definitions in Application Designer  
Translate Values  
Anatomy of a Panel  
Using Drag and Drop to Create a Panel  
Using Your Terminology  
Creating Custom-Size Edit Boxes  
Hiding Unused Fields  
Changing an Edit Box to Radio Buttons  
Visual Panel Structure and Tabbing  
Basic Steps for Testing  
Defining Defaults to Minimize Data Entry  
Tracking Additional Information  
Editing a Field Against Another Table  
Printing Panel Definitions

Auditing Data  
Using PeopleCode to Enforce Business Rules  
Customization Overview  
Making Fields Required  
Protecting Sensitive Data  
Understanding Panel Groups  
Modifying Menus  
Types of Security  
PeopleSoft Application Security  
Security Administrator  
Opening a Security Definition  
What is Workflow?  
Rules, Roles, and Routings  
PeopleSoft Workflow Architecture  
Workflow Routings  
Business Process Designer Hierarchy  
Cancel Course Demonstration  
Workflow Tools  
Choosing a Reporting Tool  
Uses for PeopleSoft Query  
Running a Query  
Building a Query  
Using a Template  
PS/n Vision  
SQR  
OLAP  
Documentation in Application Designer  
Sources of Information  
PeopleSoft Upgrade  
Import Manager  
Mass Change

### **Evaluation within the Courses**

Student progress has been measured and evaluated based upon the completion of lab assignments as well tests. The tests have been both the written objective type as well as hands on line tests. Students generally performed at an above average level on the exams and labs that have been given.

## **6. Evaluation of the Program**

Dakota State University and the College of Business and Information Systems have viewed the relationship to be extremely beneficial for our students. Many students are currently looking at both internships and employment opportunities with companies that utilize PeopleSoft in their business operations. Those students who have been placed with companies using PeopleSoft have been very excited about the long-term professional opportunities it provides for their careers.

At the time of this writing the assessment data is still being gathered from both students and employers but once received that will give another barometer of the success of the program in preparing students to work with ERP.

The program has been in place for only one academic year however three graduates have been placed on Peo-

PeopleSoft development teams within the companies that hired them. The employers have presented positive evaluations on the students' abilities to contribute immediately to the PeopleSoft efforts.

### 7. Future Implementation

The BUS 270 Special Topics ERP continues to be a regular part of the curriculum within the College of Business and Information Systems and is offered each semester. During the spring semester of 2002 a new course will be added to the curriculum in the College of Business and Information Systems that will be the equivalent of the People Tools I and People Tools II. This course is under development at this time but will be CIS 470 Special Topics: PeopleSoft.

The accounting faculty and the human resources faculty are in the process of also looking at the integrations potential within the functional areas of accounting and human resources management. The ultimate goal is to have the students enrolled in the CIS 470 Special Topics: PeopleSoft to complete the customizations for the faculty and students enrolled in the accounting and human resource courses.

This future implementation will necessitate additional faculty receiving training, which is provided for as a part of the On Campus Program with PeopleSoft. They will need to look at their existing curriculum and make their own determinations as to how PeopleSoft will be able to be integrated.

### 8. Conclusion

The On Campus Program with PeopleSoft has been most productive for Dakota State University during the first year of its existence. The entire faculty of the College of Business and Information Systems has been trained in at least one product of PeopleSoft. Three faculty have received additional training at PeopleSoft training locations. Two new courses were developed and taught during the past academic year and a third course has been designed to be implemented into next year's information systems curriculum offerings. The business faculty are exploring ways on integrating ERP and PeopleSoft into their curriculum.

At least three students are currently working with PeopleSoft applications. In addition multiple students have searched for PeopleSoft opportunities. The addition of PeopleSoft offerings into our curriculum has had a net effect of increasing opportunities for graduates of Dakota State University. Many of the Information Systems majors now have a better understanding of what Enterprise Resource Planning is and have the opportunity to work hands on with PeopleSoft.

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