Questions as Finalized at October 22, 2013 Meeting
Information Technology Blue Ribbon Panel

Questions to Address:

1. Policy of “Not Modifying” Banner-- Upon the adoption of Banner as the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system in the late 90’s, we established the policy that we would not modify Banner. This policy was established because of our experience with the ISIS system where many modifications had been made which resulted in the inability of the vendor to provide support.

   What does it mean to “modify” Banner?
   
   What are the advantages and disadvantages of not modifying Banner?
   
   What are the intended consequences of this policy?
   
   What are the unintended consequences of this policy?
   
   Do we change our processes to fit Banner or do we change Banner to achieve more effective and efficient processes? What criteria do we use to make this decision?
   
   How do we identify one or more Banner schools that have modified Banner so that we can learn first-hand the advantages and disadvantages of modifying Banner?

2. Reporting--We know that providing reports to decision makers is not strength of the Banner system.

   How do we provide better reports for decisions makers? E.g. department chairs and deans.

3. Processes--Are there ways to utilize Banner to increase efficiencies with various business processes? For example, in Financial Affairs, an account clerk has to negotiate several Banner screens to pay a simple invoice. This is time consuming, expensive in terms of labor costs and inefficient.

   How do we identify these business processes and improve them either through modifications to Banner, changes to business processes, and/or new third-party products?

   Do we change our processes to fit Banner or do we change Banner to achieve more effective and efficient processes? What criteria do we use to make this decision?

   What are the intended and unintended consequences if we change our processes? For example, our current use of the ProCard has expedited our small purchases but none of the vendor information is contained in Banner.
4. Third Party Solutions—What plug-ins or add-ons to the Banner system might we need to work more effectively and efficiently?

What criteria will we use to make decisions as to what third party vendors/products we utilize? Do we use only Banner products if available? Do we develop our own solutions in-house?

What criteria do we establish to govern the uploading and downloading of data to/from Banner with third-party products, e.g., information that is contained in Hobsons concerning student orientation dates?

5. Utilization of Banner and Accuracy of Data

What measures can be taken to assure that the data entered into Banner are consistent and accurate?

How do we assure that not only are data accurate but that data are entered as appropriate and needed by those responsible for entry? For example, due to any number of factors, including lack of trust in the accuracy of the data and difficulty in getting reports some departments/divisions have developed their own reports and this may be duplicative and time consuming. How do we maximize the use of Banner?

6. Collaboration between IT and the User Community—What programs can be put into place to assure better collaboration between IT and the user communities? During the early stages of Banner implementation there were several users groups which met on a very regular basis with the appropriate IT staff to resolve implementation issues. For example, what is the best practice and best model of the relationship between Institutional Research and Banner, i.e., how are data extracted from Banner by staff in Institutional Research?

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