“PAM” Projects
Version 05/12/2011

The purpose of this document is to give a high-level overview of several projects that are either directly in the PAM Huron report or are directly related to the objectives of the PAM initiative. In no implied priority, the summaries follow.

MAPS – Month-end Activity and Project Statements

Monthly Accounting Statements must be approved by departments. “Approval must be evidenced by the signature of the person who completes the review, along with the date.” (Policy 3-003 III.f) This requirement means that General Accounting must print and distribute the Accounting Statements every month. Printing and distributing these statements requires 15-20 cases of paper, 60-65 hours of high speed printing, 25-30 hours to stuff the envelopes. This does not count the time spent out in the departments to distribute and sign. If the policy to require signature approval is changed, this enormous task would be reduced significantly across the institution. However, departments still need their Monthly Accounting Statements to make decisions, conduct business, etc. The statements are also used as historical documents for research. This project would create an electronic statement for departments. They would be able to review current and historical statements online this eliminating the need to print. This is not a project to shift the burden of the printing of statements to departments.

Departmental Projections and Commitments (DPAC)

Principal Investigators need a way to plan for future budget, revenue, and expenses. This planning should be a self-service application where the data entered flows to existing web reports (management reports, FIL, etc.). To manage these plans, individual line items will be flagged to expire in the future, either at a set date, or when the actual transaction posts to the ledger that matches the planned transaction. This system should be developed so that it is flexible and scalable and is able to hook into existing and future financial transaction systems.

Post Award Implementation

The PeopleSoft grants modules implementation has 5 sequential phases:

1. PeopleSoft tools need to be upgraded to version 8.51. This upgrade is currently in process.
2. The PeopleSoft financials application needs to be upgraded to version 9.1.
3. Next are preparatory tasks to prepare for the grants modules implementation including requisite data capture and analysis.
4. The fourth phase is the actual grants modules implementation.
5. Finally is the ongoing support of the new grants modules.

Signature Card Maintenance

The current process for signature cards is very inefficient. For example, when any individual needs to be given authority to sign on an activity or project, all signers on that activity/project needs to resign the signature card. This is particularly problematic when individuals who can sign on large numbers of activity/projects leave and their replacement needs to be given authority to sign. The proposal is that the actual authority to sign on an activity or project and the actual signature are captured separately. In addition capturing this information electronically will allow any financial systems to determine who is authorized to sign on an activity or project.

Business Intelligence

The ultimate delivery tool for information to enhance decision making by principal investigators is Business Objects. The University has decided to standardize on this platform. As a result, all of the PAM initiatives should keep in mind how the information that is being gathered will ultimately be used in the Business Objects reporting tools (WebIntelligence and Xcellsius). It is not until the information is available via Business Objects universes, that the true value of the PAM project will be recognized.

Fringe Benefit Rate

Moving to a Fringe benefit rate involves three phases.

I. As an institution, we have to get buy in. There is effort required to gather facts, assess financial impact to existing awards and future proposals, and developing and executing a communication plan. This must be done as quickly as possible.

II. After making the decision to move forward then there is additional data that must be gathered in preparation to negotiate the rates with the Federal Government. This may require bringing on external resources. At a minimum it will require establishing the business rules by which the data will be gathered and verified.

III. Once we know that we will be using fringe benefit rates instead of charging actuals then an assessment of the impact to existing systems will need to be done. This will be followed by making the necessary changes, including additional reporting

Streamlined Payroll Reallocations

The current payroll reallocation process should be streamlined. Designing and developing an “e-app” that would eliminate most dual data entry and integrating it into some of the existing WEB EBT reports will be a significant step forward. This project will enhance the timeliness of payroll data. This project is directly impacted by the Fringe Benefit rate project. Implementing a Fringe rate will make all payroll reallocation much simpler.

Salary Encumbrances

Salary expenses make up the largest percentage of all university expenses. Improving the system so salary and benefit encumbrances will be reflected **daily** instead of once per pay period has value to PI's, Account Executives, and Business Officers. Additionally, we need to make system changes so the salary and benefit encumbrances can extend beyond the current fiscal year for projects.

Cost Transfers

The Cost Transfer business process needs to be closely examined to determine a way the departments can supply the necessary information using e-Journal. There will be immediate savings by reducing the amount of dual-data entry. It will not completely eliminate it as there are often corrections made by Grants and Contracts Accounting. Leveraging e-Journal will make these corrections more transparent. The most critical part of the business process to work out is determining how (if) the system will enforce departmental approvals.

Self-Service Update of Department Liaison and Short Title of Projects/Activities

Liaison assignments are often out-dated, making it a challenge to determine the correct person to contact when needed and limiting the ability to develop automated communications to department liaisons. The current process is to contact Central Administration with any changes and then Central Administration makes the changes. This is currently a manual process. Creating an application which the department could use to update Liaison contact information updates will speed up the process and increase accuracy and eliminate duplicate data entry.

Titles for Activities/Projects are assigned by Central Administration upon creation. The ability to change the name of an Activity/Project to something that the department can relate to without emailing Central Administration would be beneficial to the departments. This would be a part of the application used to update liaison contact information.