What is an ERP?

ERP is an acronym that stands for Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). An ERP system is the core electronic system of any institution. It allows us to integrate internal and external information in a single, easy-to-use system. ERP systems in higher education might include records and data for students (grades, credit hours, financial assistance, etc.), finance (expenditures/payables, receipts/receivables, etc.), employees (pay stubs, benefit statements, etc.) and human resource services (employee reviews, appointments, etc.).

Does PSU currently have an ERP?

Yes. Our core ERP system is commonly known, or referred to, as “IBM” or “Secure Shell.” Users can also access ERP data through the GUS system. Everything you see in GUS is actually residing in our ERP system.

Why is PSU looking at a new ERP system?

PSU’s current ERP system is nearly 30 years old. It was created in 1984, and has been modified numerous times throughout the years. As you might imagine, this 30-year-old system is beginning to show its age. The software is no longer supported and the hardware is no longer being produced.

Our current system has served us well for nearly 30 years, but it’s time to look for a system that is industry standard and flexible to be successful in today’s changing IT environment.

Are any other universities in Kansas using an industry standard ERP?

Pittsburg State is actually among the last four-year universities to upgrade its ERP system. Every university is unique, but all are operating industry standard ERP’s or are in the process of developing a new system.

Where can I find out more about ERPs in higher education?

A quick Google search of ERP will provide you with many examples, but here are some that are specific to higher education. EDUCAUSE Paper
Benefits to PSU

An important outcome of the project is that PSU has an ERP system that saves the university money in the long run. There are many ways that a new ERP could be cost efficient. The system’s business processes could streamline work and save time and labor. It could be easier to learn and navigate, thereby reducing the learning curve and minimizing errors. It could also allow us to better integrate and access information from third party software. Also, by having an ERP that is standard throughout the industry, PSU should have more flexibility to meet the university’s needs in a timely manner with less downtime and disruption of services.

The total cost of ownership of each system will be an important factor in the decision-making process. Determining total cost of ownership involves all of the factors mentioned above as well as the number of staff needed to maintain the system. It is difficult to identify and quantify the total cost of ownership of a particular ERP system at this stage of the project. We will be able to identify the costs and efficiencies for each product when the vendor’s respond to the Request for Proposal (RFP).

Timeline and Leadership

When will PSU purchase a new system?

At this point we are merely in the exploratory phase of the process. We are reviewing our current system and engaging a team of active campus users to help us better define the needs of our campus.

There is no doubt that a reliable ERP system is necessary for the daily operation of our university. This system allows us to process payroll and billing, compile employee employment information and provide students with personal information about their progress toward a degree.

The cost of replacing the current system, which includes HR, payroll, finance and student information, will likely be a multi-million dollar endeavor and take several years to complete. Given the uncertainty of our financial ability to support a project of this size, we are proceeding cautiously in order to identify options that are affordable and practical.

What is the scope of the ERP Project?

The project will focus on identifying a replacement for PSU’s Human Resources, Payroll and Financial system first. A replacement for the Student Information system will be studied at a later date.
Who is involved in the ERP Project?

A great result takes great leadership and a knowledgeable team. This is why we’ve worked hard to identify those on campus who have the most familiarity with our current system and the technical knowledge necessary to help guide our discussion.

The ERP Project Team will direct the work that is needed for the project. Because the new ERP system will impact almost everyone on campus, two stakeholder groups – Department Stakeholders and Campus Stakeholders will provide guidance and insight for the Project Team.

The Department Stakeholders are the staff of HRS, Budget, Business Office, Cashier’s, Purchasing and Information Services who works with the core IBM system on a daily (and hourly) basis. They will serve as Subject Matter Experts (SME’s) for the project.

Campus Stakeholders is a group of 36 individuals across the campus who were selected to help with the project. These individuals have various levels of knowledge, experience and expertise in all of the areas of our current administrative system. Some of the members wear department head hats. Others are timekeepers and keepers of departmental budgets. Every Senate, including SGA and Graduate Council, and every division is represented. And most members are also employees who use our current system in one way or another.

In addition, the Project Team will invite input from the campus at large as project milestones are reached. We will reach out to the campus at large through surveys and Mr. Bulk-Es. We will add information about the project to this web site. Product demos will be open to all employees. Dates for these events will be released later as the project progresses.

What are the responsibilities of the two stakeholder groups?

1. Review the capabilities of the current ERP system.
2. Learn about other products on the market.
3. Develop a rubric of required and desired features for the new system to evaluate option.
4. Assist with the selection of vendors to visit campus, as well as participate in vendor demonstrations.

How will the decision be made?

A rubric of required and desired product features will be developed with stakeholder input. This rubric will become part of the Request for Proposal (RFP) and will be used to evaluate and rank products. A recommendation will be made to the President’s Council through the Information Technology Council (ITC) based upon the rubric rankings.