Seeking informal input on the PeopleSoft System (as of 9/21/09)
E-mail sent on September 8, 2009 to BCC-FAS, Merritt-FAS, COA-FAS, Laney-FAS, and District-FAS

Request: Please e-mail me the top 3-5 issues or problems you are experiencing with PeopleSoft, which you would like to see addressed.

Purpose: To use the data to assist in developing a formal survey to be forwarded throughout the district. The survey is a step in addressing the June 30, 2009 ACCJC Recommendation regarding functionality in the Management Systems.

Respondents: 70

The following provides a summary of the input received. I may have missed a few items because of the way they were worded. There may be some repetition. It is categorized into the following areas: Issues related to Instruction, Issues related to Counseling, Issues related to Human Resources, Issues related to Finances, Issues related to Students, General Issues (that are broader than the other categories), and Comments (from the respondents).

Issues related to Instruction
- Grade Book/Roll Book (mentioned repeatedly) [for those cutting and pasting into Excel some say the cells are merged, etc.]
- Activate Wait List function for closed classes (mentioned repeatedly)
- Enforce all pre-requisites and co-requisites (mentioned repeatedly)
- Develop an effective Early Alert System
- Electronic Add Card/Code method (to avoid students forging add cards) [other comments about the instructor’s ability to do add/drops during the add/drop period of time]
- Positive Attendance Rosters: Input fields did not allow appropriate values; can’t put in hours earned for a student who drops later in the semester
- Dynamically dated classes have a variety of issues
- Can’t “save” unless all fields are entered correctly – so you can’t save a work in progress, complete it later, and then submit
- Class Rosters: issues include missing rosters, incorrect rosters, incorrect or misleading due date, missing students/extra students
- Grade Rosters: No way of knowing if the grade roster has truly been submitted; need a message that says it has been successfully submitted (repeatedly commented on); need some “validation” that the process was completed successfully
- Class Rosters, etc.: Why do you have to go through two login screens and then another 9 screens before accessing the class roster? Also, the default is not set for the current term; set the default as the current semester. (repeated numerous times)
- Census Roster: The “printer friendly” version does not print out the entire roster. Also, why can’t the “no show/drop” buttons be located on the actual roster? Is
there a way to get a list of who has dropped or show those dropped on the roster as dropped?
• Not able to enroll in an open entry/open exit class after the last day to add – since it is positive attendance it should allow enrollment for the entire time period of the class
• Plug the hole that says a student is enrolled in a class but the student doesn’t show up on the roster; or that they are not on the roster but their printout shows them as enrolled. Or the instructor drops a student through the system, yet the student still appears on the grade roster resulting in needing to give the student an F.
• Can we find a way to see all of the classes in a discipline at least at each college?
• When e-mailing students from the roster, you cannot attach a document to include in the e-mail.
• Does not create a room map or catch room conflicts when scheduling classes – need a room schedule to avoid double booking.
• It does not generate an accurate report of total enrollments in concurrent sections.
• Need to e-mail instructors when their census roster is available per each class (especially dynamically dated classes)
• Need to e-mail instructors who haven’t turned in rosters and give them a link to access the roster.
• Why do we have to input our name twice when you want to go to the list of classes for each semester?
• Why isn’t there an easy way for a department chair to see all classes for the department/disciplines for which they are responsible?
• Late start classes – when a full term class is scheduled as late start students cannot enroll after the first night without an add card, why?
• Need electronic codes for students in closed cohort classes to be able to register without having to go to A&R
• Cannot drop no-shows on the first day to open space for other students
• The system allows the class to go at least one over the max without instructor permission
• In a lecture/lab class, why is the lab used as the class identifier?
• In variable unit classes like COPED – not able to adjust student units based on the amount of time in the course.
• False conflicts, for example, in ENVMT there are non-sequential weekend classes. When two classes both have non-sequential weekends, the system fills in the days for every weekend creating a conflict which in actuality does not exist. So, if a class meets on a first, fourth, and eight weekend and another class meets on the second, fifth, and sixth weekend, the system sees this as a scheduling conflict not allowing quite a few students to enroll online which for these classes is where we garner the most enrollees.
• Need the equivalent of the /SCI screen from Legacy that then allows department chairs see classes by course # rather than by class code

Issues related to Counseling
• The system is convoluted in functionality; it can take up to 2 minutes to download a transcript
• LD Specialist unable to access a student’s complete transcript; also unable to get a quick view of number of units completed, must add them up
• If a pre-requisite for a student is waived for a higher level class, the student cannot get into a class that is lower in level.
• Clearing a pre-requisite is extremely cumbersome and involves too many screens
• How did the list of prerequisite courses (milestones) get decided- for example, English J is the milestone or prerequisite for English 201A
• No degree audit available. When is this coming online?
• Why do we have to cut and paste the student ID every time we move from one screen to the next? You cannot toggle back and forth between screens as in the Legacy system.
• Too many glitches in an already cumbersome milestones system.
• No equivalent of the /THI screen
• The finance screen is incomprehensible (some faculty manage budgets)
• When I look via campus community and view the student’s “academic record” I can see what classes have been taken, but not who the teacher was
• A repeat in different words – once you are into a student’s records, having found and entered their SID, you have to re-enter that SID every time you navigate to another page (Student Center to Transcript, transcript to Milestones, Milestones to Service Indicators, etc.) Once you have accessed the Student Center, the program should be able to peg to additional pages.
• Repeat – need something comparable to the THI and THD in the legacy system.
• Transcripts are too long – condense the data.
• Integrate SARS with PASSPORT

Issues related to Human Resources
• Inability to update one’s personal information in the system
• Put accrued faculty Flex Hours into the system (was in Legacy); put in hours prior to the PeopleSoft system; also put in seniority information
• Need electronic Personnel Action Form
• Need electronic leave/ absence forms (B-forms)
• Need for an HR technology analyst or someone upgraded to HR technology analyst

Issues related to Finance
• Need to see funds encumbered in every area of the system- need to show current balances in the system (need a “right now” system)
• The purchasing/ordering process is extremely complicated and difficult. Too many things to input in order to be successful in this process.
• There should be an easier way to looking up vendors when completing a requisition.
• There needs to be a way to see where a requisition is in the system at all times; where is it? Whose desk is it at?
• It is possible for requisitions to be changed without notifying the originator.
• A/P persons should be able to add taxable lines in processing vouchers and not just to depend on the purchase order structure. The bottom line – why can’t the tax be included up front? It also would be great to see the account code and corresponding purchase order number on the requisition.
• Ability to see where outstanding items are in the approval process (requisitions, budget transfers, purchase orders) – the steps to find information are lengthy.
• Financial data is not available in a timely fashion so end users cannot access and/or track expenditures and remaining budgets.
• Need more useful budget and expense reports; very difficult to get detail on expenditures and detail cannot be reviewed or extracted in formats that are useful.
• When looking at budgets any sort of payment through timesheet is not reflected until months later, so totals are often incorrect.
• Give security access to key personnel in the Business Office at the college level to create budget coding to proceed with payroll adjustments if needed.
• Business offices need access for reviewing budget coding for all employees in real-time or a payroll report as soon as payroll has been dispatched to help alleviate the wrong changes in payroll.
• Payroll should be posted in a timely manner and permanent salaries should be able to project and encumber in the system to help better monitor the budgets.

Issues related to Students
• Before the students have completed enrollment, show them a “view” of what they enrolled in that also shows location (boldly), before they do a final submit
• Student portal is confusing for students to navigate
• Difficulty in creating a password (why not a variable or one’s own name?)
• Student complaints about CCCApply, as well as the wait time between completing the application and when one can register/enroll. In other districts which use PeopleSoft and CCCApply – do they have the same issues? (repeated comments about the cumbersome nature of the application and then enrollment process)
• The student interface is very confusing: It is not clear what college the course is taught at; by default it only lists the first three sections and those sections have higher enrollments
• When students search for a class, why can’t there be an option that they can select a college and get the classes listings for the college.

Issues related to Research
• Review the procedures for transferring data entered by students as it goes into the PS main database. The database likely contains faulty data that should be cleaned and coded to insure quality
• Set standards for results of queries that are delivered to the colleges by all research technicians and consultants. The results should not date, person, time period covered by the data and the fields used, hopefully with descriptions of the fields.
• Standardized methods for common types of reports and data. Validation studies should make sure that such data and reports are consistent with treatment of information used by the Chancellor’s Office

**General Issues**
• The program shuts down too often and yet it is essential to our daily work
• Can the W-Drive be put on the VPN?
• IT granting Security access for some individuals and not informing HR
• Update the current Leave/Absence Report forms to current year.
• Why do you have to log in twice?
• Why so many steps to get to my Faculty Center?
• The number one issue is how to get information out of the system, be it the financial or student system. We need queries and reports that make sense of all the data that is input into the system. This was the main reason for adopting the PeopleSoft system in the first place since it is a relational database. The number one obstacle to this is a lack of staff/programmers who understand the system.
• How can instructional faculty have access to Legacy to get old student lists, especially for mailing list purposes?
• On the PROMT employee site – why are social security numbers still being used?
• It’s impossible to fix values in pull-down menus, etc., so you are constantly inputting the same info for every search you perform (one ought to be able to set it up so that the current semester is already set when you go into the system)
• Both the general interface and the codes necessary to run queries are designed for back-end techies, not actual users (for example, one shouldn’t have to use 1094 to indicated Fall 09 in a search)
• The consultants are working in a vacuum and not working with the colleges regarding what is being done or decided
• There needs to be a dedicated trainer for new users or people who need help or support
• Look at the screens that faculty used in the Legacy system - /SCI, /IAS, /THD, /THI, etc. and determine if there is a comparable function in PeopleSoft and arrange a procedures manual in groupings as done for Legacy (see the Mainframe Security Clearance form).

**Comments**
• The system is not being used to its full potential as we are only using limited aspects of the software and then are customizing it to fit our business practices. Sometimes our business practices need to be evaluated and modified, so that it is more in line with the software package. Food for thought.
• PCCD chose a system that did not fit our business rules, practices, and needs and we are trying to fit ourselves into it. At this point in time, the only thing I see us
doing to go forward is re-evaluating our entire business practice so that we may work better with a system that was put in the hands of the end users.

- PeopleSof is not perfectly aligned with all of the District’s business practices. The system is not flawed in this respect, but our processes do not match up. PeopleSof processes in many instances are designed in functionalities which line up with what are generally considered “best practices” (financials). Some of the District practices do not. Examples would include electronic signatures, data, and process routing.

- The documented procedures for many PeopleSoft processes are not available in a process manual for end users. Although there has been modest progress in addressing this through training in some areas, there is much that needs to be done before all users can maximally access and use the system.

- IT will have full staffing with Information Systems experts with a solid budget, not consultants. Consultants do not have long term accountability

- IT will be held responsible for following procedures that assure data quality

- IT experts will collaborate with Research to share expertise, while designing and executing reports and studies that inform the college

- Expert research staff with a solid budget should receive appropriate training and response from system designers and programmers.

From One Instructor
Dear, Joseph 1 One big problem: When a class that is composed of a lecture and a lab it has two code numbers, one for the lecture and one for the lab. For some reason, students must sign up for the class using the LAB number which is listed second (which does not seem very intuitive to me, but that is not the problem I am describing). So, students who are looking for the code number for the second section of the class must find the fourth code number. If they are using the printed catalog, there is not too much problem. But if they are looking for that 4th code number on the internet catalog, MANY (including PhDs) don’t find it. They either don’t sign up, or they email the teacher trying to find that fourth code number that they need to sign up, which is what happened to me over and over this summer. I know that this has happened in more classes than mine. I am attaching a picture of MMART 160A (view-all-sections.jpg). You will see that there are only three visible code numbers. The student must know to click on “show all sections” to find the numbers they need. I teach web design. By all Usability common sense, the site should show all four code numbers and not make the user search for the button that is hiding in plain sight. Why can’t the designers of problem just add one more set of cells to the table instead of demanding the extra click? 2. I’m sure you will hear a lot about this one -- Most Multimedia classes require students to sign up for a 2 unit Lecture/Lab plus a 1 unit Lab corequisite. Students were getting an error message that they could not sign up for the class because the did not meet the "requisites". Most assumed that meant "Pre-Requisite" and emailed me for directions on how to get registered in my class. I assured them that there are no Pre-requisites for my class, that the message was about the Co-requisite Lab. I advised them to register for the 1 unit lab first, then try for the 2 unit lecture/lab. (Sounding a little dysfunctional?) For several this worked. Dear, Joseph 1 One big problem: When a class that is composed of a lecture and a lab it has two code numbers, one for the lecture and one for the lab. For some reason, students must sign up for the class using the LAB number which is listed second (which does not seem very intuitive to me, but that is not the problem I am describing). So, students who are looking for the code number for the second section of the class must find the fourth code number. If they are using the printed catalog, there is not too much problem. But if they are looking for that 4th code number on the internet catalog, MANY (including PhDs) don’t find it. They either don’t sign up, or they email the teacher trying to find that fourth code number that they need to sign up, which is what happened to me over and over this summer. I know that this has happened in more classes than mine. I am attaching a picture of MMART 160A (view-all-sections.jpg). You will see that there are only three visible code numbers. The student must know to click on “show all sections” to find the number they need. I teach web design. By all Usability common sense, the site should show all four code numbers and not make the user search for the button that is hiding in plain sight. Why can’t the designers of problem just add one more set of cells to the table instead of demanding the extra click? 2. I’m sure you will hear a lot about this one -- Most Multimedia classes require students to sign up for a 2 unit Lecture/Lab plus a 1 unit Lab corequisite. Students were getting an error message that they could not sign up for the class because the did not meet the "requisites". Most assumed that meant "Pre-Requisite" and emailed me for directions on how to get registered in my class. I assured them that there are no
Pre-requisites for my class, that the message was about the Co-requisite Lab. I advised them to register for the 1 unit lab first, then try for the 2 unit lecture/lab. (Sounding a little dysfunctional?) For several this worked. For others it took long waits in line with signed add slips and waiver of prerequisite forms to get signed up. One small part of the solution would be to simply abandon the word "prerequisite" and say what the problem is -- "prerequisite" or "co-requisite". 3 Next Big Problem At least I feel that it is a big problem. I was shocked to find on my personal information page all the information that an enterprise hacking needs to steal my identity -- my Social Security, my address, my birthday. If the security on these pages is a good as the design of the site, I am worried for all of us. I talked to my department chair, who said he would take it to the Union. But the info is still there. When I pointed this problem out in a staff development session, the help desk person said there is double sign in for security. When I not to them that the double sign in uses the same log in and password each time, they brushed me off. Problem 4 Have these web engineers ever heard of the three click rule? That a user should have to go no more than three clicks to get to the info they want. I understand that on a site this big, one might need to have more than 3 layers. BUT. To get to my class roster takes 9 clicks. Usually just an annoyance, but last week, when either the school server or my Internet connection was slow it was a real waste of time. When it takes 15 to 30 seconds for each click to be realized, that is a problem. The pages have lots of space. These categories can be condensed and choices made on fewer pages, fewer clicks, better use of time, calmer, more effective teachers. 5 ANNOYANCE Is there some reason why we should not see the current semester first when we get to our first faculty center page? Why is the upcoming semester always making it necessary for us to choose "change term" and click through to what we need -- the current semester? 6 I know you said 5 but..... have you had the experience of selecting all the emails on your roster, sending out an important message, and then finding out that no one got the message? I have taken to not using the email system on Access for more than one person at a time. I am not privy to the mystery. Well, the fool and latter is going to drown me. Thank you for taking this on.

Jan Dove One small part of the solution would be to simply abandon the word "prerequisite" and say what the problem is -- "prerequisite" or "co-requisite". 3 Next Big Problem At least I feel that it is a big problem. I was shocked to find on my personal information page all the information that an enterprise hacking needs to steal my identity -- my Social Security, my address, my birthday. If the security on these pages is a good as the design of the site, I am worried 'or all of us. I talked to my department chair, who said he would take it to the Union. But the info is still there. When I pointed this problem out in a staff development session, the help desk person said there is double sign in for security. When I noted to them that the double sign in uses the same log in and password each time, they brushed me off. Problem 4 Have these web engineers ever heard of the three click rule? That a user should have to go no more than three clicks to get to the info they want. I understand that on a site this big, one might need to have more than 3 layers. BUT. To get to my class roster takes 9 clicks. Usually just an annoyance, but last week, when either the school server or my Internet connection was slow it was a real waste of time. When it takes 15 to 30 seconds for each click to be realized, that is a problem. The pages have lots of space. These categories can be condensed and choices made on fewer pages, fewer clicks, better use of time, calmer, more effective teachers. 5 ANNOYANCE Is there some reason why we should not see the current semester first when we get to our first faculty center page? Why is the upcoming semester always making it necessary for us to choose "change term" and click through to what we need -- the current semester? 6 I know you said 5 but..... have you had the experience of selecting all the emails on your roster, sending out an important message, and then finding out that no one got the message? I have taken to not using the email system on Access for more than one person at a time. I am not privy to the mystery. Well, the latter is going to drown me. Thank you for taking this on.

PS I am sending this email from my private email account because Outlook on Access refuses to accept your address (error message: you must choose a recipient before this message can be sent) in the To: field. Good thing I saved my foaming prose.