



# Questions Submitted at April 29, 2005 Campus Update with Answers

Status of Answers by section: (rev. 9-16-05)

**HR/Payroll – Complete**

**Project Planning/Mgt. – Complete**

**Training and Support – Complete**

**Hardware/Software – Complete**

**Luminis – Complete**

**Finance – Complete**

**Security – Complete**

**Reporting – Complete**

**Student/Academic – Complete**

**Financial Aid - Complete**

## **HR/Payroll**

Will we be able to submit payroll through the LINK system?

- Yes. We are currently planning to pilot the web time entry functionality in LINK during our initial implementation period January 2007 – June 2007. Many schools are piloting this functionality and have learned that a gradual implementation is the best strategy.

What is “employee Self-Service” and what does it do?

- Self Service allows employees to view W4s, pay stubs, leave balances, benefits and beneficiaries. It will also allow employees to change their information such as address and phone number. This will eliminate some of the need to contact Human Resources for information currently only available through the old system.

What will be different in this implementation from what happened with the finance module?

- The Human Resources/Payroll system will spend more time focusing on testing and reports development. This system implementation will also benefit from having the technology infrastructure and processes in place from prior implementations.

Will timesheets all be electronic with the implementation of human resources and payroll?

- Some timesheets will be electronic at the initial implementation via a pilot project. More employees and departments will phase into electronic timesheets as the implementation progresses.

## **Project Planning/Management**

Why implement new financial modules until we can have what we’re supposed to be using now, working?

- The Finance module is working quite well now. The issue is the reporting tool and the Operational Data Store. However, those two components are nearing production status and we believe it is prudent to continue with the other modules. Delays only increase the overall cost of the project.

Does the administration truly understand the significance of another implementation of this system on our daily lives?

- We are certainly becoming more aware of these impacts in light of our experience with the finance implementation. We will be doing everything in our power to lighten the burden of future implementations. This will include earlier and more in-depth training, phased roll-outs where reasonable, limiting the amount of change all at once, more system testing and more regular opportunities for faculty and staff to provide feedback to our project teams.

How do end users give input on their needs and what we'd like to see change? Who do we call?

- During the lifetime of Project LINK, this sort of communication and feedback is best directed, in writing, to the appropriate LINK Project Director.
  - Finance – Ava Lovell ([alovell@unm.edu](mailto:alovell@unm.edu))
  - Student/Academic – Liz Jenkins ([ejenkins@unm.edu](mailto:ejenkins@unm.edu))
  - Financial Aid – Ron Martinez ([ronm@unm.edu](mailto:ronm@unm.edu))
  - HR/Payroll – Bonnie Young ([b1young@unm.edu](mailto:b1young@unm.edu))
  - General Questions – Fred Youberg ([fyouberg@unm.edu](mailto:fyouberg@unm.edu))

These individuals are not in positions to implement suggestions they receive, but do provide a channel to the business owners that can.

Two recent surveys of UNM Banner users showed that 85% of users are dissatisfied. What were the major causes of this dissatisfaction and what measures have been taken to address these problems?

- EndVision Research and Evaluation Inc. is Project LINK's external evaluator. They recently completed a "six month, post go-live" evaluation of the Finance rollout. A link to a summary of those findings and comments from the LINK Management Team is available at [link.unm.edu](http://link.unm.edu)

Do you have an estimate of the cost for implementing Banner?

- The estimate is \$61M over the five-year implementation.

Can you acknowledge that most people are not resisting change and that there may have been problems with the product or the implementation?

- We believe there is more truth to this statement than we realized. We believe the issue is more with the processes surrounding the implementation and problems with add on software like the reporting tool, than problems with the base product. But it is also apparent that the process changes required by the new system have generated much frustration.

How will LINK management recognize staff that are not only accepting of LINK efforts but are proactively racing to meet LINK at the door with technological developments in the individual departments like web pages and functioning original software?

- We are often not aware of these efforts and as a result have not yet developed a way to recognize the individuals behind them. If a manager becomes aware of something like this occurring in their area of responsibility, that manager should write it up and submit it to the Project LINK Office, c/o Fred Youberg, Project Coordinator. We will develop a method for recognizing these achievements.

What lessons were learned from the finance project and how are they being applied so that the other projects don't make the same mistakes?

- Where to start? Here are the major lessons learned (in no particular order):
  - Allowing units to determine their own Chart of Accounts (COA) structure was participative and inclusive. It also resulted in an unnecessarily complex COA that many departments are still struggling with today and which exacerbates their reporting problems.
  - Allowing users to access Internet Native Banner screens, rather than limiting them to Finance self-service screens, gave departmental users much more flexibility and control over their financial transactions. It also required that we train large numbers of users on the complex and non-intuitive forms in the Internet Native Banner product.
  - Removing site recognition from index codes, account codes and organization codes, implementing commodity code usage and tightening up on our use of account codes were all the right things to do from a purely data management and integrity perspective. It also compounded the number of changes that our users had to deal with and decreased the number of familiar items and procedures in the new system for them.
  - Pushing responsibility, control and accountability out to the end users was the right thing to do from a purely organizational and process design perspective. Doing it all at once meant that we were all in the same boat together trying to learn the new system at the same time. There were no experienced users to help us.
  - Delivering a new on-line transaction and approval system, business-to-business e-procurement, document imaging and ad hoc reporting capabilities simultaneously was an attempt to meet user expectations. In hindsight, it may have been too much, too fast. For eProcurement (HigherMarkets) and ad hoc reporting (Hyperion), UNM was also one of the first universities in the country to use them. This may have been too much "uncharted territory".
  - Delaying training till just before go-live, insured that students would not have time to forget their training before having to actually use the system. It also caused incredible stress and strain on limited training resources resulting in our inability to meet the required training load in a timely manner.
  - The network and server stress testing we did for Finance was not sufficiently heavy enough to expose server problems that we found shortly after go-live.
  - Deciding to use the Banner Index (a shorthand reference for the actual Banner Account Number) relieved users of the necessity to use the full 20+ digit Banner Account number, accommodated the space limitations of important interfaces (HRS and internal services) and accommodated HigherMarkets' requirement for a shorter account number. It also

prevented us from utilizing the standard reports that were delivered with the Banner product.

What are we learning from other universities to make our upcoming transitions easier?

- While we are attempting to learn from other universities' experiences with Banner, the variations with which it can be configured and implemented make some of these lessons less than directly applicable to UNM. We are a member of the Banner Large School Consortium that represents the needs of large research universities to SungardSCT, the vendor for Banner. Many of the ideas for our training curriculum, data standards and communication strategies were borrowed from University of Illinois, Wayne State University and Virginia Tech, among others.

The University of Illinois started Banner 12 months before UNM and has now spent \$150,000,000.00 and it continues to be a disaster. What measures are UNM taking to avoid such a disaster?

- We are implementing a new management structure to oversee the Banner implementations. The goal is to identify variations in planning and spending quickly so they do not escalate to the level that have occurred at other schools. With the proper oversight and resource management we believe there will not be the cost overruns that other institutions have seen. The Finance implementation did come in on time and on budget. There is still some clean up work going on, but the costs are not out of line. Financial Aid and Student and Academic implementations are also on budget through today.

Why did we implement Banner Finance before Human Resources/Payroll?

- There were several reasons for this decision, but the most important was that our accounts payable and purchasing systems were in danger of catastrophic failure. These critical University business functions were being run on PC-based software that was developed years ago by employees no longer even employed here. Although the FRS system was stable and reliable, it was simply a general ledger system unable to deliver the kind of business functionality our users were demanding.

On the other hand, our Payroll system, although highly modified and requiring constant maintenance, is a "mainframe" system and is producing payrolls regularly and reliably.

What plans are there to help financially strapped departments that have had to add additional staff to accommodate Banner?

- At present there are no plans in place to address this issue. This is an issue that probably needs to be addressed on a department-by-department basis. One suggestion that has been offered is to have colleges consider establishing centralized business offices to accommodate the needs of small departments and introduce economies of scale.

## **Training/Support**

Why does Banner seem so user-unfriendly? Can we expect more user-friendly operations with future implementations?

- Banner has two primary interfaces; the “Internet Native Banner” (INB) forms we are currently using, and a “friendlier” web interface called Banner Self-Service. Although easier to understand initially, Self-Service is also extremely limited in its functionality. Project LINK Finance made a decision to use INB in order to meet the immediate functional needs of our departments.

Banner Internet Native Banner navigation and form layouts do have a different ‘look and feel’ from more familiar Windows applications. The vendor continues to upgrade Banner INB navigation and screen layouts and UNM plans to upgrade at the end of next year. Also, future implementations will utilize Banner Self-Service whenever the functionality is sufficient to meet user needs.

My original training materials are outdated. When will we get a set of updated instructions or is this information available online?

- You can print the most up to date Finance Lab Participant guides and Job Aids, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s).
  - The most current Finance Lab Participant Guides are located at: [http://link.unm.edu/Training/Finance/Participant\\_Guides.htm](http://link.unm.edu/Training/Finance/Participant_Guides.htm)
  - The most current Job Aids and Standard Operating Procedures are located at: <http://link.unm.edu/Training/JAandSOP.htm>.
  - Short online refresher modules, Banner Bytes, are also located on this link.
  - Upcoming training will continue to be available online.
  - STAC and Financial Aid training will include practice accessing these training material updates.

Why are you making training mandatory for getting access to Banner?

- Mandatory training provides employees with a good skills foundation prior to working in Banner. Training, whether classroom or computer based, is a good (and in many cases the only) way to learn to use Banner correctly and avoid frustration and unnecessary delays.
- Not all Banner training being offered is mandatory. New skills needed which are critical for maintenance and accuracy of information will be considered for mandatory training. Refresher skills or skills that augment an individual’s ability to use the system will continue to be offered in training, but can be taken at the user’s convenience.

Are the people staffing the help desk trained to help us as we work our way through the process? Often they do not seem to know the answers.

- The help desk is trained to answer basic questions, however, no one has the answer on everything, so the help desk process sometimes has to refer questions to specialist in the appropriate area.

We need a real “customer service center” to help us transition positively. Help!

- We are in the process of implementing metrics for our customer service center that will help us identify and rectify service issues.

What training do you plan to provide to departmental technical support staff?

- Departmental staff must be trained in the business functions by the core office "power users." The continuing education department and EOD are offering training on the more general topics.

### **Hardware/Software**

We have really old computers in our department office and no budget to replace them. How can the University help?

- For departments with computer equipment that does not meet the minimum specifications for operating Banner as set forth by CIRT, there are limited funds available for purchase of new equipment. To request a PC click: <http://www4.unm.edu/linkdsktops>
- From the bigger picture perspective, with the appointment of a CIO, one of the major tasks will be to look at funding for IT on campus. This will be long-term issue, so in the meantime we will have to live with departments having to finance their own PCs. CIRT is driving what it can to make life easier for departments on the wrong side of the digital divide. These are:
  - Institution of a formal computer surplus program, which will facilitate the reuse of computers that no longer meet higher end users' needs, but could be an improvement for some departments. CIRT is refining its existing recycling program in conjunction with the IT-UNM group since departments have benefited from that for years.
  - Continuation of efforts to make most applications web-based, so that less power is needed at the desktop.
  - Working with Hyperion set-ups so that work can be done on the server, thus needing less power on the desktop (and getting Macs up, too)!

How often will Banner updates occur?

- Major Banner upgrades (for example from 6.0 to 7.0) are released about every 18 months. However, there are frequent points releases (for example, from 6.1 to 6.2) that the Banner team decides to adopt if the functionality or fixes are important enough. Then there are patches, which fix bugs. So, what the typical user will experience is major change every 18 months; the smaller releases tend to be visible only to certain user segments. Philosophically, we would like to upgrade only on an as needed basis.

Why does Banner only work with Internet Explorer as this is a serious computer security concern?

- The Banner application itself works with other browsers such as Netscape, Mozilla, and Firefox. However, Hyperion and Extender only work with I.E. This is a vendor issue, as the vendor has not written the application to work with multiple browsers. See the web site [www.unm.edu/cirt/sct/desktopconfig.html](http://www.unm.edu/cirt/sct/desktopconfig.html) for a specific list of browsers that can be used for these applications.

Will Banner provide software license tracking for users in departments?

- No

The Banner system is slow or down often. Are more servers going to be brought on line with the addition of the new modules?

- Contrary to the quote in the Lobo, the Banner system itself is pretty stable. However, once you add all the other components that we consider part of the Banner system, we do need to improve the overall availability. These components will be even more stressed with additional modules. There are many efforts underway to minimize the risks of poor performance:
  - Monitoring tools are being put in place so that all components can be monitored and proactively managed.
  - Servers are being added or beefed up as we see bottlenecks. This is an iterative process – when one bottleneck is fixed (like Tomcat and Hyperion talking), another is visible (the disk cache for Hyperion need upgrading, but we couldn't see it until Hyperion and Tomcat talked effectively).
  - Load testing tools will be used to simulate load on the student module before transitioning. As with Hyperion in the last couple of weeks, we also ask for stress testing from the users. So when you're asked to stress the system, please do!

What are we doing to ensure implementation of each new phase being fully supported technologically?

- First off, we are trying to minimize the introduction of “bleeding edge” technology. We should attempt early releases only when the benefit strongly outweighs the risk.
- We are getting more aggressive with managing the support we do or do not get from our vendors.
- We are starting to use more consulting as we start technology, so that our employees have a chance to learn the technology before their feet are held to the fire to support it.

### **Luminis Portal**

Will Luminis use the same web mail that we're using now?

- The Luminis project has cross-UNM representation to determine how best to implement the portal, and what components we will place behind the portal. Steve Spence ([zurn@unm.edu](mailto:zurn@unm.edu)) is leading the effort for the web mail component; contact him for questions or to be an active participant in the decision. The project web site is at [luminis.unm.edu](http://luminis.unm.edu).

How will the single sign-on work in particular with staff as students? Will staff have access to both if they are also registered as students?

- Single sign-on is the method by which you supply a single user identification and password to gain access to on-line services, including Banner, that you are authorized to access. Single sign-on will be via the new Luminis portal that is part of the Banner deployment. We will continue to use our LDAP Lightweight Directory Access Protocol for authenticating users with their net-id on the Portal. Once you are authenticated, the system determines the systems to which you have access according to assigned roles and your affiliation with the University. As a staff member, you will be assigned roles that are appropriate to your job function and will allow you to access for those services necessary to conduct your day-to-day job duties. If you are also a student, you will also have access to Banner student services, such as holds, viewing grades, registration etc. Today you may

have several login ids and passwords for the various systems you use, such as email IDMS, I-Tel, etc. that will be replaced by a single user identification and password. Single sign-on will take away the need for the user to enter further authentications when switching from one application to the other.

How can we find out more about Luminis portal?

- The Luminis implementation project has a web page at [luminis.unm.edu](http://luminis.unm.edu). Also, at the bottom of the web page is information for how to subscribe to a listserv where project updates are posted. Many other mediums will be used including Campus News, News Minute and Inside UNM.

## **Security**

Who will be in charge of security and compliance with FERPA, HIPAA, GLB, VISA and will we hire a security officer?

- As emphasized in the LINK meeting, everyone has some responsibility for security. Users who have access to sensitive student, health, financial and xxx data must protect access. The overall HIPAA effort is being driven through HSC, under the leadership of Saundra Brown-Savoy, Associate VP for Compliance and Regulatory Affairs. FERPA falls under the Registrar's Office. GLB compliance is being managed by Raquel (Raqui) Martinez. VISA will be covered under GLB compliance.
- From the underlying systems security standpoint, there are two people in CIRT who act as campus security coordinators, Jeff Gassaway and Nick Pappas. Now that we have a CIO, we will work on strengthening our policies and establishing standards that will apply to all systems management on campus. The hiring of a Security Officer will be delayed due to funding issues. Originally the Banner budget contained funding for this position, but the budget had to be trimmed and this position fell off.
- From a Banner security perspective, we are distributing security administration to the core offices responsible for those functions. As an example, in Finance, which is in production already, security is being managed by a central office within the Controller's Division. This office coordinates the regulatory and process requirements of all finance modules, including Purchasing, Higher Markets, Accounts Payable, Grants, Non-Student Accounts Receivable, Fixed Assets, and reporting. Mandatory training is considered in granting security, as are changes in job assignments and changes in job status. This process is facilitated by a UNM developed security application. This application is being reviewed by a central group of individuals across other systems being implemented, including Student, Financial Aid, and Human Resources. It is extremely important that experts in each of the areas define and maintain a process that is organized and compliant. The decisions that have been reached at this point are as follows: Finance and Human Resource Security will be managed and administered by Finance Systems Management. It is expected that a similar central office will be identified to manage the Student and Financial Aid Systems. All Security will be administrated in the UNM developed security application to provide a consistent approach to requesting and monitoring security.

## **Reporting**

Why does the ePrint function take longer than Hyperion in extracting reports by detail YTD?

- Because e-Print is using different technology for searching than does Hyperion. Changes are being made (over the next month or so) to that search method which will enable quicker presentation through e-Print.

Will the delays with getting Hyperion running affect the STAC or HR/Payroll projects?

- Not if the project continues on its current schedule of development and testing of reporting before go-live.

What decision has been made regarding Hyperion in light of its continued unreliability?

- We challenged the vendor to either make it work in our environment or face consequences. After many weeks of work with the vendor, we have completely re-installed the Hyperion environment, and are rolling out a much more reliable platform. We had determined that this would be the last ditch effort – either make it work or move on to another tool. The vendor has stepped up to the challenge and we are now confident it will mature into an excellent tool for all of campus.

## **Finance**

How fast can UNM dump Banner and get back to a user-friendly accounting package?

- As with anything new, there is an adjustment period to learning how to use the new technology. One of the primary differences between Banner and FRS is the number of users that have the authority to input transactions into the system. FRS was not without kinks; these were resolved over time just as the kinks in the Banner system will be. Fewer people had to deal with these issues in FRS, so there is definitely a wider impact with issues found in the Banner system. While SCT will be making enhancements to make the system easier to work with and UNM will continue to work on communications through such avenues as Fast Info (<http://fastinfo.unm.edu>), the Link Service Center, and online and classroom training (<http://www.unm.edu/~hrinfo/link.html>), we all will need to do our part to make the system a success. Banner is here to stay!

When will we have electronic signatures?

- Each individual that accesses Banner has a unique Net ID that is used to authenticate to the system. This Net ID serves more purposes than just allowing an individual to use Banner. The Net ID is a unique way of identifying an individual and the permissions the individual has within the system. The records associated with the Net ID are also used to identify approval authority. Because Banner electronically stores the Net ID with transactions that are initiated and/or approved by individuals, we have an electronic audit trail of all records within the system, including who initiated them and who approved them. Documents that are not completely integrated with the Banner system, such as Direct Pay Requests (DPRs), are being researched to reduce the need for paper signatures and to make the process more efficient.

What hope do we have that problems will be resolved and the grant process will actually run smoother than it did in the past?

- The Banner grant process is running smoother after a year in action. Knowledge base has increased and other operational processes are adapting to Banner.

What do journal vouchers update; general ledger only, or is it similar to a journal entry that updates everything-journals, reports, general ledger, etc.?

- The process for inputting a journal entry into the Banner system is to use the journal voucher form, FGAJVCQ. An entry done on this form can affect one or more of the ledgers: General Ledger, Operating Ledger, Encumbrance Ledger, and Grant Ledger.
- The three major determinants in which ledger(s) get updated are:
  - Account Code used - If a Balance Sheet Account code is used, such as Assets or Liabilities, only the General Ledger is updated. These Account Codes always begin with an “A” for Assets or an “L” for Liabilities. If an Income Statement Account Code is used, such as Revenue, Expenses, and Intra University Activity (Allocations, Transfers, Balance Forwards), then the Operating Ledger is updated to record the current year activity. The General Ledger is also updated with what is called “indirect updates”. That is, if revenue is posted to the operating ledger, then there is an indirect update to Revenue Control and Claim on Cash in the General Ledger. Revenue control is simply a record in the balance sheet that summarizes all of the current year revenue that has been recorded in the operating ledger, by Fund. Claim on Cash represents the amount of money either due to the Bank Fund (as is the case with expenses) or due from the Bank Fund (as is the case with revenues). The Bank Fund stores the actual cash that we have in the Bank as a University. Claim on Cash tells us to which fund the money belongs.
  - Whether the Fund is tied to a Grant - If an index is a Contract, Grant, or Project Accounting String, then the Fund is associated with a Grant Code when it is set up. When any Income Statement Activity is posted to such an index, the Inception to Date information is automatically updated within the Grant Ledger just as it is updated within the Operating Ledger. This is how we are able to do Inception to Date reporting on Grants.
  - Rule Class Code used - If an encumbrance rule class code is used, as in the creating of a General Encumbrance, the Encumbrance ledger will get updated in addition to the other ledgers identified above. The encumbrance ledger is the detail of the encumbrance and maintains the original encumbrance and encumbrance adjustments and liquidations.
- All the activity referred to above affects reporting, whether it is a Grant Inception to Date Report, an Income Statement Report, or a Balance Sheet Report. Reporting is one of the main reasons that a good accounting system stores the information in this fashion.

Why doesn't UNM have a central travel office for booking, paying and billing for travel?

- Any large administration is always trying to balance cost savings and control with the speed and flexibility. The business travel needs of UNM faculty and staff vary widely and our administration has chosen to issue policies that govern travel purchases, but also allow for speed and flexibility when necessary. The UNM Purchasing department can provide assistance to any Department with hotel and airline reservations please go to the Purchasing Department website at <http://www.unm.edu/~purch/>, or contact Bruce Cherrin, UNM Director of Purchasing at [cherrin@unm.edu](mailto:cherrin@unm.edu)

If an index code has a negative balance, invoice billing cannot be generated no matter how much money is owed by a contractor. This jeopardizes our ability to ever get paid. What can be done to modify this practice?

- If this was your question, more information is needed before we can truly answer it. Specifically what Index code with a negative balance? A contract or grant? An I&G Index? Who would we invoice? (Contact Ava Lovell in the Controllers Office.)

When will the full version of LINK Finance with a real-time processing be available?

- Processing in Banner DOES occur real time! This is facilitated by two processes, Posting and Approvals, running in Sleep/Wake mode. That is, every couple of minutes, a process is kicked off to advance completed documents through the approval queues and ultimately to posting when the approvals have been received. The human intervention that is required is: First the document has to be initiated and completed and; second, the document has to be approved by all the necessary individuals. Some processes are not completely part of this real time procedure. Human Resources, Telecommunications, Banner Use Fee, Bookstore, and other large feeds are posted in Batch during the evening to minimize the impact on resources. The Direct Pay Invoice (DPI) is dependent on central accounting receiving a Direct Pay Request (DPR) with signatures, before it will be approved and posted.

When will more vendors be available on Higher Markets?

- We are currently in the process of enabling electronic catalogs for Dell Computers, Apple Computers and Gateway Computers, which are targeted for availability by July 1, 2005. The Purchasing department continually evaluates vendors for enablement and welcomes recommendations from our end-users.

What new capabilities does Banner Finance give us that we didn't have before?

- Banner Finance allows us to capture and store more detailed information electronically, such as Initiator of an entry, approver(s) of an entry, scanned supporting documentation and vendor invoices. Not only does this cut back on filing space but it also makes the information easier to find and access for more people.
- Banner Finance has eliminated some of the double or triple entry that was previously being done, such as journal vouchers that were created by departments and re-keyed by central accounting. This helps to minimize mistakes in re-keying and also ensures that things are balanced before submitting for approvals.

- Banner Finance has brought us on-line purchasing capabilities from catalog vendor sites in Higher Markets.
- Although we have experienced growing pains with the new system, the reporting capabilities are starting to be realized with our new e-Print report FOX002 (Operating Ledger Summary) that allows users to quickly access data at the college level, department level, or index level. General Ledger Summary, Grant Ledger Summary, Transaction Detail, and Salary Projections and Labor and Benefits Distribution reports are all planned in this same format by the end of May.

When will payroll encumbrances be liquidated with each actual payroll posting?

- This is an issue that has been facing the University for quite some time. With FRS, it was less of an issue because by the time the monthly reports were generated, the liquidation of the entire month's salaries had already occurred. Since information is more accessible in Banner, it does pose a problem to have encumbrances still out there when some of the biweekly or student payrolls have already posted—the ledgers reflect both encumbrances and actual charges for the monthly payrolls that have already posted. We are currently reviewing the HRS feed process to identify a solution. Because the encumbrance feeds are coming from HRS, not Banner, the ideal solution may not be available until we go live with Banner Payroll/HR.

#### Non-Sufficient Funds Reject

- How can you make budget changes more straightforward before you hold us to a budget setup by central accounting?
  - Budgets are loaded to Banner for Unrestricted Indexes as a result of the Budget process that is currently underway. Departments are responsible for following the Budget Guidelines and creating the Budgets within their indexes. If a mistake is identified or if Budgets require adjusting, departments have access to a rule class code for submitting budget adjustments. In some cases, where either total revenue or total expense budget is being altered within an index, the department will need to work with the budget office directly. This is due to the fact that a change of this nature will result in a Budget Adjustment Request (BAR) to the Commission on Higher Education (CHE). Restricted budgets are input by the contract and grant offices based on the approved grant proposal that is also initiated by the department.
- What level will non-sufficient funds checking affect? Will NSF checking produce just warnings or absolute rejects? How will the NSF checking work with self supporting units?
  - In July 2005, Non-Sufficient funds checking will be set to reject for Instructional and General Funds at the College Level Organization Code (Org level 3). This means that if the total Instruction and General expense budget for the College, less the actual expenses posted or committed (encumbrances or reservations), does not leave sufficient funding for the transaction, then the transaction will not be allowed to be posted. This is

not being done at the individual index or specific account code at this time.

- No later than mid-year, this will be changed to look at the department-level organization (Org level 5) in Instruction and General. All other funds will continue to be checked with a warning. Eventually, it is expected that we will gradually implement non-sufficient funds reject in funds other than Instruction and General. To be effective, this will require budgeting to be done accurately in departmental indexes. For units that are self-supporting, a balanced budget will need to be input based on analysis of prior year earnings and expectations for the current year. These will need to be monitored extensively by the department to ensure that goals are being met, and revisions will be necessary should the situation change.

### Banner Tax

- Do funding agencies know that they are paying a Banner tax of 1% in addition to indirect costs?
  - Funding agencies are NOT paying anything in addition to the overhead rate specified in our indirect cost proposal. The 1% Banner usage fee is being deducted from that overhead amount.
- As of March 2005, \$1,224,643.00 has been charged in Banner tax. Will there be an accounting of the use of these funds?
  - An accounting of the funds collected via this usage fee and the use of those funds is a matter of public record and can be obtained by contacting Andrew Cullen ([acullen@unm.edu](mailto:acullen@unm.edu)).
- Will the Banner tax go up?
  - There is not now, nor has there ever been, any plan to increase the 1% Banner usage fee.
- Will it ever go away?
  - This 1% fee is being used to pay the recurring costs associated with Banner Finance. It will be used for the next 15-18 years for debt service on the bonds that were sold to finance that implementation and decisions regarding its continued existence and use after that point will be made at that time.

With regard to the following items what would you change about the implementation choices that were made, if you could?

- No sight recognition
  - Sight recognition is included in our Chart of Account element codes. For example, all Index and Activity codes begin with the same three digits of the Department's level 5 org code, all Main campus funds start with "2," HSC "3," etc. Account codes have sight recognition within their ranges, Revenues begin with "0" or "1," salary and benefits expense begin with "2," assets begin with "A," etc. The one Chart of Account element code that has little sight recognition is the Organization code.
- No parallel system running for implementation.

- Due to the massive size of the Banner Finance Implementation and the lack of resources to properly backfill production positions, a decision was made not to run a complete parallel test. Instead, individual implementation teams tested specific processes and transactions throughout the implementation. These tests included a number of users and pilot groups from the campus community. The testing culminated in an integration testing scenario completed in April before go-live that evaluated all aspects of the Banner Finance System.
- Going live before people were trained
  - Many people across campus took the opportunity to complete the needed training prior to go-live. Feedback from the brown bag sessions conducted after the first few months of training suggests additional communications of the importance of training was needed. Also, communicating the importance of completing required online classes prior to Banner labs sign-up may have lessened confusion about required pre-requisites for the hands on labs.
- Going live without any trained specialists in the departments
  - Over 1400 people were trained prior to July 1 go-live. Each department was encouraged to ensure at least one or two people were trained in their area prior to implementation. Unfortunately, people were not able to take time to practice what they learned between the time they completed training and July 1. A suggested change would be the development of online practice or 'refresher' courses allowing individuals to repeat portions of the classroom training on-demand. The online training would have helped reinforce topics taught in the labs in a condensed amount of time.
- Implementing Higher Markets simultaneously with Banner
  - We would not change our decision to implement Higher Markets simultaneously with Banner because implementing one without the other would not have been true to our Guiding Principles. In the evaluation and selection of the University's ERP, one of the key critical UNM requirements was the delivery of an eProcurement system. Although SCT Banner and SciQuest HigherMarkets are different applications, their partnership has produced a fully integrated, web-based and catalog-oriented electronic requisitioning system that was considered more user-friendly than what was available with Banner requisitioning as a stand-alone product. With this eProcurement functionality, users have single sign-on access to electronic catalogs for University contracted vendors, easier access to preferred suppliers and University contract pricing as well as electronic requisitioning capabilities for all external purchases and internal requisitioning with select internal service providers (ChemStores).
- Implementing commodity codes at the same time as Banner
  - With the implementation of Banner, commodity codes were required in the system and had to be developed for the following reasons:
    - To assist with identifying purchases at a general level

- To electronically route approved Requisitions to appropriate Buyers for processing
  - For reporting and tracking capabilities of hazardous/radioactive materials for SHEA
- The list of commodity codes was designed to be general and was purposefully limited to a small number to avoid an end user having to search through a list of thousands of codes.
- Changing organization codes instead of trying to integrate old ones
  - The needs of the University had surpassed the capabilities of the old Organization code structure because it was non-hierarchical and built on ranges. As an example, several years ago the School of Medicine began utilizing an attribute (Unit Code) associated with their organization codes in both the Human Resources System (HRS) and the Finance System (FRS), to properly categorize all of the divisions within a department. There simply were not enough ranges left to meet this need in the old organization structure. One problem with this is that there were multiple “master lists” of the meaning of the department code/unit code combinations that needed to be maintained and kept current. The hierarchical nature of the Banner Organization Structure provides much more flexibility to meet the needs of a growing University. When fully understood and properly utilized, this creates a powerful information gathering mechanism for roll up and drill down reporting. The new bookmarked E-Print Reports that are planned to be complete by the May Month End close, illustrate the benefit of the hierarchical structure with search options. In the month end repository, fme\_banp –Finance Month End Banner – Production (banp), this can be seen with the FOX0002 report (Operating Ledger Summary Through the End of March 2005). For information on how to use this report, check out the online training material available on the EOD website. The Course is “FIN RP 101 Primary E-Print Monthly Report On-line training”.
  - That being said, the two largest complaints about the new organization structure are:
    - The loss of sight recognition - This presents the largest problem while we are half paper and half electronic. Taking advantage of the hierarchies is best done when the information is being stored electronically. It does pose a problem for the storing of paper documents and the routing of mail. This is being overcome in part by the refinement of the Mail Stop Code and the further utilization of it in areas such as Payroll Remittances for distribution to campus.
    - The number of new organization codes - While a large number of the organization codes are very useful and appropriate, there are many that could use refining. One measure that is being taken to help clear this up. Finance Systems Management is working with a pilot College to review and refine Organization Codes. Soon, they will be arranging meetings with other Colleges, Branches, and Administrative areas. Better definitions of an “Organization,” as well as other Chart Segments, are being developed as a result of this process and to assist in it.

- Changing sub codes instead of enhancing old ones
  - The major issue with the old FRS sub codes was that they were inconsistently used and often times were user-defined in the wrong categories. Many of the user-defined sub codes either did not have descriptions or were redundant of sub codes that already existed. The approach that was taken was to identify the major categories that were in use and place these as Banner Account Codes. There is room for expansion, but this is being handled on a request basis to avoid creating duplicative and unnecessary account codes, as much as possible.
  
- Using “I,” “E,” and “O” in organization codes index numbers account numbers and funds
  - Certain letters and numbers utilized in Chart Segments have definitely presented issues in terms of the ability to differentiate (as in the letter “I” versus the number “1”). Also, when exported to Excel, codes beginning with “0”s or the letter “E” tend to present unique challenges that are caused by the Oracle database language that Banner runs on. We are reviewing these codes and will propose a plan to change the most difficult offenders in areas where they most often cause problems, such as the Account Code.
  
- Pushing responsibility to the “lowest levels”
  - It is simply a good business practice to have decision-making and responsibility for those decisions located as close to the source of business information as possible. For many years, we have maintained large, centralized core administrative offices upon which we have depended to catch our mistakes and clean up our documentation and enter our information into a data system. This relieved us from having to understand lots of details and how to work with that system, but kept all of us locked in a situation that no one really liked. The shift to decentralized responsibility, data entry and accountability will not be easy for either group, but we remain confident that it is the right thing to do for the long term.
  
- Asking supervisors and managers to wait before signing up for training so that “end users” could attend sessions first
  - We had little choice when the number of initiators that needed to be trained began to strain our ability to deliver training. In hindsight, it might have been beneficial to have some other type of training, besides hands on, for the managers and supervisors of the actual initiators.
  
- Going live before reports were available
  - The reporting situation was definitely a major issue relative to the Finance implementation. Numerous factors had an impact on the ability to utilize the Banner tools, such as E-Print and Hyperion, to deliver, in a timely fashion, summary and detailed information that departments could rely on. While the Banner forms always allowed access to the information, the lack of familiar reports brought a major hardship to campus. A major initiative was kicked off in January to resolve the technical issues that we were experiencing with Hyperion, the data integrity and refresh issues we were

experiencing with the Operational Data Store (ODS), and the reconciliation processes and problem resolution that were necessary to deliver quality reports. Due to the combined efforts of CIRT, Finance Systems Management, and countless others in the campus community, many of these issues have been resolved. The following are now available:

- Finance Hyperion Reports:
  - FOH0001&2 Operating Ledger Detail and Summary
  - FRH0001&2 Grant Ledger Detail and Summary
  - FGH0001&2 General Ledger Detail and Summary
  - FSH0001 Payroll and Payroll Benefits Distribution Detail
  - FRH0001 F&A Generated by PI
- Finance E-Print Reports Available:
  - FGE0001 General Ledger Transaction Detail
  - FGE0002 General Ledger Summary by Fund
  - FOE0001 Operating Ledger Detail
  - FOE0002 Operating Ledger Summary
  - FRE0001 Contract and Grant Detail by Index
  - FRE0001D Contract and Grant Detail by Index for Dept Use
  - FRE0002 Contract and Grant Summary
  - FRE0002D Contract and Grant Summary for Dept Use
  - FSE0001 Payroll and Payroll Benefits Distribution Detail
  - FSE0004 Salary Projections

We are now situated with reports where we should have been with the July 1, 2004 go-live. Continual improvement and expansion of reporting remains a top initiative.

### Audits

I am a professor running a lab of eight to ten students and a student program through the NIH that supports 27 people including graduate and undergraduate students. Banner has been an accounting nightmare. What could or would UNM do if the NIH were to audit our accounts right now? I am concerned about being audited. What are we doing to avoid disruptive audits?

- UNM has been or is being audited for FY05 by various federal organizations and other external auditors. This is a mandated control feature for Universities both from a general management perspective as well as for funding-source specific requirements. There have been no material findings regarding financial accounting of transactions for grants.

### Internal Processes

General Accounting is so backed up with direct pay requests that it is taking a long time for individuals to be reimbursed and causing them to accrue interest on their personal credit cards. Is there a way to speed up the travel reimbursement process?

- General Accounting currently has a turnaround time of approximately 5-6 days. In “pre-Banner” days, this may have been closer to 2-3 days. However, then, the document also had to be routed to Accounts Payable for keying into the system, which was generally another 1-3 days. After that, a check had to be processed, mailed, and received. This took up to another week or more before the payee received payment. Now, after

General Accounting review, the document is routed electronically to A/P for payment, and with the direct deposit option, the payee will generally receive payment directly in their bank account 1-3 days after General Accounting has approved the document.

- Looking at the whole picture, employees will generally receive payment 7-10 days after their document is received in General Accounting, compared to 10-12 days previously.
- In addition to the overall quicker payment, we are looking at process improvements that will cut down on the review time in Accounting. This includes integrating the creation of the DPR with Banner, so that the DPR will create the DPI. This will eliminate double data entry for the departments, and double review for Accounting. In the interim, a report has been developed for use by the Accounting offices, so that their review of the DPI is faster and more efficient.

Finance procedures are much, much more rigid than pre-Banner. This is in direct conflict with the first guiding principle for LINK. When will the procedures become responsive to user's needs?

The guiding principles of Project Link are:

- The needs of our process users must drive our process and systems design. This "Service 1st" commitment means that our processes must first meet the customer's needs and second accommodate the regulatory and control needs of the University.
- Decision-making must be pushed to the lowest appropriate level in the organization where accountability will be enforced. Reporting of these decisions must be available up to the highest levels of the organization.
- The overall effectiveness and organizational impact of our processes must supersede the needs or desires of any one functional area within a process.
- We must understand how and why individual users benefit from our processes.
- We must increase the efficiency of our administrative procedures.
- Process interfaces must be as simple and user friendly as possible for our customers.
- Our processes must easily accommodate future growth and changing business demands.
- Timeliness of transaction processing must be a major indicator of success in every process.
- The number of administrative reviews and approvals will be decreased to the lowest possible number consistent with sound stewardship.
- Data will be electronically captured at the earliest reasonable point in every process.

All of these principles were taken into consideration during the Banner Finance Implementation. In many cases, procedures were modified to accommodate the needs of the institution. The other caveat that governed Project Link was to implement a "Vanilla" system, without the extraordinary amount of system modifications that we have had in our previous systems. This allows us to have a maintenance contract on the Banner system and provides for long-term sustainability. While not all of the processes in place maximize the efficiencies that we would

expect, we are working both internally, as a campus community, and with SCT, as a business partner, to address some of these issues. It is a balance of technological feasibility, compliance, internal control, and pushing authority and responsibility to the appropriate level. It will be a gradual process to address all of the needs—one that will be ongoing and require the commitment of both administration and users of the system. If you have particular areas of concern—please get this information to the Link Service Center so that the issue can be routed to the appropriate area.

- Purchasing transactions seem to be getting bogged down at the General Accounting office. Some documents are taking two weeks to go through the approval process and longer if something is incorrect on the document. Are these issues being addressed?
  - General Accounting consistently has a very low number of Requisitions in its queue, and these are generally processed within 2-3 days. Requisitions that require a PSPQ are held up until it is received. We are currently in the process of revising the PSPQ procedure, to allow a payee to be classified as a “Universal Service Provider”. This will allow all departments using a particular vendor to rely on a previously obtained PSPQ (or SPQ, as it will be known), when the same types of services are being procured. This will help reduce the time that PRs are help up waiting for a PSPQ.

When will the departments actually see a decrease in the use of paper?

- This is a difficult question to answer. When the University first signed the contract with SCT to purchase the Banner System we received electronic system documentation. Being a University that embraces paper, our first step was to print out the documentation into a number of color-coded and tabulated binders. This is just one example of the culture change that is required to see a decrease in the use of paper. Some of it will go away when we integrate some of our paper processes into Banner, such as the Direct Pay Request (DPR). Others already have the potential to minimize, with Electronic Purchase Requisitions, Electronic Purchase Orders, Electronic Journal Vouchers, and Electronic Reports. However, it is in our nature to print these out regardless of their availability on-line. We should not expect this reliance to go away overnight. However, as we become more comfortable with the integrity of electronically stored documents and we improve our procedures and ability to capture and store more of the vital information, we should see a gradual downturn in the necessity to print out everything.

Changes to organization codes impact the University Library’s ability to validate users into their electronic resources. How can we coordinate these changes?

- If the validation is being done electronically, there are already entities that have successfully utilized the Banner Hierarchy data to capture what they need. One example is the Electronic PAN. We provided the information necessary for the HR programmer to have the document tell the end user where to route the PAN based on the fund hierarchy. The end user would not care about all the details, just that it needed to go to General Accounting. Based on follow up that has occurred since the forum, it is

my understanding that the University Libraries need to identify which organizations are Branches. This could be very easily accommodated, as each Branch has a unique level 3 Organization Code. For non-electronic purposes, a daily report is run of the Organizational Hierarchy. It is available in E-Print in the fin\_banp –Finance Banner – Production (banp) repository. It is called FGRORGH Organization Hierarchy Report, and includes information such as effective date and termination date, where applicable.

Is it possible to have a parallel system so those of us managing grants can really know what is in an account? There is not a report or screen in Banner that can help a principal investigator understand how much is left to spend of a grant or contract because revenue equals expense is and the balance is always zero. Banner form FRGTBIL is not acceptable when as an accountant I cannot even understand it.

- The Banner Grant Module is an integrated component of the Banner Finance System, and maintains detailed grant inception-to-date information. FRIGITD is the form in Banner that shows revenue and expenses. The money left to spend on a grant is based on the budget available. Most sponsored projects are budget driven and inception to date based on the awarded amount. By utilizing this form, as well as the reports available in Hyperion and E-print, PI's can utilize summary and detailed information to manage individual grants.

Why don't we have a report where we can easily access beginning and ending dates of a grant award?

- This can be readily found on the form FRAGRNT in Banner in the Project Period fields. It is also in the header of the Grant Summary report available in e-Print in the month end repository, fme\_banp –Finance Month End Banner – Production (banp). The report is FRX0002 Contract and Grant Summary by Index.

On ePrint, when you click the drill icon, it gives you the previous reports, but it doesn't tell you which ones they are. Can this be clarified?

- This has been an e-Print constraint that we have to overcome. You will note that the newest, searchable report in the month end repository, FOX0002, identifies the month of reporting in the title. This is something that we plan to further deploy in other month end reports.

Can you produce a year to date transaction detail report in ePrint similar toFOX0002A?

- Absolutely. We began creating the e-Print reports back in February when it was realized that Hyperion performance issues were making it difficult for departments to do their jobs. The e-Print solution still posed problems because of the massive size of the data and the fact that departments had to open the entire PDF document to search for their data. In a collaborative meeting with NMSU, we discovered that by creating the report a different way, we could utilize the automatic book-marking and search functions of e-Print, as you have seen with FOX0002. To deliver reports in this format requires that they be rewritten. We are actively working on the following and hope to have available for the May month end close: Grant Ledger Summary, General Ledger Summary, Operating

Ledger Year to Date Detail, Grant Ledger Inception to Date Detail, General Ledger Detail, Salary Projections, Labor and Benefits Distribution.

What's the reason that totals were taken off of reports in finance?

- Totals by index do exist in the reports. Please contact the service center if you have a specific question about a problem in a particular report.

Can the document history list be sorted by payee?

- Most Banner forms have a default sort order that cannot be altered without reprogramming. That being said, a lot of the Forms offer export capability. For example, if you want to get all the "Actual" revenues and expenses posted to your index, follow these steps:
  1. Go to form FGITRND
  2. Type in your index and hit next block
  3. Go to the field "FLD" and type YTD (this will only return "Actuals," not budgets or encumbrances).
  4. Process Query.
  5. When the data is returned, select from the Menu bar "HELP" and then "Extract Data No Key"
  6. When the prompt comes up to open or save, select "OPEN"
  7. The information is now in EXCEL and can be sorted, subtotaled, and/or saved.

If you have any difficulties with this or if things don't go as described, please contact the LINK Service Center for assistance.

Is there a way to get finance information, real time, out of Banner without having to do reports?

- Absolutely. There are a number of screens that allow roll-up and drill down gathering of Finance Information. Some popular ones are:
  - FGIBDST Organizational Budget Status Form (Operating Ledger Summary).
  - FGITRND Detail Transaction Activity Form (Operating Ledger Transaction Detail).
  - FGITBAL General Ledger Trial Balance Form (General Ledger Summary).
  - FGIGLAC General Ledger Activity Form (General Ledger Detail Transactions).
  - FRIGITD Grant Inception to Date Form (Grant Summary).
  - FRIGRTD Grant Transaction Detail Form (Grant Detail Transactions).

These forms also offer export capability of the data to a comma separated value file (CSV) that is readable in Excel.

Why do you condone secondary recordkeeping if Banner really works?

- In communications during implementation the Project tried to emphasize that Banner was intended to alleviate (not eliminate) the need for "Shadow Systems". Expectations were poorly managed in this area, and many departments were expecting that they could shut off their Shadow Systems on go-live. There are

many reasons why a Shadow System may be appropriate for a Department. However, it is equally important that these systems be reconcilable to the Banner Finance System, as this is the database of record. Some of the reasons include:

1. Cost Accounting is typically very specific to an organization's operations. SCT does have a cost accounting module—but it does not and cannot meet the specific needs of a diverse group of business operations.
2. Using the Banner Finance System to record an extremely detailed accounting for financial activity is do-able; however, it requires the following:
  - a. Knowledge of the accounting breakout prior to inputting the transaction
  - b. Timely posting of any correcting entries
  - c. Departmental and Central Accounting approvals of these entries

Departments that attempted to do this realized a significant increase in lag time in order to purchase and to report timely information to management. With a Shadow System the department could make detailed break outs after the fact, requiring no system approvals, and did not run against the posting period constraints. This approach did not slow down the purchasing process.

A number of factors need to be considered in evaluating the appropriate level of detail to record in the Finance System. This has to be balanced with the type of business that the department conducts, the efficiency of operations, and the resources available.

When will there be training in Hyperion for accessing data, producing summary reports and tracking expenses etc?

- A project began in January with Finance Systems Management and Continuing Education to develop a curriculum that would use real finance data to conduct the training from the ground up. The proposed approach is a tiered approach in which users would complete one or more of the following, in order:
  1. Learn of the existing tools (e-Print, on-line forms, canned Hyperion reports, etc.) to get financial information. This would include finding, using, and understanding this information.
  2. Learn how the information in the Operational Data Store relates to the information stored in Banner, including how it is reconciled.
  3. Learn how to develop your own queries using Hyperion.
  4. Learn how to develop your own reports using Hyperion.
- Due to the reconciliation issues that began shortly after this project started, as well as the need to create a new delivery method for the large batch reports, this process was temporarily put on hold. We want to ensure that we have a stable reporting environment before proceeding with the training, and we need our most capable resources to ensure that this happens. The training curriculum will be

revisited Summer of 2005 to ensure that we can begin to offer these much needed classes.

Will Macintosh computers be compatible with Hyperion?

- Once we complete the stabilization of Hyperion, we will work to configure Hyperion to run on the Mac. This will be done using a “thin client” setup that doesn’t require Windows or a particular browser. With the Macs you will not be able to harness the compute power on your desktop for processing data, thus you will be supported by server processing.

How is the operational data store going to be capable of the increase in data with the human resources, student and financial aid systems coming on the system?

- The Oracle database, on which the ODS is based, is probably the most scalable database around. It requires careful systems administration (setting up search indexes, managing table spaces, etc.) and good hardware sizing. With this kind of tuning, we will be able to ramp up for students. If the project goes as planned, this will be done before rollout.

### **Student and Academic**

How are academic people being identified and what kind of controls will be available to advisers?

- Banner will allow individuals to be identified as faculty, advisor or both. Roles will be assigned based on job duties and responsibilities. Instructors will be able to post-grades and access course information including student lists via the web. Advisor functionality will include access to students' academic history and status as well as degree audit via a web-interface.

Can anyone assure us that Banner student is going to make the jobs of faculty easier? For example P-Card implementation is much harder on the faculty than the old way.

- The goal of Banner Student/Academic is to improve the way we (staff, faculty, UNM as a whole) work with students from the time they consider applying here until the day they graduate. Toward that end, we're implementing several modules that faculty members will use, and -- we hope -- will quickly find to be efficient and effective tools for handling the administrative end of working with students. For example, Banner Student/Academic will implement at least one feature that UNM faculty have been requesting for decades: automatic pre- and co-requisite checking and enforcement. Thus, the time and effort that often goes into managing a course with ill-prepared students will be reduced. And, yes, faculty members will be able to admit students by exception even if they don't have the necessary pre- and co-reqs.

Faculty members who are comfortable with web-based interfaces will likely find the Banner utilities to be easy to work with, particularly since Banner Student will go live in our new portal environment. Unlike Banner Finance, which we had to implement without the nice web interface, the remaining Banner pieces will take full advantage of the web interface. We are also committed to very serious "stress

testing" of the remaining pieces before we go live -- this step will help us avoid sluggish response times that can cripple even a good system.

As with our current systems, UNM faculty will remain responsible for handling students' requests to add/drop a course, assigning grades at the end of the course, and determining the right co- and pre-requisites for each course. In addition, Banner (together with the upgraded degree audit system) has features that empower students to track their own progress and thus shift the advising function from bookkeeping focused to advising-focused.

Even with these improvements, we do expect that faculty members will require some time to learn the ins and outs of the new system. We are working hard to implement an intuitive system and to develop clear, practical training that can be available when and where faculty members need it. We share your concern to minimize the disruption, and we seek and welcome faculty participation in designing the content and the strategy for deploying it.

Finally, as we approach each important LINK Student/Academic decision, we look to your faculty rep (Laurie Schatzberg, [laurie@mgt.unm.edu](mailto:laurie@mgt.unm.edu)) to help get the requests for input out to faculty members across campus. Please contact her if you'd like to be part of her virtual academic advisory group. There are no meetings, but you'll be among the first to be asked to participate in the decision process.

Will departments be receiving student applications or at least copies once Banner is implemented?

- Current admissions businesses process will continue in that applications for admissions will be both paper and web-based. With the appropriate security access, departmental personnel can continue to view the application information on Banner.

Currently students must submit a Dissertation Committee Form to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval. OGS checks to see if the faculty is approved for dissertation committees. Will a student or the departments be able to do this on line with an automatic check?

- For those faculty that are eligible to be on a dissertation committee, an attribute will be added to the appropriate "faculty profile." A report will be generated listing those faculty members that are eligible for dissertation committees. Departments will have access to this report. Students will not have direct access to this information. The information will need to be obtained from the departments.

What differences will students notice when the student system goes live?

- Students will have new web-based tools to manage their learning and administrative business goals more independently, efficiently, and effectively. The deployment of Banner Student Self Service will provide online access to students' account information as well as various academic advisement and registration functions. This will be accessible in a single location as part of the University's new portal.

What is being planned specifically to help the Student and Financial Aid implementations go more smoothly than the Finance implementation, and with less stress to the University?

- LINK STAC has had the benefit of learning several lessons from the Finance implementation including: 1) developing a richer menu of training approaches and delivering this training to our core offices much earlier, 2) preparing formal standard operating procedures for various academic and student services processes early in the implementation to support testing and training, 3) including our core offices in the actual testing of the Banner Student product from the earliest stages of testing, 4) working to plan LINK Service Center support activities much earlier, and 5) actively reaching out to academic units in the Health Sciences Center and the branches to make certain their unique needs are incorporated into all components of the implementation.

### **Financial Aid**

Banner index 408092L387XX is Unapplied Credit B. How is it used? On screen 403 (FAM) this is constant for account 2. Banner index 408093 is System Clearing BR. How is this account used? This Banner index appears on the FR11 (interface) between FAM, business office and Banner.

- The credit account of unapplied credit is used on financial aid credits to book a liability on the financial system. A credit on a student's account is a liability for the institution until a refund is issued to the student. At the time a refund is issued, the system debits the unapplied credit and credits cash, eliminating the credit on the student's account.
- The System clearing account is an internal balancing account for the Billing and Receivable system. It's used to reconcile transactions that are posting to BRS from Cashiers, 3<sup>rd</sup> party, ITEL, etc. It is monitored by Bursar staff to make sure the system is posting correctly.

In the Banner system, will there be an interface report or file that we in Financial Aid can use to aid us in reconciling FAM and Banner?

- It is important to note that Banner Financial Aid will start with the 2006-2007 Award Year. We will close out the 2005-2006 year in the FAM System. So, for a period of time in 2006, we will be using both the FAM and Banner FA systems but not for the same award year processing. This simplifies our reconciliation requirements.
- There are two parts of data reconciliation that we are addressing in the Banner Financial Aid implementation.
  - First, we will be verifying all data that is converted from FAM to Banner. This includes 10 years of award history data. We will only convert award data from years that are closed. The last award year in FAM (2005-2006) will not be converted until 2007.
  - Second, we are identifying the places where updates occur in FAM that also need to occur in Banner (like for one-time tracking requirements). In some cases we will build an automatic process to bring data over. Each process would include a report of data loaded to Banner. In some cases we will implement office procedures to make sure both systems are updated appropriately.

- We are also working on the development of reports to reconcile Banner FA with Banner AR and Banner Finance. We are not developing any reports to aid reconciliation between FAM and Banner Finance for years before 2006-2007.

What differences will the students notice when Financial Aid goes live?

- The real difference will be in the Self-Service component of the Financial Aid module, display through the Luminis Portal. Students will be able to access information regarding documentation still required to complete their financial aid application, and then link to the specific document or to a helpful web site directly. Students may access their own financial aid award and cost of attendance, by line item detail and campus, used to determine their eligibility. Financial Aid awards in Banner are by year rather than by term. However, we are working with other large Banner users to convince SunGard SCT to display awards by term in Self-Service. Students will also be able to track the progress of their own request for consideration of special circumstances, tribal needs analysis and petitions; Financial Aid Officers will be able to leave specific messages viewable to the student.

We are also planning to automate some of our manual processes - specifically, the ISIR data-load process, that should result in a quicker turn around of FAFSA corrections initiated by the Financial Aid Office, following the receipt of documentation from the student. We will also be able to better inform students about the timing of funds being available for pick-up (the availability of a disbursement check) at the Bursar's Cashiers offices.