

January 9, 2008

To: North Carolina Community College Presidents

From: North Carolina Community College Adult Educators' Association

Executive Summary: Issues related to Colleague

Members of the NCCCAEA board solicited input from their membership to include senior administrators, directors, registrars and front line staff to define those business requirements for continuing education most impacted by deficiency issues with Colleague.

In recognition of the efforts of the NCACCIA and NCSDA, the NCCCAEA supports a number of their issues and evaluations as presented in their memorandum to the NCACCIA/NCSDA Presidents, dated June 14, 2007. We would also like to take the opportunity to bring specific continuing education business issues to the table for consideration as discussions regarding possible strategies and recommendations are presented.

The NCCCAEA supports the high priority recommendations as presented in the aforementioned memorandum. Specifically:

- Combined Course Library (CCL) – we recognize that a committee has been formed to begin the business objectives and requirements of this function. Continuing Education representation has been present at these meetings and will continue to provide input for areas that impact CE business objectives/requirements.
- Data Report Catalog and Indexing – the issues of resolving report errors are key within the CE objectives. An inordinate amount of time is spent at various levels resolving report errors and data inconsistencies between reports of supposedly like data fields. Report errors impact FTE submissions to the system office as well as locally required college reports.

Additional high priority recommendations specific to Continuing Education impact several key areas including audit issues, finance, course implementation and productivity.

Audit Issues:

Data Integrity – Due to the inability of the system to push data from various related tables, it is necessary for significant manual correction of student and course records. Data integrity is also compromised by when inputs are not correctly recorded to the appropriate table. These scenarios require significant staff time to monitor, investigate and correct.

Administrative Code – Specific to captive courses the current system is not designed to adjust for administrative code guidelines for the set up of these courses. This creates a situation where it is possible to over report contact hours for FTE within these courses.

Finance Issues:

Fees and Refunds – Additional fees and continuing education refunds are not processed correctly without significant manual oversight and manipulation. It is possible to charge students inappropriate fees and to generate incorrect refunds.

Course Implementation:

Instant Enrollment – A key function for continuing education is not available. This is a significant hindrance to allowing online registration for CE courses.

Faculty pay roll – The system is not designed to accommodate the many variables of CE faculty. This creates an institutional situation of creating manual processes for contract creation and payment processes or not utilizing the system at all.

New courses – The process for creating new courses does not function. Continuing Education offices do not have the ability to generate a request for a new course and utilize the 90-day implementation window as defined by the Administrative Code.

Productivity:

Work around processes – The standard practice of developing significant work around processes is a negative impact to local colleges and the system as a whole. Where possible they should be unnecessary but best practices and support should be widely available.

Duplication of effort – Due to the absence of or limited functionality of several reports, all levels of staff find scenarios where efforts are duplicated both within and across work groups.

Training and support – Timely responses to help desk inquiries are key to support issues. Continuing education also requires relevant and timely training from individuals knowledgeable of the NC Community College system.

There are number of business requirements specific to the areas of Basic Skills that have been directly addressed by Randy Whitfield in a North Carolina Corrective Action Plan. These areas concern BSP requirements related to a management information system that meets the National Reporting System guidelines. The NCCCAEA fully supports this document in its entirety.

The NCCCAEA board and membership hope that the severity of the impact from these concerns on CE business requirements is seriously considered. If further information or clarification is required the full memorandum is available through the NCCCAEA board.