



CASE STUDY:

Simplifying the graduation application process

Campbell University saves students and staff time, improving their experience with Ellucian Ethos system integration

Located in North Carolina's Research Triangle, Campbell University serves 6,300 undergraduate and graduate students across four campuses. The institution holds two graduation ceremonies each year, in May and December.

Applying for graduation, however, was cumbersome, for both students and staff. Campbell University had separate graduation applications for each of its twelve schools.

Students either filled out their application electronically and printed a copy to submit or they printed out a blank copy to complete by hand. Then they hand delivered the paper copy to the administrative office for their degree program. If there were any mistakes, the application was rejected, and students had to repeat the process.

Once the application was submitted correctly, staff entered the information into a spreadsheet and manually scanned it into the content management system (CMS). Finally, the spreadsheets from each school were collected and compiled into one master spreadsheet at the main campus, and a graduation record for each student manually created. This process was repeated with each graduation cycle.

"The process was extremely labor intensive," said Josh Tate, programmer/analyst, Campbell University. "It had a lot of opportunities for mistakes. And it was not efficient. It was frustrating for our students."



CAMPBELL
UNIVERSITY

Enrollment

6,300 students

Campbell University is a private institution offering undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree programs across four campuses in North Carolina's Research Triangle.

Challenge

Streamline the graduation application process

Solution

Ellucian Ethos

Results

Gain efficiencies and improve the student experience by working across departments using system integration

Developing better system integration to improve processes

To streamline the graduation application process, Campbell wanted to create a single application that could be customized for each school and pre-populated with information pertinent to the student and degree program. This complex project involved multiple stakeholders, seamless system integration, and a heavy IT lift.

However, like many small and mid-size institutions, Campbell University has limited IT resources. Their small staff relied on point-to-point integrations to connect their enterprise resource planning (ERP) system with the third-party applications used by departments across campus. But those integrations were becoming unmanageable. They wanted to create a centralized hub that would better connect their systems.

To improve their system integration, Campbell adopted Ellucian Ethos, a platform that connects people, processes, and technology across the institution. The platform's APIs make campus data accessible, and their Ellucian Colleague® ERP delivers data changes that enable many systems to stay in sync.

"You only have to publish that change one time," said Tate. "It puts it up in the hub and whoever needs it can subscribe to it. It helped radically simplify our integrations."

This paved the way for IT to develop the new graduation application and bidirectionally integrate a third-party application, in this case, OnBase by Hyland, the CMS used by the registrar's office. IT created a form in the CMS and pulled data through the platform, including data unique to the university via the Ethos Extend module, to populate the form with pertinent information. IT also included a value within the form to provide transmission feedback, so they would know if the application was submitted successfully or not.

"Our previous process was missing a lot of elements," said Tate. "We had no feedback. We had no way of identifying the program that that student was part of."

Now, when students access the graduation application, the system identifies the student's degree program and fills out the form with the latest, pertinent information. The data hub keeps that information correct and up to date.

Gaining efficiencies that benefit students and staff

As with any major project, there was an upfront investment of time spent learning the platform and developing the graduation application. But that investment has saved time in the long run, for current and future system integration projects.

"I've spent more time maintaining the report side of it than the actual integration," said Tate. "The integration runs flawlessly."

Administrative staff have also benefited from the streamlined graduation application process. What used to take the registrar several days during each graduation cycle now takes minutes. And the number of applications that have to be reprocessed per cycle is only a handful.

"The savings to the student has been immeasurable, too," said Tate. "The students are happier. The process to them is a lot less complicated."

"The registrar would spend days, maybe weeks, compiling spreadsheets, which now happens in less than a minute."

JOSH TATE

Programmer/Analyst, Campbell University



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