



# PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

A Member of the Texas A&M University System

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OFFICE OF BUSINESS AFFAIRS MEMORANDUM No. FY06-16

Distributed via Campus Email

MEMO TO: University Faculty and Staff

FROM: Mary Lee Hodge  
Vice President for Business Affairs

RE: BENCHMARKS – Frequently Asked Questions

Below is list of frequently asked questions regarding our newly launched initiative BENCHMARKS.

**Q: WHAT IS BENCHMARKS?**

A: BENCHMARKS is about charting a new course for customer service standards for students, alumni, faculty, staff and administrators. The acronym for **B**anner is **E**ssential for **N**ecessary **C**Hanges – **M**aking **A**dvancements in **R**elationships, **K**nowledge and **S**ervices, the Banner software implementation project for PVAMU. Through the project, PVAMU will work to meet the definitions of a Benchmark: 1) A measured, “best-in-class” achievement; 2) a reference or measurement standard for comparison; 3) a performance level recognized as the standard of excellence for a specific business process.

**Q: WHAT IS BANNER®?**

A: Banner is an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) application developed specifically for higher education institutions by SunGard Higher Education Solutions (SHES). PVAMU will implement the Student, Financial Aid, Alumni and Workflow modules during the BENCHMARKS project.

**Q: HOW WILL BENCHMARKS AFFECT ME?**

A: Banner is a vastly improved system enhancing performance, availability and capability which will positively affect every member of the University community. BENCHMARKS is not an Information Technology project; it is an enterprise project, largely driven by user-stakeholders. Other institutions that have migrated to Banner consider it to be a significant improvement compared to SIS Plus. Individuals who presently use SIS Plus on a daily basis will be key players as we migrate to Banner.

**Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENCHMARKS PROJECT OBJECTIVES?**

A: The objectives of the BENCHMARKS Project are:

- Elimination of duplicate records and redundant data entry
- Easy access to information
- Refined business processes to include best practices for operational efficiencies

- Reduced annual maintenance costs
- Web-enabled processes accessible from anywhere and anytime
- Elimination of batch processing
- Improved system availability
- Completion of project on-time and on-budget

**Q: WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES TO MIGRATING FROM OUR SIS PLUS ENVIRONMENT?**

**A:** Banner provides:

- 24 x 7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) system access via the web (no batch processing window!)
- Improved security and privacy through a unique ID number for students, faculty, and staff that does not use the social security number
- Advanced system capabilities through point and click interfaces
- Improved capability for query access to basic data elements and reporting
- Enhanced tracking capabilities to analyze recruitment, registration, enrollment, and other processes
- Intuitive automated Workflow processes to trigger user notifications via email for the next step of process activity
- Integrated systems through an Oracle relational database making information available system-wide
- Increased speed, efficiency and reliability
- Provides a long term solution as SIS Plus is at the end of its lifecycle

**Q: WHAT OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION UTILIZE BANNER?**

**A:** Numerous major institutions including the University of Illinois, Oregon State University, Howard University, Princeton University and the Georgia University System have selected Banner as their ERP solution. All TAMUS institutions except for West Texas State University are in the process of migrating or have recently migrated from SIS Plus to Banner. Texas A&M University is currently evaluating an ERP solution and Banner is one of the two finalists.