

CSUN'S EPROCESS+ INITIATIVE: STREAMLINING AND IMPROVING PROCESSES THROUGHOUT THE CAMPUS

FOCUS ON EFFICIENCY

The CSU Northridge IT team is leading a successful digital transformation initiative, eProcess+, across departments at the university. The program includes collaboration, solicited feedback and thorough communication as numerous processes are automated, which saves time and resources.

CSUN's eProcess+ is a campuswide initiative using technology to digitally transform a variety of processes for students, faculty, and staff. The program leverages software applications such as Adobe Sign, myCSUNbox, OnBase, SOLAR, and others to make tasks more user-friendly and efficient.

The eProcess+ team within the Division of Information Technology is leading this initiative, and in the last year, the team has digitized several manual processes across various departments.

In spring 2019, CSUN hosted its first eProcess+ Showcase attended by faculty and staff to learn how the campus is using technology to digitally transform processes for the benefit of all constituencies. The event showcased the digital tools that employees may use to move papers out of file cabinets, minimize errors and simplify department-specific procedures. Following the event, several departments asked to automate their business processes.

One of the main challenges is managing the number of project requests, and the team uses a set of guiding principles to more efficiently fulfill requests:

- Elevate processes that are frequently used by students, faculty and staff
- Focus on the areas that are time sensitive and would have the largest impact on campus
- Prioritize projects that minimize or mitigate risk
- Meet the requirements mandated by The California State University and CSUN policies

QUANTIFICATION AND RESULTS

MILESTONES

Oct
2018

- Automated process for Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act form and memorandum of understanding form begins.

Feb
2019

- Technology software application access is requested.

Mar
2019

- Automated process for employee work schedule change form begins.

Apr
2019

- eProcess+ Showcase is held.
- Automated process for vendor data collection form begins.

A number of processes have launched with good results. For example, in the Office of Graduate Studies, 100 percent of the 65 master's programs now complete graduate course substitution forms within the new system. The impact is measured by the successful online integration and the reduction of errors, which is a result of the autofill feature within the electronic form. Processing time for this specific project is now one working day versus the previous three to five working days.

New users are able to get access to the technology software in a matter of hours and not days. The approval process is automated and saves a lot of time and paper.

IMPACT AND BENEFITS

Common feedback from clients is that "change is a good thing." The new digital processes are more efficient and save time; data errors and data loss are diminished. Clients also suggest additional opportunities where some of the same concepts may be applied.

Among the processes that are now automated are the Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act form, memoranda of understanding, technology software application access requests and removals, information security risk assessment, employee work schedule changes, vendor data collection and many others. Most of these projects have cross-campus collaboration and are embraced by all CSUN divisions.

PROJECT TEAM

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LESSONS LEARNED

1

Because many departments have several projects that are high on their priority lists, it is essential to develop an internal prioritization model. Within IT, the model has helped the team strategize and prioritize all campus projects by allocating time, resources and funds; the model also fosters trust and support from clients.

2

A common roadblock is the extension of the timeline during the testing phase. Before a solution goes in, meticulous internal testing is conducted followed by client testing. When in doubt, always plan for more testing time.

3

Proper documentation of the current process is essential.

4

Ensure buy-in from clients before development begins. Proper communication for the project's timeline, testing and go-live dates eases implementation.

FURTHER REFERENCES

CSUN IT eProcess+:

<https://www.csun.edu/it/eprocess>

CSUN IT eProcess+

Showcase:

<https://www.csun.edu/it/eprocess-showcase>