

Brandeis University Places Students at Heart of Workday Implementation

PROJECT MODERNIZES STUDENT EXPERIENCE, SUPPORTS DIVERSE EDUCATIONAL JOURNEYS

Located outside Boston, Brandeis University is a Carnegie Tier-One Research (R1) institution with global reach and a commitment to cross-disciplinary learning. Nearly half of its 3,500+ undergraduates study more than one major, often in disparate fields.

In practical terms, majoring in more than one field of study means that students must work with multiple departments, sometimes on opposite ends of campus, to complete administrative and academic tasks. To streamline processes and support service excellence, Brandeis began collaborating with Huron in 2019 to migrate its student information system from PeopleSoft Campus Solutions to Workday Student — becoming one of the first R1 institutions to do so.

The goals of the engagement were lofty: to develop a more holistic community for all students, improve the student experience, and encourage student success by removing administrative barriers. The new system, Workday@Brandeis, achieves these goals by providing students with 24/7 mobile access to personal data and tasks related to registration, advising, financial aid, and more. It also gives faculty and staff, the partners on students' educational journeys, the ability to efficiently perform vital tasks and access student information online through any device.

Processes Transformed by Workday@Brandeis

Students

- View and manage personal information
- Register for, add, or drop classes
- View class schedules and grades
- Access financial aid

Faculty

- View student information
- Find course schedules
- Check enrollment and class rosters
- Enter and change final grades

Staff

- View student information
- Check degree progress
- Review student financial accounts
- View and manage holds

Figure 1. Source: [Brandeis University](#)

Enabling tasks which were previously conducted by different offices on campus was a game changer for students, faculty, and staff; see figure 1. It improved workflow and reduced time spent on “back and forth” coordination among these offices: time that could instead be spent on supporting students on their educational journey.

Cross Campus Collaboration

Based on experience deploying Workday HCM and Finance before bringing Huron on board, Brandeis understood that change management and collaboration across campus — with students at the core — would be vital to a successful implementation.

Previously, each of Brandeis's five schools customized its legacy student information system independently, making it difficult to share information consistently. To break down these siloes, Brandeis facilitated a series of interviews and focus groups with academic, administrative, and IT departments from each of its five schools and established a university wide governance and decision-making system to drive project goals and outcomes. It also gave students a large share of voice in the process.

“Students played a prominent role, from planning and development to adopting new processes and protocols,” said Raghu Chagarlamudi, Managing Director at Huron. “We formed a Student Change Network of about 30 students, including the student union president, to test the new system and share updates with the campus via social media.” Marrying faculty and staff input with student involvement led to better-informed workstreams that helped reduce risks and accelerate the project.

In addition to the volunteer network, several students were employed as paid interns and provided the same training and experience as Huron analysts. Two of those interns were hired as full-time consultants upon graduation.

Change Management Led the Way

According to Jim La Creta, Chief Information Officer at Brandeis, this boots-on-the-ground attention to detail and a cooperative spirit helped foster a high level of trust between the university and Huron teams, even when they had to transition to remote operations during the pandemic.

“Even though we completed the project remotely because of COVID-19, there was a connection to the Huron folks and our folks that I think is invaluable,” said La Creta. “Also, the consistency of keeping the Huron team that was there on day one right to the end of go-live was important.”

He attributes much of the project's success to Huron's technical expertise and sophisticated approach to change management, as discussed in [this video](#).

The new Workday-powered system was launched in time for the 2021 – 2022 academic year during the height of the pandemic. “The timing pushed us think through ways to deliver services that don't require on-campus staffing or processes,” said Ryan Knickerbocker, senior director at Huron.

Managed Services

Since then, Huron has continued to work on the university's production support activities, including remediating business processes, providing industry and Workday best practices, and expanding the system's functionality, as shown in Figure 2. For example, the team is among the first to create custom applications for higher education institutions utilizing Workday Extend, a collection of tools that enable organizations to create and manage new applications that operate within the existing Workday Financial Management, Workday Human Capital Management (HCM), and Workday Student frameworks.

Lasting Impact

This adaptive approach and the ongoing improvement and evolution of Workday@Brandeis will continue to support the university's motivated, intellectually curious students, no matter how many degrees they pursue.



huronconsultinggroup.com

© 2022 Huron Consulting Group Inc. and affiliates. Huron is a global consultancy and not a CPA firm, and does not provide attest services, audits, or other engagements in accordance with standards established by the AICPA or auditing standards promulgated by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board ("PCAOB"). Huron is not a law firm; it does not offer, and is not authorized to provide, legal advice or counseling in any jurisdiction. 23-3231

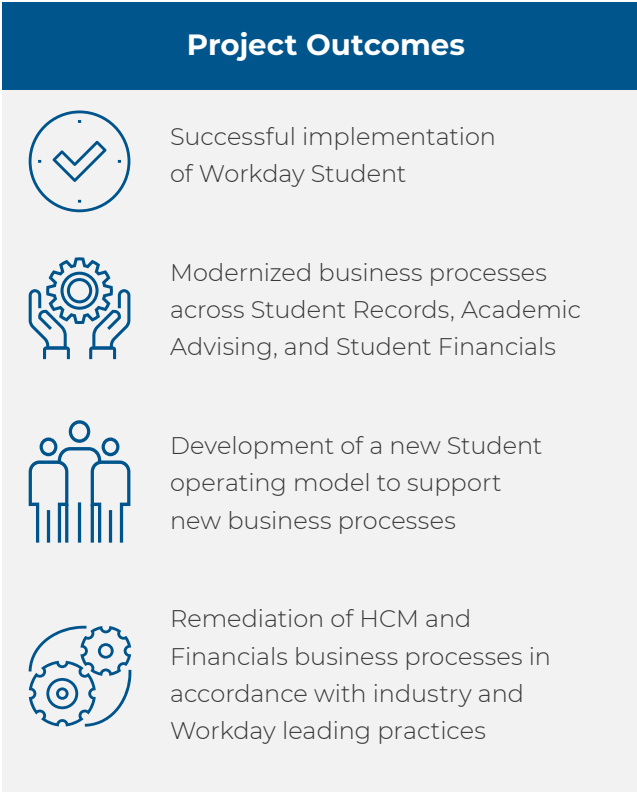


Figure 2.