

July, 2003

DARTMOUTH COMPUTING HOSTS BROWN

A unique partnership took place in Tindle Lounge on May 6, 2003, at an all-day information exchange between Dartmouth College and Brown University. Featuring roundtable discussions as well as separate breakout sessions, the event was attended by more than 40 members of each school's Admissions, Advancement, Financial Aid, Financials, Human Resources, Information Technology, Registrar, and Sponsored Research organizations.

Brown is in the process of considering a major upgrade to their administrative business systems. The process they are contemplating was undertaken at Dartmouth over the past ten years. Brown contacted Dartmouth to learn more about how this major upgrade was accomplished and what lessons were learned along the way. Bob O'Leary, Director of Administrative Computing at Dartmouth, led the event.

The program began with a general discussion of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) at Dartmouth. ERP typically refers to the integrated business systems of an institution that are implemented through a module-based approach. The core ERP components at Dartmouth are the Banner student system, the Oracle HR and Financial systems, the SunGard BSR Advance system, and the MIT COEUS system for Sponsored Research. The challenge has been to implement these modules in such a manner that all Dartmouth schools can use them and to ensure that they can share information across products.

Phil Hobbie, Associate Director of Administrative Computing, discussed the Banner Student system, outlining some of the points that made the project a success, including commitment from senior management, ongoing training, and a project management committee that addresses continuous improvement. Todd Langille, Associate Director of Administrative Computing, provided an overview of the Financial systems, while Cheryl Josler, HRIS Project Manager, described the tools used in the Human Resource system, adding that it was "designed for functionality and efficiency."

Following the morning presentations, there were two-hour breakout sessions for each of the different organizations. In addition to Josler, the Human Resources group consisted of Brown's Roberta Gordon, Assistant Vice President for Human Resources; and Christine Wood, Payroll Manager; also from Dartmouth were Gary McLean, Senior Programmer/Analyst; Toni Pippy, Payroll Manager; and Abha Singh, Project Manager. Topics at the HR session ranged from benefits plans and payroll periods to workflow and the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

"The Dartmouth team was extremely helpful and willing to share their knowledge and experience with us."

**Roberta Gordon
Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
Brown University**

July, 2003

“The Dartmouth team was extremely helpful and willing to share their knowledge and experience with us,” said Gordon, “enabling us to make an informed and meaningful assessment of the systems in place and the concerted planning involved.”

After lunch, the groups reconvened at Tindle Lounge. The afternoon concluded with each of the Brown teams reporting on what they had learned at the breakout sessions.

Terri-Lynn Thayer, Brown’s Executive Director, Administrative Information Systems, had high praise. “We’re very impressed with what Dartmouth has accomplished. In the course of our evaluation, we have talked to and visited many other institutions regarding their systems implementations. Dartmouth stands out in the crowd as having used a methodical approach that has resulted in a stable environment at a fraction of the costs we have seen at other institutions. We only hope we can do as well at Brown.”

O’Leary clearly viewed the day as a positive experience. “I think that the process was very valuable to both schools. We were able to share information about implementing and maintaining the business applications of our respective institutions. It was a wonderful example of the collaborative spirit that exists in higher education.”

—JB