

Block Project 8-A 2016: Banner Student Module Improvements

Team membership

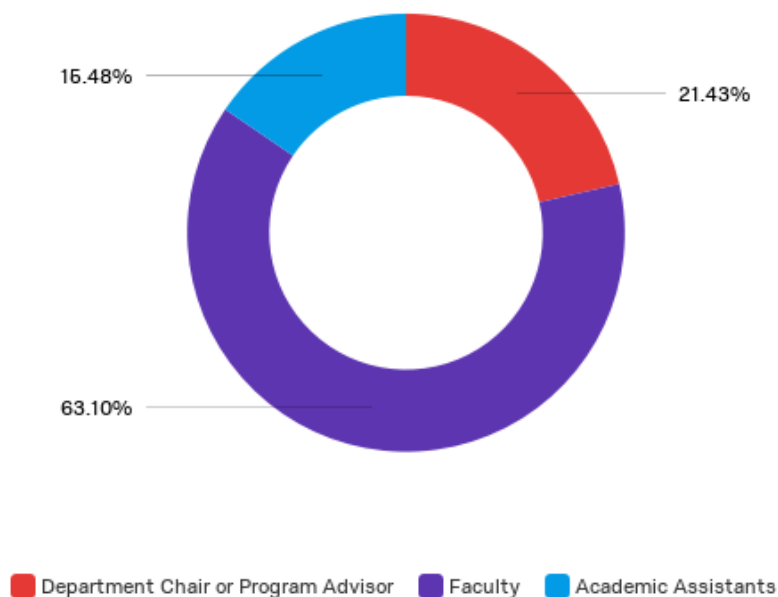
- Phil Apodaca, *Chair, Registrar*
- Sue Huntington, *Information Solutions Architect*
- Alejandra Chavez, *Paraprofessional – President’s Office*
- Nancy Heinecke, *Administrative Assistant, Economics & Business*
- Donna Sison, *Administrative Assistant, Organismal Biology & Ecology*
- Nancy Cheney, *Administrative Assistant, Chemistry & Biochemistry*
- Michelle Christiansen, *Lead Administrative Assistant, GREAL*
- Shaylan Quinn, *Administrative Assistant, Drama Dance*

This block project explored academic department needs for enhancements and efficiencies as it relates to the Banner Student module by reaching out to other academic staff and departmental faculty. Based on feedback as well as personal experience, a base list of possible enhancements was the start of a Qualtrics survey. Since the list wasn’t considered complete, room was left on the survey for the respondent to add more suggestions, and to indicate their priority.

The Qualtrics survey captured information from the academic side of the College, with a total of 84 respondents. The breakdown of respondents is as follows:

- 15.48% Academic Assistants;
- 21.43% Department Chairs or Program Advisors;
- 63.10% Faculty

Figure 1



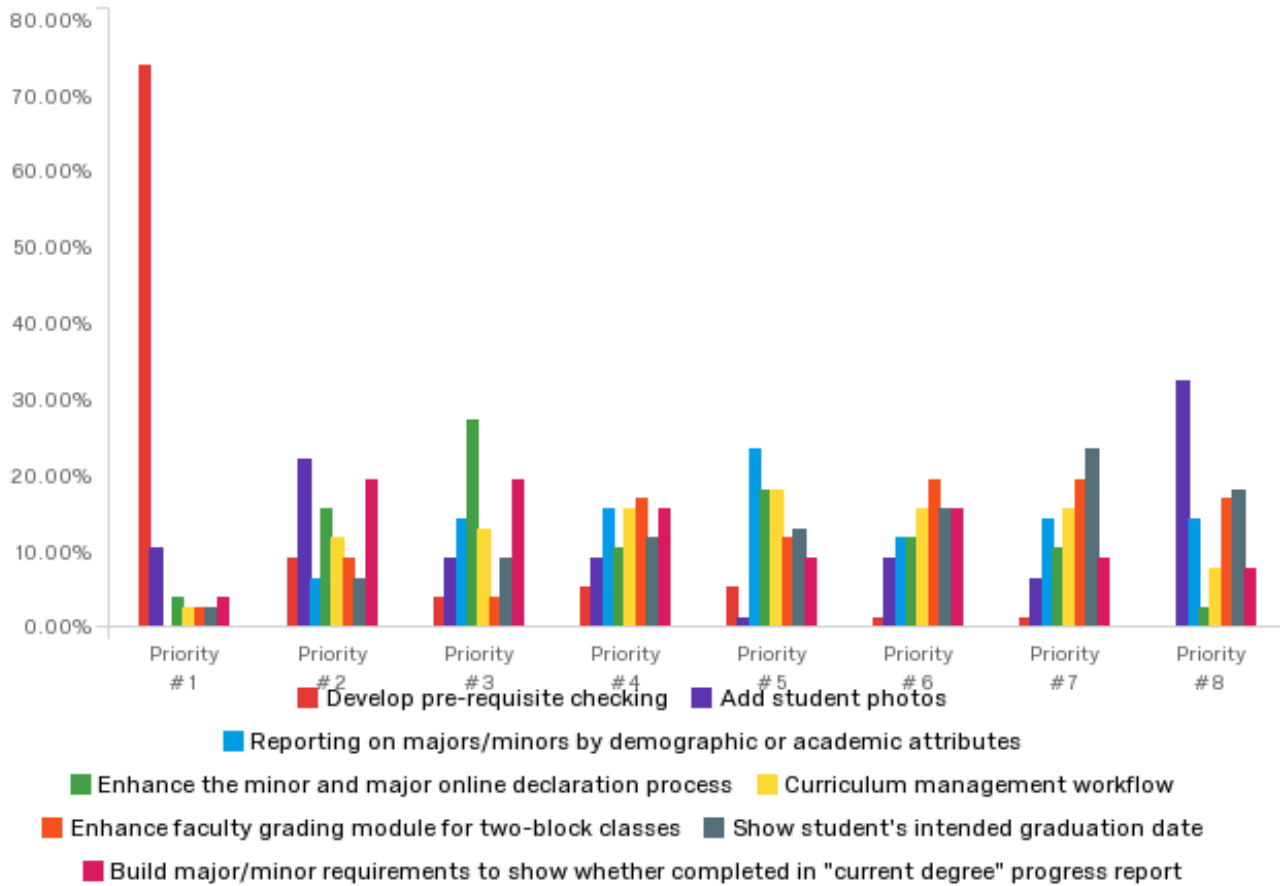
Results

Priority No.	Enhancements/Recommendations
1	Develop pre-requisite checking (<i>i.e. Banner check of pre-requisites of student's transcript, transferred credits, and currently enrolled classes. Verified or in progress will show next to the student's name on the class list</i>) IT Effort – Medium – if no block-plan customizations are required.
2	Add student photos in Self Service Banner IT Effort – Low to Medium
3	Enhance the minor and major online declaration process (<i>i.e. develop workflow, and the ability to track and report declaration dates</i>) IT Effort – Medium
4	Curriculum management workflow (<i>i.e. management of departmental program and course update, eliminating the manual process and updating online. E.g. Proposals to the Divisional Executive Committee, Committee on Instruction, and Faculty would all be online and trackable. Possibly linked to the course catalog</i>) IT Effort – High
4	Build major/minor requirements to show whether completed in "current degree" progress report (<i>similar to the one of general education requirements</i>) IT Effort - Medium
4	Enhance faculty grading module for submitting grades for classes that span more than one block. (<i>Current issues with 2 block thesis (not in sequential blocks or linked blocks), IP courses or Incomplete courses would show up in faculty tab</i>) IT Effort – High
5	Reporting on majors/minors by demographic or academic attributes. (<i>e.g. A report on your majors/minors that have taken a certain class, or a listing of sophomore females (perhaps for an award), or majors that have taken a leave of absence or failed a course. Only users that currently have that student access would be able to access this functionality</i>) IT Effort – Low to Medium
6	Show student's intended graduation date IT Effort – Low

Figures 2 and 3 below present the results, the earlier as a percentage, the latter as a count.

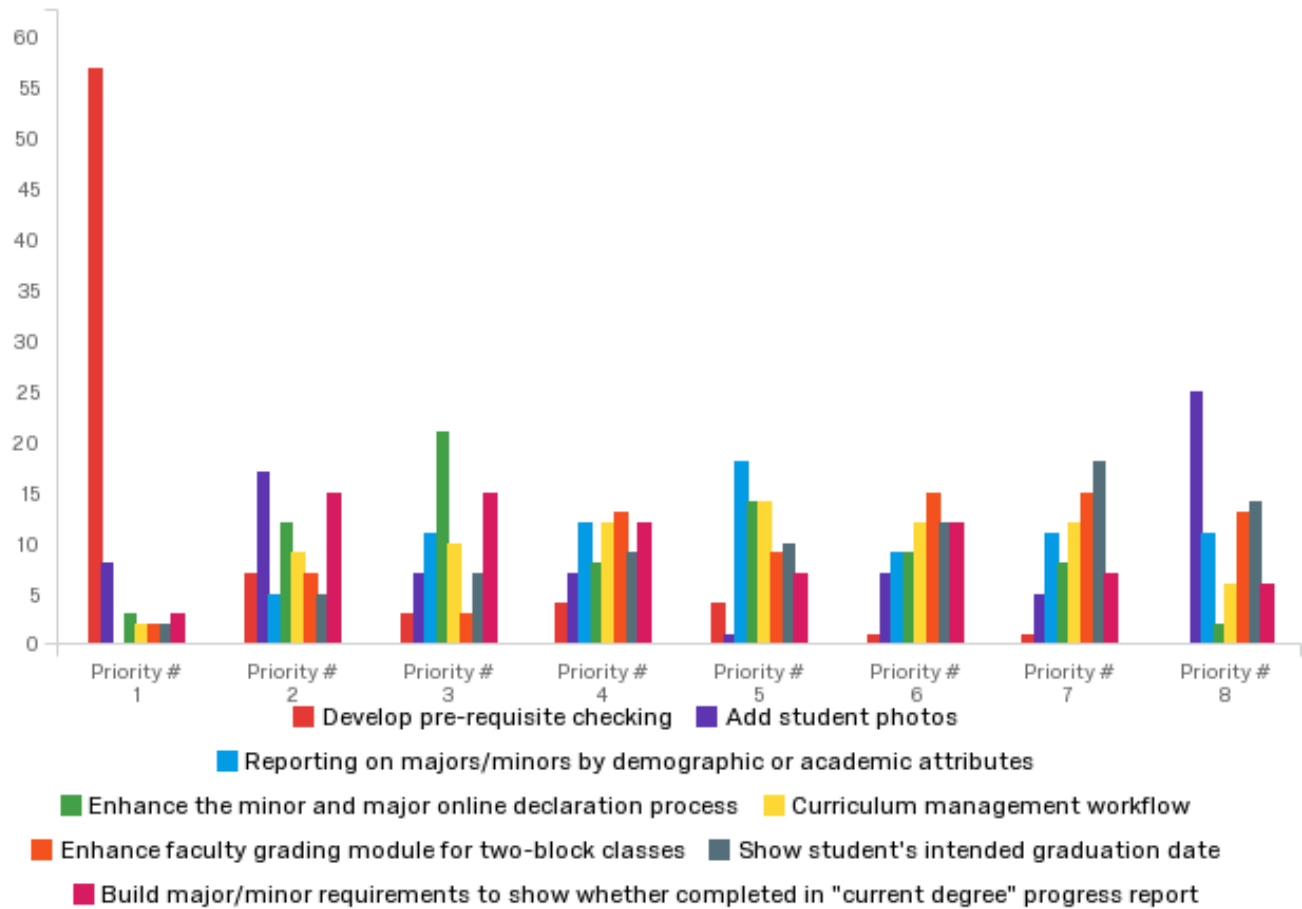
Figure 2

Prioritized Suggestions and Recommendations to Enhance Self-Service Banner (in percentage)



- Over 74% of respondents signaled that pre-requisite checking is priority number one
- Over 22% of respondents stated that adding student photos into self-service banner is priority number two. In addition, several of the comments emphasized the addition of student photos.
- Over 27% of respondents declared that enhancing the minor and major online declaration process is priority number three
- Over 16% of respondents stated that curriculum management workflow (16.88%) as priority number 4. At 16.58% percent, there was a tie between “enhancing faculty grading module for two-block classes” and “building major/minor requirements to show whether completed in current degree progress report.” The committee put the three suggestions under the same category.
- Reporting on majors/minors by demographic or academic attributes and showing student’s intended graduation date were identified by respondents as lower priorities

Figure 3
 Prioritized Suggestions and Recommendations to Enhance Self-Service Banner



IT Recommendations on Implementation

Currently most of the Banner modules deployed at Colorado College are at various levels of Version 8. It is worth noting that beginning Version 9, the technical architecture of Banner is significantly changing into what is referred to as Banner XE (Extended Ecosystem). This will result in new technical set up, reskilling the Banner programming staff and also re-acquainting the administrative offices using Banner to the new look and feel of Banner XE. All the current customization in Banner (mostly required for the CC's unique block plan) will need to be redeveloped in Banner XE environment. It is therefore an obvious suggestion from ITS: that the new customizations in Banner Student to be introduced in the new Banner XE environment, rather than the current Banner SSB environment that is destined for a phase out.

Note about the IT level of effort: Low refers to up to 1 month of effort; Medium – between 1 to 6 months of effort; High – over 6 months of effort. These estimates are rough estimates based on an overall understanding of the needs. A detailed estimate will need a thorough analysis of campus needs.

Other suggestions

Accessibility Requests

- Restore faculty access to class lists. FEC started asking for this three years ago, and it has never happened.
- It would be helpful to have a student's adviser listed on Banner.
- Yes, I want to see the name of every student's academic advisor somewhere in Banner. I want this information available for the students who are enrolled in my classes. It's very weird that Banner gives professors access to personal information (family, home, financial aid, etc.), but nowhere can we find the name of the students' advisors, which is something we sometimes need.
- I think we all need to see course rosters so we know who was or will be in a certain class. Also, I think when not chair, I need a lot more access to student data in order to advise well and plan for my courses. I realize we should only have what we need, but I don't see why all faculty cannot have access to all academic info on students.
- Enhance the transmission of first-year student data from Admissions to ITS/Banner: Allow Admissions to upload the information to Banner?
- Be able to easily find a general GPA and major GPA for advisees.
- We routinely receive requests from students who have taken classes, but who are not our advisees, for letters of recommendation. Were it possible to do this, it would be very helpful to be able to see transcripts for such students, rather than having them request a transcript for us.

Course schedule & Degree Evaluation

- I find myself having to toggle between a student's degree evaluation summary and their transcript to verify whether they've taken older courses that still count towards their major but are no longer offered, and not always appear in the degree evaluation report. **It would be great to have the older courses linked to students' degree evaluations as course changes are implemented.**
- **Course schedule sometimes does not show the correct course description, or if it is on campus or not.** Maybe add some explanation of what are the different FERPA things mean. Could we incorporate the early alert system in there? Can we add in student (financial) awards and grants (beyond the regular financial package) there so that academic departments can see if the student is receiving awards for things we award too (e.g., conference money, special projects money).
- **The course schedule seems to be buried in the Student Module,** rather than being a direct link on the main page. It is the single item most commonly accessed by advisors when consulting with students, so it seems it could be made easier to access. It also requires scrolling up and down to click on all the possible

pieces. Maybe make the boxes in two columns so that they all fit on a single, standard computer screen size. (Maybe that is bad for phone app access?)

Phi Beta Kappa

- I like all these ideas! I would also like to add that it would be helpful to **Phi Beta Kappa** if we could have a field that indicates the **level of foreign language attainment of students**.
- Was I supposed to do something earlier? I am responding as a department chair. A projected graduation date that is revised according to completed units would be helpful. **Assessment of foreign language training for Phi Beta Kappa would be great**. I don't think keeping track of major and minor requirements is practical. Too many problems.

Pre-requisite checking

- Here here to **prerequisite checking**. This could really smooth out the process for classes that require advance knowledge of certain skills. It is really just too bad when we find out in week three that the student does not have the prerequisite. I hope Banner can improve this.
- First, allow Banner to check for **prerequisites completed, in progress, or enrolled** for in for future blocks, denying enrollment if all prerequisites are not in one of these three categories. Then also give Banner the ability to remove students from future courses if the prerequisites are either dropped or completed unsatisfactorily (D+ or lower), possibly allowing students to move off of the wait list and into the course. Finally, an option that was not on the list would be an option to allow students to add and drop courses on-line prior to the beginning of the block, thus reducing person hours, paper forms, and the inability of students off campus to easily add or drop courses.

Two-block class

- Please figure out **how to make a two block course spanning blocks 4-5 recognizable in Banner as a genuine two block course**. Currently students are confused and often register for just one of the two blocks, and instructors are unable to enter a single grade for the two blocks.
- The biggest problem right now, in my experience, is that **students cannot fail a two-block course after a single block**. Even though it is clear students should stop after one block sometimes, the way two-block courses are set up at the registrar, and on Banner, means that students must stay in the course for a second (often doomed) block, rather than reboot in what would have been the second of the two blocks, with a failing grade for only the first of the course's two blocks.

User interface

- Can banner have options like, **"F5 for enter" instead of hitting the mouse**? Could it also download class rosters in excel spreadsheets? Can we do a reverse look

up? For example, can we put a cell phone number and it tell us which student it belongs to?

- **Access to the course schedule is cumbersome**--much scrolling and shifting from page to page is required. More disturbing, Banner cannot process some information that is essential, so these days the Course schedule is always wrong and in significant ways (subtitles on topics courses, enrollment limits, off-site, restricted access). No enhancement is more important than adjusting Banner so that it can accurately describe courses.
- The **navigation within Banner for searching the course schedule** is AWFUL. In fact, it's embarrassing to use it for advising with students present because so many of the functions don't work. If you select several criteria (e.g. Block and one of the All-College requirements, it will show no results, even when eligible courses exist. It's very hard to navigate between pages, and I frequently end up having to exit the entire program and go back in in order to get it to work. It's really disgraceful and unnecessary. The navigation within the program for the course schedule matters more to me than any of the points raised in the survey
- Either alphabetical order of the main page, or maybe put in headers. **The order of the functions on the student services page does not make sense.**
- I'm often frustrated when banner doesn't work as it is meant to. So, **eliminating bugs** when you can is very important to me. The list of 8 suggestions you all came up with is really good! Thanks for thinking this through and working to improve the system.
- A **warning of impending time-out** while entering lots of grades could be helpful.

Conclusion

Prerequisite Checking was clearly the top choice with over 74% of respondents indicating that it is priority number one. Adding Student Photos to Banner was a weak second place choice, and all the others options were close at 3rd and 4th place.

IT rated Prerequisite Checking as a medium effort that could take anywhere between 1 and 6 months. However, it will also have the highest impact on functional users' workloads, including faculty. We believe this project to be a rather large, long-term project. Consequently, IT rated Student Photos as a low to medium effort. In the short term, this project might be done quickly, with little impact on functional users.

The write in section of the survey captured many suggestions that either reemphasized their original selection or could be categorized as training issues by functional users. Many of these suggestions are already available in banner. However, the Registrar will review all of these and make an effort to resolve as many as possible.

The committee encourages the college to take special note of IT's recommendation on Implementation and timing since moving to version 9 will be a major upgrade.

Finally, The Block Project team recommends that the survey results be sent to the Admin Systems Advisory Committee (ASAC) for review and prioritization. More detailed project requirements will be determined by ASAC.