

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- SSS, SBS, SAS Updates... page 2
- Self-Service Updates ... page 3
- From Your DBA: A Look At Character Data ... page 3
- **NEW!** Meet the ISIS Staff: Lourdes Cordero... page 4

SHARING PROJECT UPDATES AND TIPS FOR GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE SYSTEM AND ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF DIVERSE CONSTITUENTS.

○ November | ○ 2006

ISIS

focus

ISIS focus is a monthly newsletter to share project progress, useful advice, and more.

One Step Closer to a Fully Integrated Student Information System

Congratulations to the SAIS DC Admissions Office and the School of Nursing Admissions Office on their recent SMS implementations!

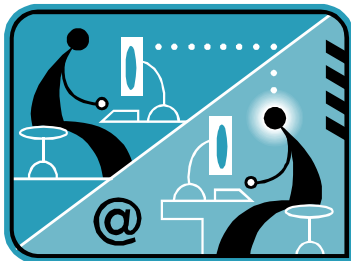
The implementation of the Admissions module at two more divisions moves us one step closer towards the goal of a fully integrated student information system for the university.

The Washington, DC Admissions office of the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) went live on the SMS application of SunGard's Matrix Student Suite on September 21, 2006. The SAIS-DC Admissions office overcame a number of obstacles during their implementation including the loss of the Admissions Director and an Admissions Coordinator, as well as heavy recruitment schedules.

"Bring into the school the best possible students, provide for them the best possible instruction, instill into them a realization of their responsibilities, send them out in the profession." Those of you familiar with the School of Nursing may recognize this Elsie M. Lawler quote from the exterior of the School of Nursing building in East Baltimore. The School of Nursing Admissions office prides itself on the quality and professionalism of the service that they provide to prospective students and applicants. In July 1999, the School of Nursing became an early adopter of the Matrix Student Marketing System (SMS) application. As of October 2, 2006, the office implemented the current version of the SMS application. This dedicated team stayed focused on the requirements and always came back to the philosophy, "keep it simple."

Upgrade to 2.6.2 Completed Successfully!

Due to the hard work and dedication of the Student Information Systems staff, ISIS project staff, divisional functional and technical staff, we have successfully upgraded the production ISIS system to version 2.6.2, the latest software release from SunGard Higher Education.



This important release fixes over 100 reported JHU issues, with most of the fixes and updates seen in the SAS and SSS modules. Thank you to everyone who tested prior to this release, as well as those who worked hard over the weekend to make sure the upgrade went so smoothly.

If you do encounter any problems...

While in the system, if you encounter a problem please review:

<http://know.isis.jhu.edu/x/txc> for steps to report a problem. There are some special steps for this release we would ask that you follow to help us identify and resolve these issues:

- 1) Take a screen shot of the error
- 2) Determine the server you are on at the time of the error (This can be done by going to HELP > About screen in ISIS and providing the HostName)
- 3) Do the exact same thing in Pre-Production and see if the error occurs there as well.
- 4) Include all of the information in a JIRA issue: In the JIRA, please mark PRODUCTION = "YES", PRIORITY = "HIGH", AFFECTS VERSION = "2.6.2.1" and ASSIGN TO = ISIS Prod Support with a KEYWORD of post2621

We will work to resolve any issues found as soon as possible.



Billing Updates [SBS]

The SBS Team is gearing up for fine-tuning our tuition and fees calculations for the SSS implementation. The team also welcomes Anushka Thewarapperuma back to the ISIS Team! We have been testing the 2.6.2.1 release in preparation for go live on October 27th.



Our next team meeting will be held on November 2 @ 2:00pm in Mt. Washington Room A115. We will be discussing the progress and process of e-billing in the ISIS Self-Service module. Challenges continue to present themselves with the Hopkins e-mail system and marketing of the SBS billing procedures. We will also have a demo of several SSS screens containing the information we currently see in USIS, so we can begin understanding the new fields and terminology.

We are encouraging all divisions to continue with their intra-divisional cross-modules meetings. It is vital to know what the SSS module will (and more importantly will not) be able to provide in the way of information that we've utilized in the past for our reporting requirements. Now is the time to learn if revisions to your rules are needed, as well as requesting additional functionality in SSS to maintain current requirements.

Financial Aid Updates [SAS]

The SAS user community spent most of October testing the 2.6.2 release and working with the SSS implementation team on issues that touch both modules. The work to integrate SAS with SSS will continue throughout the Fall and Spring semesters.

The IDOC (Institutional Documentation) service implementation team will begin user acceptance testing in November, and is still on target for a January go-live.

The next SAS user group conference call will be held on November 14, 2006 at 9:00am. Dial 1-800-467-2166 and enter a participant code of 789978 to access the call.

SAS Tip of the Month

Want to provide Self-Service users with more information about their financial aid awards?

Consider adding web viewable comments to all of your funds. When viewed on the Self-Service site, the award names will appear as hyper-text links. When students click on the links, the a pop up window reveals the text.

Security Tip of the Month

Back up all of your data!

Whether or not you take steps to protect yourself, there will always be a possibility that something will happen to destroy your data. Regularly backing up your data on a CD or network drive reduces the stress and other negative consequences that result from losing important information. Remember that sensitive information should not be stored on removable media such as CDs.



Records and Registration Updates [SSS]

Go-live for Nursing as an early adopter is fast approaching! Development work is underway on numerous efforts and will wrap up for most initiatives by the end of the calendar year. In the past month, some significant events included:

- Continued testing of the USIS data migration/interface with the expectation that the student instance will be moved to production in November
- Continued collaborative design sessions for new and enhanced SSS functions with SunGard Higher Education and reviewed prototypes for several new features; anticipated release date for all new functions is December 22nd
- Unit testing of interdivisional registration
- Imported SPSBE's Spring courses into production using the generic course import
- Began development of extracts for the National Student Clearinghouse
- Inventoried items to include in integration testing template
- Completed preparations for 2.6.2.1 upgrade
- Documented SAS-SSS touch points and began identifying resolutions

A Look at SSS Upcoming Events



The SSS project team, comprised of registrars and their staff as well as dedicated project staff have numerous activities planned for this month: *

- 11/1 - Workshop 8, ASEN
- 11/2 - Full Team Meeting
- 11/2 - Data Migration Testing
- 11/2 - SSS Demo to SBS Team
- 11/6 - Workshop 10, PH
- 11/8 - Use Cases, ASEN
- 11/9 - Data Migration Testing (all day; no team meeting)
- 11/9 - Use Cases, ASEN
- 11/10 - Use Cases, ASEN
- 11/20 - Workshop 12, PH
- 11/16 - Full Team Meeting
- 11/16 - Data Migration Testing
- 11/30 - Full Team Meeting
- 11/30 - Data Migration Testing

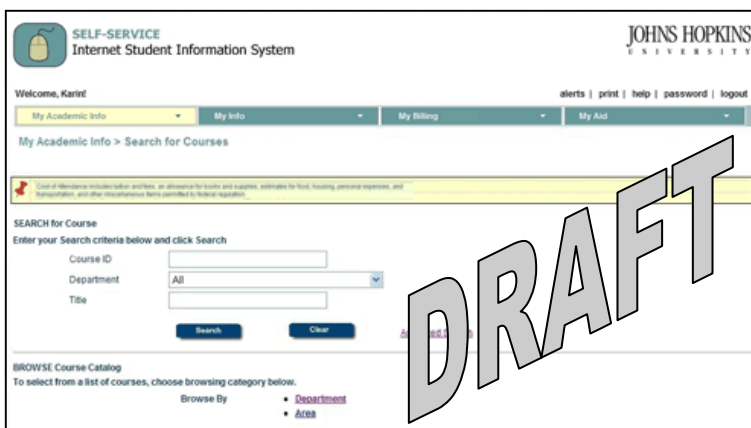
* Be sure to check the SSS Confluence space for specific locations and times as well as any schedule changes.

Self-Service Updates

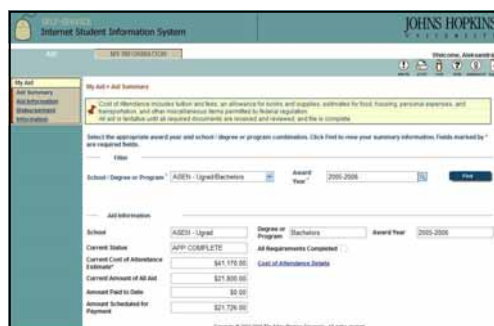
In the last few publications of the ISIS Focus newsletter, we've mentioned our work toward continuous improvement of the user experience in the ISIS Self-Service site. One of the objectives was to streamline and simplify authentication and navigation processes.

Currently, in Self-Service, upon successful authentication, over 60% of the student population is faced with somewhat of an unintuitive page to select one of multiple Self-Service roles. In the past several months, the Self-Service development team has designed and developed the JHU Self-Service framework that directly tackles this and other usability concerns. The proposed solution eliminates the notorious concept of Self-Service roles, providing students with access to all published functionality at a glance. The new design also eliminates the left-hand navigation menu, replacing it with a simpler horizontal rollover menu. This new menu style will help leave more room on the page for what's important — the student's data, while still providing access to all the same links as the current site.

The JHU Self-Service Framework is expected to be publicly introduced to the JHU student community, alongside the Nursing SSS Student implementation, in March 2007.



Proposed Self-Service design—expected to go live March 2007.



Current Self-Service design

A Look at Character Data...

When using a variety of desktop applications like Microsoft Word or Excel, it is fairly easy to input all types of data. In contrast, a database must control the type and length of data for each piece of information stored.



Character data consists of any combination of letters, symbols, and numeric characters. But, unlike numeric data, anything entered as character data is interpreted as a piece of text with no other meaning. For example, the character string '12' added to the character string '34' yields a character string '1234', whereas the number 12 added to the number 34 yields 46.

SQL Server 2000 supports three basic ways to store character data:

1. **CHAR**—Used for fixed and predictable length data (for example, a social security number) under 8000 characters in length. In most cases, values stored in a CHAR field are “padded” with spaces to the predetermined length of the field. For example in a CHAR(10) field (set to 10 characters long), the text 'ISIS' would use up 10 characters of space even though it only looks like 4 characters.
2. **VARCHAR** - Used for variable length character data (for example, a person's last name) under 8000 characters in length. The data in a varchar field stores only the actual number of characters entered in the field and does not generally pad the data to the full capacity of the field.
3. **TEXT** - Used for storage of large blocks (up to 2 gigabytes) of character data (for example, the code of an entire web page can be stored to the database in a TEXT field).

In addition, if international character sets are needed (for example, Mandarin Chinese) SQL Server uses a double-byte storage type called NCHAR, NVARCHAR and NTEXT respectively. When using these types of fields, a four character string 'ISIS' takes up a space of eight characters, because for the system to define international character sets it stores an extra byte of data about each character.

SunGard HE Certifies ISIS for Internet Explorer 7.0

In late October, SunGard Higher Education released their certification document for Matrix Student Suite for compatibility with Microsoft Internet Explorer 7.0 RC1. All Matrix Admin and Self-Service screens across all applications were tested for certification.



Student Information Systems will be independently testing ISIS against IE7 and will issue a certification when we are confident that IE7 fully supports ISIS. Users are discouraged from upgrading to IE7 at the present time; please consult with your system/network administrator to determine an upgrade strategy, once certified.



Upcoming ISIS Training

Upcoming Training

Course Title	Course ID	Date	Location
Astra Event Scheduling	AS01.001.200	12/07/2006	Eastern B104
Astra Reporting	AS01.100.300.04	12/07/2006	Eastern B104
Astra Manager Overview	AS01.100.400.04	12/08/2006	Eastern B104
Astra Schedule	AS02.001.100.07	12/14/2006	Eastern B104
ISIS Departmental Graduate Aid (DGA)	IS01.110.02.22	12/01/2006	Eastern B104
ISIS Creating and Maintaining Courses	IS02.300.10.10	12/11/2006	Eastern B104
ISIS Admissions Training	IS03.130.01.09	12/04/2006	Eastern B104

E-Learning Courses

There are also several E-Learning courses available for anyone to take at any time. Each of these courses take about an hour to complete.

- ISIS: 100 - Navigating in ISIS (ID: ISIS.100.01)
- ISIS: 110 - Departmental Graduate Aid (DGA) (ID: ISIS.110.01)
- ISIS: 120 - Financial Aid Inquiry (ID: ISIS.120.01)
- ISIS: 130 - Student Billing Inquiry (ID: ISIS.130.01)

Departmental Training Available

The ISIS Training team is happy to provide training for your department. For more information, please contact Nicole Westrick at nmwestrack@jhu.edu.

ISIS Training Team Welcomes Sasha Grutzeck

The ISIS Training Team is pleased to welcome Sasha Grutzeck! Sasha is assuming the Training Specialist position previously held by Jason Smith. Sasha joined the ISIS team on October 23, 2006. Her first projects will include web-courses for Astra Schedule Basics and Appropriate Use of Social Security Numbers.

Prior to joining Hopkins, Sasha worked at AccelarRomar where she was involved in the development of several web courses for the Center for Training and Education, as well as the Center for Innovation in Quality Patient care. Sasha brings a wealth of experience in training design and development. She holds a Master's degree in Instructional Technology from Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania.

Meet the ISIS Staff... Lourdes Cordero

The best way to get to know me, I guess, is from the beginning. I was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico; went to private school all my life, completed my bachelor's degree from the University of Puerto Rico in Business Administration and majored in Computerized Information Systems.

In 1981 my husband and I were offered a job straight from the University to come and work for Aetna Life and Casualty in Connecticut, all expenses paid. We took the offer and figured it would be a great adventure. The plan was to come for a few years and return back home; well, that was 25 years ago. Connecticut was way too cold for tropical souls like us, so, we ended up moving to Maryland in 1985 seeking a little bit of warmth. I've been in Maryland ever since and raised my two daughters here. They went to college, got married and one of them even made me a grandmother, one of the most rejoicing moments of my life.

I joined JHU on April 15, 2003, working at first in SARS on the Mainframe Billing System. At the same time, I was going to the SBS Functional Team meetings to get acquainted with the new system. I designed and coded the conversion program from SARS to SBS and was part of the SBS Implementation, conversion and transition team when SBS went live. I've been sup-



porting SBS ever since. Currently I belong to the ISIS Prod Support team; I am a member of the SBS application team and support its users.

Besides Information technologies, I love to sing which I do as a hobby; I belong to a Latin group in the Baltimore area and we perform in various activities. I also like to play volleyball—playing on my high school and college teams. On the side I do translations from English to Spanish on medical subjects, such as diabetes and high blood pressure. As you can see I am diversified and like to be busy.

I can honestly say this is the best job I ever had. Not only do we get new challenges every day, which makes it more interesting, but our leadership has turned this place into a work atmosphere where you know you can count on the support of everyone in your department. We work together as a team to help each other out in whatever challenges face the department. This is a place where you are treated professionally, where they know that they can count on you as much as you can count on them. I plan to make this the last job in my life.

ISIS FOCUS CONTRIBUTORS

Special thanks to this month's ISIS Focus Contributors:

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Looking for Past Issues of *ISIS Focus*?

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