Welcome to "The Scoop"

This premier issue of THE SCOOP provides updates to you about the Financial Training Program in the Controller’s Office. By distributing this newsletter, we hope to keep our university audience informed of the latest developments in our workshops and courses. You may even find it useful to forward this email on to new employees in your area.

In the last three years, we continued to expand our blended learning approach with instructor-led workshops, online courses in Carmen and hands-on computer lab practice sessions. In doing so, we were able to leverage the online courses to prepare participants for our instructor-led workshops. These innovative courses cover basic knowledge and are excellent prerequisites for the instructor-led workshops. Our participants agree that “the Carmen courses were good preparation for the workshop.”

As trainers we are always looking for opportunities to convey information in a concise and handy format. Following up on a suggestion from our participants, we created the Fiscal Managers Toolbox, a “one-stop shopping” for a variety of fiscal training, policy and system access descriptions and links.

In the following articles we will be showcasing some new interactive developments in Financial Training, including the use of case studies in the workshops and interactive learning experiences conducted in a computer lab.

Experience can be the Best Teacher!

We all learn by doing. As we worked with a group of subject matter experts (SMEs) to develop the online courses in Carmen for Purchasing and General Ledger, we realized that people would need to practice entering data to create a Requisition, PO or Journal Entry. Thinking about how to solve problems or find remedies for error messages would be essential to learning these responsibilities.

To create the learning environment, we reformatted the typical “Help Lab” to offer a number of relevant scenarios for participants to work...
We enlisted our SMEs to facilitate the Purchasing Experience and General Ledger Experience sessions. These sessions are particularly helpful for anyone required to take a Final Assessment when requesting access to the Financials system. Many participants have commented that the problems they solved during the Experience session led them to being successful on the Final Assessment.

**Using Case Studies for Realistic Exercises**

The training environment at the university is ever-changing. Interactive learning is taking a front seat to the typical lecture-based training. To stay ahead of the curve, we have redesigned two of our workshops, *Using General Ledger Reports* and *The Reconciliation Process* to include case studies as a part of the activities.

The case studies contain actual GL and other financial reports. While working on the case studies there are questions to answer that will lead to a better understanding of how to assess the overall financial health of your department.

This recent change in delivery of the workshops has been well-received by the participants. Typical comments have been:

- “There were different levels of experience in the class and the course seemed to fit everyone!”
- “The case studies gave a better understanding of using all the reports together to find the information that you need.”
- “The case studies were based on real life situation, thanks! Very helpful!”
- “Really great instruction and hands on exercises!”