



STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM

THE UPDATE

Bimonthly

Website Updates

★ The [Situation Room](#) provides more details on the project & milestones.

★ New [In the Arena](#) Blog authored by Rick Lux, QA Analyst

★ New [PORTiCO Poll](#)



The Update

The Update is the official bimonthly newsletter for status updates related to the student information system (SIS) project at the Defense Acquisition University.

PORTiCO, the official name of this acquisition workforce initiative, is a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) system that integrates critical capabilities including career training management, schedule development, DAWIA transcripts and reporting.

Select [More Updates](#) to view past editions of this newsletter on the PORTiCO website.

BEAUTY AND “THE BEAST”

SIS WORKS TO IMPROVE CLASS REGISTRATION PROCESS

The implementation of the PORTiCO student information system (SIS) continues apace. Development of a comprehensive workflow for the class registration process has been central to this effort. The final product is a 7x3 feet workflow diagram—aptly named “The Beast”—that captures a future-state process that will improve the transparency, efficiency, and user experience for class registration.

Among the new features transforming the registration process is far more access to information for the faculty and students. For faculty, the first day of class will get a lot easier. Instead of managing through the series of questions necessary to decipher which walk-in student gets into the class, faculty will have all the pertinent information on the nearest PC or tablet. So while the earliest bird may reach the class two hours earlier, faculty will invite the highest priority student who has also completed the

prerequisite assignments. The end result of this real-time information access is a more efficient process for instructors and a better outcome for workforce preparedness.

For students, improvements to the registration process will include, among others, greater visibility into the waitlist. These changes will respond to student frustration over

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

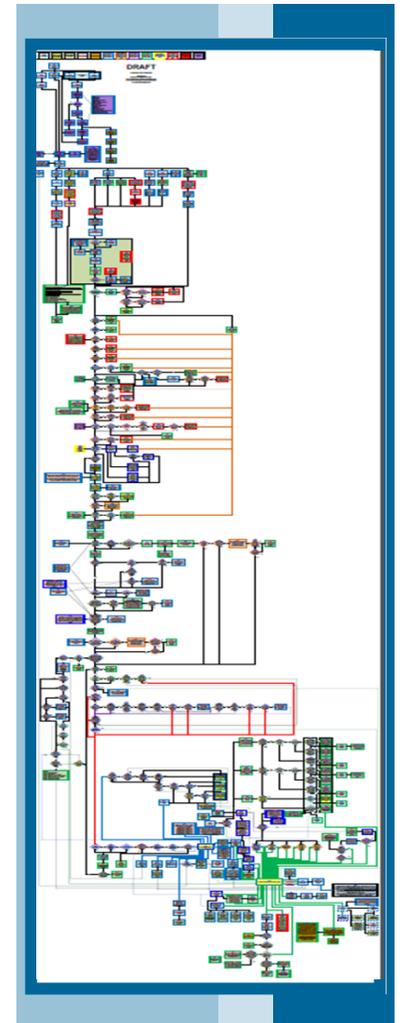
PORTiCO GAINS A WINGMAN

For the last six months, the PORTiCO team has collaborated with the Defense Travel System (DTS) program management office to integrate DTS functionality into the SIS. The advantages of this integration project deliver big wins for the entire work-

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GATEWAY TO EXCELLENCE...

“Failure is not fatal, but failure to change can be.” — John Wooden, Legendary UCLA Basketball Coach



“The Beast”

A 7x3 ft workflow diagram of DAU's class registration processes.

THE BEAST TRANSFORMED

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Beauty & the Beast

the “mystery” of the current waitlist. As one student remarked in a student survey, “*I don't understand what the big secret is concerning classroom seats. Applicants need to know if there is a seat or not.*” With PORTiCO's deployment, students will know where they sit on the waitlist and can determine whether another section may make better sense.

For those students hampered by delays in the supervisor approval process, the new registration workflow will notify supervisors, but not make an application contingent on this approval step through the SIS.

There will also be a significant improvement in completing and processing of travel orders for resident classes. Travel requests are now a separate process, but when PORTiCO is deployed, the Defense Travel System (DTS) will be fully integrated to the registration process—see [On the Road Again](#) article. This change will make class registration and travel (when necessary) a more efficient process for students.

As the PORTiCO project completes its configuration and testing in the coming year, we look ahead to transforming *The Beast* (and other key processes) into an elegant, single interface for all acquisition training needs.

To keep up to date on the PORTiCO's progress, go to the project [website](#).



PORTICO AND DTS PARTNER TO SAVE TREES

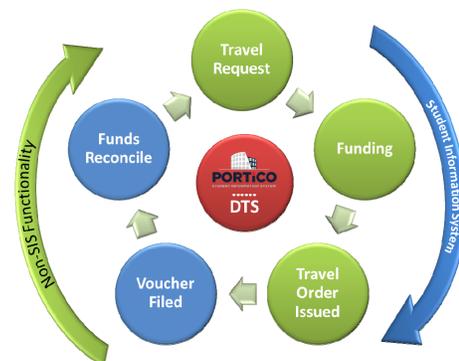
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On the Road Again

force by:

- Fully automating the current manual process;
- Standardizing the entire process from travel order generation to travel budgeting and reconciliation; and,
- Driving compliance with DoD's travel guidance.

These positive impacts are critical for PORTiCO's success but they only represent half the story. In explaining the project team's enthusiasm for this integration, Brian Gaines, the initiative's lead said, “*Integrating DTS certainly will generate a better process, but we're also excited about the potential savings it represents. Bringing an end to manual processing and multiple interfaces will reduce paperwork and human error.*”

To ensure that the user experience and results will be an improvement on current practice, the PORTiCO team and DACM offices will continue to unit test functionality over the coming weeks. Comprehensive user acceptance testing will begin when the integration is completed toward the end of the summer. Successful integration will deliver one of the crucial value propositions for the student information system: an integrated, efficient and effective travel resource.



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MANAGERS, PORTICO AND HIGH DRAMA



Role playing through process changes serves as a tool for helping senior managers understand how PORTICO will impact future training management.

Spring time at DAU means time to regroup for updates and learning. In 2012, forums for both mid-level managers (i.e., department chairs, site managers, and mid-level supervisors) and senior-level managers (i.e., academic deans and deputy directors) provided a great opportunity to bring DAU leadership up to speed on the PORTICO project.

In an attempt to engage the audiences on why PORTICO matters—and avoid a withering PowerPoint death march—the project team designed an interactive workshop that reviewed how processes would be transformed at deployment. The sessions were designed to make managers role play through current and future processes—the latter benefiting from PORTICO functionality. The notion was to enable managers to fully absorb (or question) the impact of the student information system on workforce training and their own daily responsibilities. The workshops also incorporated Zing (see box below), an audience response and collaboration technology, to gather real-time feedback on what managers were thinking.

The mid-level manager’s forum focused its attention on the classroom walk-in process. When asked what they thought of the current practice, one table of managers described the process as, “**non-standardized; faculty lack needed information about student training priorities; not a fair process.**”

After using a role play scenario where one manager served as a faculty member and several others performed the role of walk-in students, this initial impression was reinforced. In short, faculty members often do not have the necessary data to ensure the right person gets into the classroom. To highlight how PORTICO will provide the needed visibility to make the right call, another scenario was generated. Only this time, the faculty member had all the information on the students waiting outside the classroom (i.e., priority for the specific course and whether the student had fulfilled pre-requisites).

The additional visibility offered by the future system’s functionality had a considerable impact on faculty’s access to real-time information. Participants were impressed by the insight PORTICO will provide and, as one table zinged, “**The SIS will work better than the present system. The student priority will be included. A better rule set will be applied.**”

At the senior-level session, the process role plays also served to keep the participants engaged for over two and a half hours. In this workshop, the project team presented four distinct scenarios where PORTICO would present a strong value add to current practice:

- ◆ managing classroom walk-ins;
- ◆ identifying faculty resources across the enterprise;
- ◆ fostering team diversity in classrooms; and,
- ◆ communicating in the event of an emergency.

The intersection of role play scenes and several comedic “actors” generated lots of laughter—see [video on website](#)—but the takeaway was a



DAU mid-level managers using Zing technology to collaborate on ways to improve the classroom walk-in process.

Zing Technology

Zing systems help groups collaborate in real-time, make sense out of complex or rapidly changing situations and win agreement for immediate collective action.

