

Online learning and teaching (OLT) software system (White paper)

Whenever we think of computerization of various activities of an educational institute, more specifically for a Management institute, activities given below immediately come to your mind if you are an administrator/ staff/ faculty/ student of any institute.

1. Admission: There are, normally, about 15,000 to 20,000 applicants apply for 200-300 odd seats in a reputed management institute. Institute needs a system to record the complete details i.e. personal information, educational details and marks obtained of each of the student including details of the payment received for application. The other job is to prepare a merit list and sending interview letters to prospective candidates. The vast availability of internet to every corner of the world, admission department wishes to use online registration, to greatly reduce the labor and increase the accuracy of student database prepared by them. With the introduction of Part time management courses, now, the admission process is carried out every six month instead of once a year. To carry out such a nature of job efficiently in a reasonable time frame with limited resources and total transparency you need software support.
2. Fee collection: This is another area where computerization is must. Normally fee is collected in 4-6 installments. To control timely payment of fee, provision of penalties is also kept. Fee from NRI students are received in dollars and from local students in rupees. Further, reconciliation of bank statement is also required. In an institute where on an average 300 students are enrolled, it is highly desirable to have an efficient computerized system.
3. Academic data: The academic data consists of student personal information Roll No, Program enrolled into, photograph, details of marks, details of attendance, details of electives taken by student, areas of specialization etc. Now for 300 students strength with 5 courses per term and 4 test items in each course means 6000 records in a term and 24000 records for a six term program. That shall involve calculation of grades and then converting them into points and then

multiplying it with Credit (Weightage) of respective course and then adding the individual score and dividing with total credits to find the Grade Point Average (GPA) in a term and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) for a year and entire program. In a modern management institute to carry out this exhaustive exercise, a well tested computerized software system is required.

4. Administration and other academic activities:

- a. Preparing Grade cards for all six terms and mark sheets for all 300 students
- b. Taking student feedback from each student in every term for each of the faculty teaching and then compiling the data for use.
- c. Conducting Quizzes for each of the courses, evaluating them and putting them into place for preparing mark sheet.
- d. Providing Student handbooks and course out line.
- e. Preparing Time table.
- f. Keeping Attendance Record.
- g. Preparing Rank lists.

Definitely, institute needs a software system to accomplish these activities.

Most of the institutes have adapted to partial computerization or having individual dedicated system for each of the above activities where only one or two persons from the same department can access the data. Individual dedicated systems causes redundancy of same data at different location i.e. student personal information is kept at admission office, account department and program office in different software systems.

Online learning and teaching (OLT) software provides an Enterprise wide resource planning system to fully integrate all the above mentioned activities at one place with no redundancy of data. All the users i.e. administrators, staff, faculty and students can access the information desired by them.

OLT has further simplified and automated the following activities:

1. Converting of marks to grades.
2. Online quiz with auto evaluation and posting of marks
3. Online selection of elective courses
4. Online attendance
5. Grade lowering due to short of attendance
6. Time table Generation
7. Online student feedback and compiling of data
8. Posting of marks and grades by individual faculty themselves from their own PC rather than sending excel sheets to program office.
9. There is no requirement to transfer of data on excel sheets over email/ floppies from one department to other department.
10. Date wise Entire Backup process.
11. Generation of user ids and password.

The system is fully secured with three level of security and is highly user friendly. Permission to individual users is controlled through user interface. The auto installed feature on individual client machines using latest software publishing method makes the maintenance job much simpler. The system works on windows operating system with SQL Server 2000 as Relational Database management system. The implementation time is as low as 6-8 weeks. The implementation includes training of the users as well.

In today's flat and competitive world, a new program is introduced every three - six month. More of new courses are introduced to meet new management skills requirements. It is of utmost importance to have a highly reliable, well tested and proven educational ERP which can be customized fast to give an edge to your institute.

OLT has been successfully implemented in some of the prestigious management institutes.