

North Idaho College, RFP #25-02 – Course Scheduling Software

November 1, 2024

- What is the budget set for the services within RFP #25-02 – Course Scheduling Software?
 - North Idaho College's budget is flexible based on the proposals provided and the needs of the college.

November 11, 2024

- What technology stack currently supports the Ellucian Colleague Student Information System?
 - North Idaho College currently utilizes Ellucian Colleague for its' Student Information System. Colleague sits on-premises and is operated on an IBM AIX Unix Platform (Version 7.2) with Unidata (Version 8.2.1). NIC is currently on version 2.3.0.10 for the Ellucian API and version 3.3.05 for self-service. NIC has Ethos deployed and in use with multiple systems. The Colleague deployment consists of a production, test, and development environment. All additional Colleague services (Self Service, etc.) reside on virtualized Windows servers on VMware.
- Are there any additional systems beyond the Student Information System that require integration?
 - Not currently. Colleague serves as our source of record for almost all systems and feeds are done in that manner.
- Is there a need for artificial intelligence capabilities in the Course Scheduling Software?
 - NIC is not opposed to AI usage in the tool if the vendor provides it. NIC is seeking improved analytic capabilities and validation of course scheduling. If the vendor provides an AI option, please include it in the proposal.
- Could you provide more details on the required scheduling frequency (e.g., hourly, weekly)?
 - Summer and Fall class schedules are copied from the previous years every November and published in early February. Spring class schedules are copied from the previous years every May and published in early October. Division administrators and the Registrar's Office create and update sections hourly and daily until these schedules are published. Updates continue but decrease in frequency through the middle of the semester (Fall and Spring) and through the first two weeks for Summer.

- Is audit tracking of the course scheduling process necessary?
 - Auditing of the system is desirable to quickly identify who approved, authorized, or changed an element in the system for record keeping purposes. For example, added sections require an approval process which should be audited so the registrar's office knows the addition was completed correctly.
- Should the dashboard or visualizations include drill-down capabilities?
 - Drill down capabilities would be desirable as it improves the experience for the end user. Although not required, NIC would see this as a beneficial feature.
- What file types are preferred for schedule and delivery reports?
 - NIC would accept multiple formats for scheduled reports (i.e PDF, HTML, XLSX, etc.).
- How many concurrent user logins are expected within the system?
 - Approximately 20 individuals could be logged in concurrently, especially during heavy scheduling times.
- Is there a need to maintain master data for the Course Scheduling Software?
 - The need to maintain master data will depend on the solution and its technical components. For example, does the system maintain user accounts, access rules, system configuration data, and other elements outside of normal configuration? If so, this data would need to be able to be restored in case of disaster recovery and continuing operation of the service.
- Is a dynamic scheduling feature required to accommodate changing resource availability?
 - Yes. If a schedule needs to change the system should be able to quickly accommodate a change. This normally happens if a classroom needs to be taken offline for maintenance or an event occurs that would require a change in location for a long period of time. Other events include cancellation of courses before the term starts and the possibility of moving different sections to new rooms if that is the case.
- What factors should be considered when designing the user interface for the Course Scheduling Software?
 - Due to the integration requirement with Ellucian Colleague, NIC does prefer a Commercial off-the-shelf solution that has a previous success rate in being used and integrated with the Colleague system. This is to ensure compatibility, data integrity, and be able to accommodate changes from Ellucian should/as they arise.

The user interface should be easy to understand for non-technical users.

- Is there an estimated budget range or allocation for the Course Scheduling Software, including implementation, training, and ongoing support costs?
 - NIC's budget is flexible based on the proposals provided and the needs of the college. Overall proposals will be scored equally as per the scoring matrix.
- Does NIC prefer a one-time licensing fee, an annual subscription, or a hybrid model for the new solution?
 - NIC does not hold a preference on ongoing costs and will leave pricing models to the discretion of vendors providing responses to the RFP. NIC does require that the vendor can accommodate a billing cycle that fits within NIC's academic budget cycle of July 1-June 30 of each year.
- Are there specific budgetary considerations for accommodating license costs?
 - NIC's budget is flexible based on the proposals provided and the needs of the college. Overall proposals will be scored equally as per the scoring matrix.
- Does NIC prefer a Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS), or is custom software development preferred for a more tailored approach?
 - Due to the integration requirement with Ellucian Colleague and the Ethos API, NIC does prefer a Commercial off-the-shelf solution that has a previous success rate in being used, updated, and integrated with the Colleague system. This is to ensure compatibility, data integrity, and be able to accommodate changes from Ellucian should/as they arise.
- Is NIC open to offshore development and support (outside the USA), or does it prefer all work to be completed onsite or offsite within the USA?
 - NIC prefers that work be completed within the USA and that support individuals speak English as its native language.