

Question:

Does VSC have SQL and/or ODS for Colleague?

Answer:

Yes, the VSC has SQL for Colleague.

Question:

- For the response format, we plan on responding to:

1. 4.0 Scope of Work
2. 5.0 Qualifications References, and Pricing.
3. 6.11 Intent to Bid

Section 4.0 references the requirements listed in 3.0, so we plan on incorporating them at the beginning of 4.0. Please confirm this format is in line with what VSC is expecting?

Answer:

Yes, the format you have outlined for your response, incorporating requirements listed in section 3 into the beginning of your response in section 4, meets our expectations.

Question:

Can VSC confirm if it requires vendors to complete Appendix A line by line, or if it would prefer a more simple response in Question 4.6.3 on how the vendor will comply more generally?

Answer:

The VSC prefers a more simple response in Question 4.6.3 on how the vendor will comply with Appendix A Third Party Data Security Requirements.

Question:

Based on VSC's structure and EAB's experience serving college systems across the country, we recommend implementing the proposed solution individually at each VSC institution (Castleton University, Community College of Vermont, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College) and customizing the configuration account for each institution's unique needs. Is this approach in line with VSC's goals through this RFP and would it be viewed favorably in a response?

Answer:

Either approach is acceptable.

Question:

Does VSC have a single instance of Colleague (that is centrally hosted) across the system or does each school have its own unique SIS instance that is housed at the campus level?

Answer:

The VSC has a single instance of Colleague that is centrally hosted.

Question:

Does VSC's Colleague instance use a Unidata or SQL backend?

- If Unidata, is VSC planning to migrate to SQL or another SIS system anytime soon?
- If Unidata, do you have internally or have a team of external consultants that you've worked with to get data out of their system?
- Does VSC have standard Colleague web-service APIs in production to support student registration in place?

Answer:

The VSC Colleague instance uses SQL backend. Yes, the VSC has standard Colleague web-service APIs in place in production to support student registration.

Question:

What strategic challenges is VSC looking to address through this RFP? Are there specific goals VSC is looking to achieve? And in what time period?

Answer:

The strategic priority the VSC is looking to address through this RFP is to improve retention and graduation rates. See <https://www.vsc.edu/board-of-trustees/strategic-planning/> and <https://www.vsc.edu/academic-programs-initiatives/start-to-finish/>.

Question:

What are some challenges unique to VSC that you think proposing vendors should be aware of as they compose their responses?

Answer:

The need to advise students who are enrolled in multiple institutions within the VSC simultaneously or who transfer among institutions.

The need to implement a solution with sufficient configurability to meet the needs of four distinct institutions serving both traditional and post-traditional learners who engage in their learning in person, online, and via video communication technologies.

Question:

Section 5.2 Pricing states that VSC expects fully bundled pricing for each service offered and any tiered pricing or volume purchasing discounts that may be available due to purchase loads. Will all VSC schools make one purchasing decision, or is VSC looking for tiered pricing based on the number of schools that will make a purchase?

Answer:

The VSC will make one purchasing decision for all schools.

Question:

Section 7.0 Appendices / Appendix A - Third Party Data Security Requirements

What needs to be provided in this section from the vendor? Do specific documents need to be filled out or does the vendor need to provide information in this section?

Answer:

The VSC prefers a more simple response on how the vendor will comply with Appendix A Third Party Data Security Requirements.

Question:

Is VSC looking to implement a single instance of the chosen student success and advising platform, or four separate instances at its four institutions?

Answer:

The VSC is open to either option, depending on the capabilities of the solution.

Question:

On page 3, item 3.1.14, the RFP states: Support an evidence-based predictive advising model

- QUESTION: Is VSC looking for reporting and predictive modeling on an individual student level to make tactical decisions, or is VSC looking for institutional analytics to better understand specific cohorts and predictive factors to make strategic decisions, or a combination of both?

Answer:

Potentially both, but our first priority is to inform tactical decisions and automate first-level support processes tailored to the individual student.

Question:

Do you have current providers in the following areas, and if so, who?

- Analytics provider
- Early alert/retention solution
- Degree planning/auditing solution

Answer:

- Analytics provider: no
- Early alert/retention solution: our four institutions currently use a variety of home-grown solutions.
- Degree planning/auditing solution: all of our institutions currently use degree auditing in Ellucian Colleague and we are working towards implementation of Ellucian Student Planning.

Question:

Do you have an approved budget for this project, and if so, can you share what it is?

Answer:

We will be making a final budget decision based on responses to the RFP.

Question:

Can you provide estimated dates for the following?

- Date of implementation
- Date of go-live
- Length of contract

Answer:

- Fall 2019
- January 2020
- As requested, please provide pricing for 36 and 60 months

Question:

Are you able to provide the names and titles of the team members who will be on the review / evaluation committee?

Answer:

Our review committee will include the following roles:

System Chief Academic Officer

System Director of Information Technology

System Project Manager

Institution: Associate Academic Dean

Institution: Director of Admissions

Institution: Director of Student Support Services

Institution: Director of Advising, Advising Resources

Institution: Faculty (with teaching and academic advising responsibilities)

Institution: Developmental Education Committee Co-Chair

Question:

Do each of the Vermont State Colleges have their own catalog of programs?

Answer:

Yes.

Question:

Do colleges ever share course numbers or have courses equated across all Vermont State Colleges?

Answer:

Yes, all colleges share a common course numbering system, including some shared courses and some equated courses, and some transfer agreements. We are working to implement a common framework of general education course types across all institutions.

Question:

Are there common General Education requirements or remedial course pathways across colleges?

Answer:

We are working to implement a common framework of general education course types across all institutions. We have aligned remedial course pathways.

Question:

Can students take courses at multiple Vermont State Colleges, including online, towards a program or are those courses considered transfer credit?

Answer:

Yes, students can take courses at multiple VSC institutions simultaneously, including online, towards a program. Courses are not considered transfer credit and are included on a single system-wide transcript.

Question:

Can you please describe the typical process a student goes through today to build a degree plan?

Answer:

Registrars have built degree audits for all programs across our institutions. All institutions are working towards building semester-by-semester degree maps, with a target completion of 2020. Currently our institutions use a combination of the degree maps and degree audit tool to support students in building a degree plan.

Question:

Does each of the 4 institutions run on the same instance of colleague, canvas, etc? Or does each institution have their own instance, with specific / different data fields in each of the 4?

Answer:

All institutions use the same instance of Colleague and Canvas.

Question:

Will training for the solution be done with representatives from each school attending training sessions? Is the expectation that each institution will have their own training session, individually?

Answer:

We expect a significant portion, if not all, training can be done with representatives from each institution attending a system-wide session. Where significant configuration specific to an institution is part of a proposal, we will be looking to proposals to define what will be required for institution-specific training to support a successful implementation.

Question:

Do each of the institutions use their own ERP, or do they share a single instance?

Answer:

Single instance.

Question:

Do each of the four institutions listed in the RFP employ their own authentication system?

Answer:

We use a single authentication system.

Question:

Can you please expound on what is meant by “customer-required data retention and access” in 3.2.13?

Answer:

The VSC would like to know how long data is retained and do we access that data.

Question:

Our solution provides named user licenses. In order to provide pricing we are asking the Colleges to provide the number of individuals who will need access to our solution based upon the following:

- Provost(s)
- VP and/or director of retention/student success
- VP and/or director of student services/student affairs
- VP and/or director of academic advising

Answer:

Our system of 4 institutions includes:

4 Chief Academic Officers (provost)

4 Deans of Students (senior student affairs role)

Other roles are more varied and distributed, but include approximately 1-2 additional unique individuals per institution with responsibilities primarily associated with student support services and/or academic advising.