

Feedback on HRMS Payroll System

PART II

December 2004

Prepared for the December 2004 meeting of the
University of Rochester Faculty Senate

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, December 14, 2004

Schlegel Hall 103

Respectfully submitted by the faculty members
of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee

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This is the second report of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee on HRMS. It is based on a fresh set of responses from supervisors, timekeepers, administrators, and department heads regarding their continuing experience with this system. We received these responses in the first week of December 2004.

It is now five months since the implementation of the system. It is three months since our first set of inquiries, which resulted in the first, 82-page report of the Faculty Senate on HRMS <<http://www.rochester.edu/Faculty/senate/HRMSsummary1.pdf>>, presented at the Senate's October meeting. And it is now past the midpoint of the 90-day period established by Mr. Paprocki and Mr. Murphy at the October meeting for resolving the serious problems that this system is causing throughout the University.

We received responses from 121 departmental representatives, who work with this system on a regular basis or who supervise others working with this system. (This is more people than responded to our first set of inquiries in late August and early September, which resulted in the original report in October.) We heard from an additional 15 people, reporting on their individual experiences with their pay stubs, although we did not solicit individual responses during this round of inquiries. For individuals, the single biggest complaint with HRMS remains the lack of either a paper pay stub or an electronic pay stub that can be printed to a single sheet of paper.

Our e-mail inquiry asked two specific questions:

1. Have most of the main problems with this system now been solved, or does the system continue to disrupt the normal work responsibilities within your department?
2. If problems do remain, which aspects of the system contribute most to the disruption?

Just over one-quarter of the responses—34 of the 121 people responding—stated that they were satisfied with how the system worked. Most of these people described their own units and departments as small, speculating that their satisfaction with the system might be due to the relatively small hourly payrolls for which their departments are responsible.

The remaining three-quarters of the respondents—87 of the 121—report that HRMS continues to disrupt their departmental operations in serious ways. These people represent not only the large majority of respondents but also the largest and most complex departments in the University. Thus the vast majority of people working at the University appear to be represented by this group of respondents.

This group is not uniformly critical. Many of these 87 people compliment individuals within HR PERC, and Internal Audit for their patience with questions and their efforts to deal with problems. Many of them note that HR's leaders have shown genuine energy over the last two months in identifying and attempting to resolve some of the problems that have resulted from the implementation and operation of HRMS. Many of these 87 people single out specific improvements, such as Rapid Time Entry and the promised introduction of new screens to input data. And many of these respondents express their gratitude to the staff who have been working on various committees and task forces that have been charged to ameliorate some of the disruption that HRMS has been generating.

But everyone in this group is ultimately critical of HRMS, improvements and all. They continue to regard the system as an enormous intrusion on the responsibilities and time of staff people and administrators, and they continue to cite an array of problems with the system that interfere with the normal work of this University. Addressing these concerns remains a matter of the highest urgency.

The primary concerns are these:

1. Lag time for batch processing still an enormous burden. Despite widespread assurances by HR officials that this lag time has been reduced to less than an hour, the unanimous testimony of these respondents confirms that typical lag times continue to approach or exceed two hours. This is clearly one of the most serious and pervasive concerns of those working with the time-and-labor module. Many continue to ask why data entered into the system cannot be recognized in real time, rather than only after a delay, let alone delays not of minutes but of two or more hours.

2. *System slow or crashes, especially at punch times and on approval days.* The instability of the system—and its inability to handle the massive entries that come at critical times—continues to interfere with workdays across the University.

3. *Payroll deadlines and procedures.* Given the lag time required for data entry and approval, coupled with the system's traffic problems on Friday afternoons, many people observe that they are forced to work from their homes over the weekend or make HRMS their Monday morning priority. Others note that they can accommodate these problems only by having employees report time before it is worked, thus defeating the point of the precise hour-minute reporting that is supposedly required by law.

4. *Multiple screens.* The basic interface continues to frustrate users throughout the University. Essential data for any one employee is scattered across multiple screens, lists of employees cannot be sorted according to whether or not they actually worked hours during the pay-period (or whether or not they have already been approved), and the system does not permit employees to set up templates with standard weekly hours that they can approve with a click. Several people noted, with great hope and excitement, that HR is soon rolling out a new interface to solve many of these problems. But it is not clear whether this interface will solve all the problems in this category.

5. *Lack of accommodations for special circumstances.* The system does not recognize certain classes of employees, forcing departments to impose jerry-rigged solutions.

6. *Lack of timely, accurate, and comprehensive reports.* Many people report that it is difficult, even impossible, to generate the reports that they need to confirm that timecards have been entered accurately into the system, to review exceptions department-wide, or to examine summary data for all the employees in a department.

7. *Problems with employee lists visible to supervisors.* Many supervisors report superfluous or missing names on their employee lists.

8. Employees with multiple pay sources. Several people report complications with employees, especially but not only students, drawing money from more than one department.

9. Vacations and holidays. Holidays and vacation time do not appear in the system in an intuitive way.

10. Forms. Several people continue to report difficulties with gaining access to forms through HRMS.

11. Job applications. Departmental representatives state that the current process for receiving job applications makes it difficult to process applications efficiently.

12. Macintosh compatibility. As was the case in our October report, Macintosh users continue to report problems with how this system runs on their computers.

13. Confusion regarding division of responsibilities between HR and PERC. While many people compliment the efforts of staff in HR and PERC, several people suggest difficulties in navigating between the two offices.

In the next section of the report, we offer some verbatim responses to illustrate each of these thirteen problems. This is not a comprehensive set of comments, only a few examples to explain the exact nature of the concerns summarized here.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SPECIFIC CONCERNS

1. Lag time for batch processing still an enormous burden

----- “The main issue to me is the inordinate amount of time it takes to make changes and corrections and to approve the time recorded. My staff is on the Kronos system, where they swipe in and out each day. That is not a problem. Any time off taken must be added manually to the system by the supervisors. That is not such a problem, except as far as how long it takes to access each individual's swipe info (at least 10 key strokes). I have to repeat those 10 key strokes for each of the employees since each time the system returns to a default setting (which is not the most common selection). THE big problem is the time it takes to have the entered info appear on the time card (which also takes an inordinate number of keystrokes and time to access). There is apparently some reason that the info entered doesn't transfer in real time to the time card document but must be ‘sent’ on some schedule as a batch. Sometimes this transfer takes 3 - 4 hours, particularly on the morning I am trying to finalize the data for approval, since everyone else is trying to accomplish this as well. I do, as recommended, start early and finalize all that I can ahead of the payroll wrap day, but there are always changes to be made at the last minute. Last week I finished the changes around 10:30 am and could not approve them until 2:25 pm because they did not appear on the time card until then. In the interim, I wasted probably an hour going in and out of the time card screens to see if the info had yet transferred. Then I had to go to the approval screen to actually finalize my part of the payroll process . . . I hope that further improvements can be made in a timely way to ease the burden placed on us in middle management. Overall, it now takes me 6 times as long to do payroll as in the previous system. I totally sympathize with those who have 6 times as many employees to handle!”

----- “I have not experienced the new ½ hour processing time, in spite of assurances from the team that it's been working for the past 3 weeks. We usually enter on one day and double check the next day, because of the lag time.”

----- “Although I'm told that the system turnaround time to input the data (running Time Administration) has been significantly shortened, I have not noticed that this has greatly improved, especially around deadline times. Perhaps it has been shortened somewhat, but I have given up checking every hour to make sure the data ‘took.’ I find I'm usually safe inputting time in the morning and finding it took later in the afternoon so I can then do final approvals. The system is still, unfortunately, cumbersome and there doesn't seem to be any way around it.”

----- “Alot of problems have been solved and with the new reports being developed, PeopleSoft has been quite helpful. However, it is still disruptive. Last week it took the better part of a day for Time Admin to run. We needed to make approvals on some last minute changes and had to continually check to see if the changes had gone through and were ready for approval. This was one of the areas HR said they would fix (they were hoping to reduce Time Admin to no more than an hour) but I haven't noticed a difference yet.”

----- “Many of the main problems have been solved. The **run-time for time administration remains the primary problem left**. The system does not update quickly enough. This makes it difficult for supervisors to approve subordinates time efficiently. And it creates a major problem for our payroll staff in following up with supervisors to get payroll approved on time. If corrections are made, supervisors currently need to wait (an undetermined amount of time) and reenter HRMS to approve corrections. The changes are not made "real-time". HRMS staff have said they hope to reduce cycling time to 30 minutes, but have not accomplished that. Three hours or more are sometimes experienced for updates to register for approval . . . The HRMS system has greatly increased department management's time required for payroll. For our Finance Administrator and Senior Accountant, the old system took about 1 hour for their part in the process. now, each payday is interrupted repeatedly with payroll approval demands, We'd estimate that the administrative time has jumped up to 4-6 hours. At the payroll clerk level, there has been no savings in time - and sometimes she requires additional help. At the supervisor level, the time for payroll approval has increased, as well. Previously the supervisor only needed to sign a timesheet -handling it once. Now a supervisor needs to enter HRMS, make corrections, wait for time administration cycling and do a final approval. While more paper-free, the new HRMS system costs significantly more in staff time at the department level.”

----- “Wish the system was real time - capturing at the time of correction so approval could be handled when you are in the system, instead of the 2 + hour wait.”

----- “Other problems we experience usually are the result of the significant delays between the time an entry or correction is made in an individual staff members online time reporting and the time the supervisor is able to see/approve the entry/ies. Supervisors are finding it difficult enough to make the time for the online approvals, let alone making the time to go back into the system two and three times to check to see if the updates have occurred.”

----- “Many of the major problems have been addressed and the system seems to be running more smoothly. The more frequent communication is definitely a plus to the efficient use of this system. As all the little glitches get and fixed and as the staff gets more familiar with the system, things tend to run more smoothly as well. The only issue our department tends to find cumbersome is the fact that you have a 2-4 block of time that you cannot approve time if changes are made to ones time.”

----- “Having to wait at least 2+ hours before the corrected entries can receive their final approvals.”

----- “I process the payroll for biweekly employees. Each payroll cycle takes 10 hours of my time. With prior systems I was spending around 2 hours with each biweekly cycle. The current system has had features added in the last 30 - 40 days but the end result still has not reduced the time needed to process payroll. The current system is still far too slow in updating changes and the responsibility chain of who fixes problems is still largely a mystery. There seems to be no one place for the end user to request fixes and I am filing more manual 220 forms than I ever needed to in the past. The hotline services have improved tremendously and I have noticed a much better turn around time in follow through from them but I still am frequently on hold for 10 minutes before a rep answers my call. Overall, I can say that the last 30-40 days and the recent

changes have not reduced this burden at all. I understand that nursing is now able to run the time management program on demand so that they have control of when they see their updates. Since I don't have this luxury I am still waiting for up to 4 hours to see edits become available for approval.”

----- “I am the primary timekeeper for the department. The wait between when I finish my payroll editing and am able to run my timecard report is very long. I usually like to try to look it over, to see if I can catch any errors. However, with a 2 hour + wait, I usually have to give it to my boss for approval and we hope that there are no mistakes that we will have to correct and then wait another 2 hours. Also, another annoying feature is when you are reporting time, the system does not retain which reporting method or date range you used for the last employee. I am constantly changing the reporting method and date range after I finish editing each employee’s punches. If there was some sort of memory for these two things, it would save me a great amount of time (roughly 25 - 33% less time would be needed to do payroll). Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns and if I can help in any other way, let me know.”

----- “It takes at least two full days every pay period to input times, wait for processing (allowing for extra ‘down-time’), and re-checking the total hours before the final approval process. This is compared to the hour that it used to take me last year!”

----- “Having to continually go back into the system to check to see if Time Admin has run so that I can approve changes is also tedious. It would be much better if Time Admin happened on more frequent and predictable intervals. I used to be able to better plan when I worked on payroll. I could plan much better if I knew when Time Admin ran (i.e. on the hour, every hour) or if it happened immediately.”

----- “If you have corrections to an employees time card, you have to make the changes and then wait for a period of time before you can approve those changes. The ‘wait time’ is still open as to how long it will take for the changes to come over. God forgive if you forget to come back to the computer to sign off on those changes because the hours will not be approved and thus a staff member to be shorted in their check.”

----- “With regard to the PeopleSoft time-and-labor module and problems that I encounter, I find that it is time-consuming and repetitive. After entering and approving elapsed time, it is necessary to return after a period of time to check to see that the input has ‘taken’ (saving the information doesn't necessarily mean that it will be there the next time that I check). If it is not, I must continue to check (an hour or two later) to make sure that the information is correct. Because most employees rely on their weekly paycheck, it is often very problematic for the employee when his/her paycheck is incorrect because the payable time information entered may not be accurate.”

----- “The disruption that is most disturbing and time consuming revolves around viewing any changes made within the system. Any additions/changes require a TWO hour minimum turn around time which necessitates constant rechecking before any approval process can take place. On one particular approval day the wait was over 4 hours which is unacceptable from a manager's standpoint.”

----- “It would be desirable to have real time updates to changes to time reporting functions; waiting 2-6 hours for changes to be processed is inefficient use of my time.”

----- “The main problem is the amount of time it takes in the systems

1) to input time, wait 2-4 hours or more

2) approve time, wait 2-4 hours or more,

3) then review the timecard to make sure the hours are correct.

This does not take into account the number of times that the system is down due to problems.

This adds time and frustration to payroll. I have had hours turn up on the timecard incorrectly, meaning I have to go back in the system and make corrections. I can't imagine how long it take larger departments to do there payroll.”

----- “The major problem continues to be the time the system takes to process time entries. This can be especially difficult on a payroll deadline day if an error is made in entering time, and I as the approver don't catch it until late in the day. The timekeeper then needs to correct it, and the system can still take anywhere from 2-4 hours to process the change. The only way I know if a correction has been processed is to keep going back in the system and checking.”

----- “Another major cause is that the system takes 3 or more hours to update any changes that you do make. So, once you make changes (Ex: add a vacation day to an employee's week) you have to go back in to the system 3 or more hours later and keep checking to see if the changes have been made for you to approve it.”

----- “Time Administration problem. This problem is still not fixed or running properly. Per meetings at which Tim Eldred spoke, a reasonable time admin would be 30 to 45 minutes. Since September we have experienced short time admin runs of 2 hours and up to 18 hours before our changes showed up. Causing staff to have to log in from home to approve hours because it does not run time. The last run in November was better but not in the reasonable realm of 30 to 45 minutes on the days we do entry . . . What we are aiming at is that when my staff comes in on Friday morning at 8 AM, they enter the 7 people they need to enter (takes 45 minutes or so). Then time admin runs and they can approve the people before they leave at 1 PM. I think we have made one or two pay dates out of the 10 or 11 we have had so far where this was able to be accomplished.”

----- *The only report of a department satisfied with progress on this front comes from Facilities (which, with Nursing and Finance, is one of the three departments taken out of the general batch-processing). Even they, however, suggest room for further improvement. They write: “Since I sent you my report, there have been upgrades to PeopleSoft in the area of the time it takes the system to cycle (time admin). The hours we used to wait were incredible and were the main cause for special check requirements. This has now been decreased to 30 to 40 minutes. If payroll Monday, we could have constant time admin running . . . that would be wonderful.”*

2. System slow or crashes, especially at punch times and on approval days

----- “I continue to have staff who have trouble swiping or using the web clock to manage their time. The swipe machines are either malfunctioning or the system is down so that I end up having to adjust time frequently.”

----- “When I'm trying to do the time card part of timekeeping and approving, the system locks up and I have to reboot. Last week when doing the payroll on a Saturday, it happened 3 times! This is very annoying!!”

----- “We find ourselves having to go back on a frequent basis to punch employees in and out because the system would not them in.”

----- “The system continues to have issues on the approval days. It goes too slow.”

----- “I still do some of this at home on a Saturday or Sunday because I find that the system works better when there is not a heavy demand on it.”

----- “To my knowledge, the SYSTEM has not run without crashing, stalling, mis-processing, or otherwise malfunctioning since its inception. And, when the system goes awry as it did when it was giving people 11 hours for 8 hours of punch time, it still said ‘System Available’ on the HR page. And while the team may have said that it was okay to enter information, (‘it's just Time & Labor that's not processing properly’), I am not confident enough in the system to believe that it will process information that I am entering while ‘T&L's just not processing properly.’ And, in fact, we had an employee who didn't get paid for a portion of the time that was entered during that snafu.”

----- “I continue to have problems with the time that the window stays open. Although it was increased from 20 minutes to 40 minutes, I am running into a problem of being bopped out right in the middle of a time entry. I have called the HELP desk and they have no idea why this is happening. Needless to say, it is very disruptive because I am in the middle of inputting hours and suddenly, it takes me completely out of the system and I have to sign in all over again.”

----- “The system is ‘down’ quite often at the times when employees are trying to clock in or out (between 7:30 - 8:30am and 4:00 - 5:30pm). Their time then needs to be adjusted, adding extra work.”

----- “The system seems to be down and not accessible often. There is rarely communication about this until after the fact.”

----- “Basically, my original concerns still exist. 1) often unable to access system 2) long delays between screens 3) lag time of several hours between steps - reporting, correcting (if necessary), approving) 4) the inability of the system to accommodate the volume of timekeepers/approvers near deadlines.”

----- “Approval day is sometimes a big problem as everyone is trying to access the same site and everything gets terribly slowed down and I believe this has also caused breakdowns.”

----- “I appreciate your time and energy devoted to the issues with HRMS. Here are some problems I am still experiencing: 1) delays on the system on payroll approval days; and 2) several times not being able to access and approve from home (I have tried to do this to avoid the approval day delays).”

----- “During the November 15 time frame we had several issues with items entered and showing up on our screen correctly and when we ran the time card the information was all incorrect. We spent approx 5 hours trying to get it to work.”

----- “I still do some of this at home on a Saturday or Sunday because I find that the system works better when there is not a heavy demand on it.”

----- “The internet access to the system seems to be down frequently which impacts both the people that are trying to enter their ‘in & out’ punches on a daily basis and the timekeepers review and approval of time. I am responsible for approx. 20 hourly employees and 4 semi monthly exempt employees. Because of the uncertainty of the system punches and their accuracy, our hourly staff continues to sign in on a manual sign in sheet and also continue to submit a bi-weekly written timecard to me to cross reference. These additional tools have been helpful in making sure employees' time can be accurately corrected & accounted for when the system is down or they are unable to either enter their time through the webclock or forget to enter their ‘elapsed time,’ as you can imagine are time intensive when cross checking. What used to take me about an hour & a half every 2 weeks is now taking me approximately 8 - 10 hours.”

3. Payroll deadlines and procedures

----- “The payroll deadlines also are a real problem. Hourly staff don't punch out until the end of the day on Friday. Because of the time administration problem (above), supervisors are not in position to approve time until Monday morning. We have many supervisors and, frankly, approving payroll first thing on Monday morning is not always the highest priority. If the payroll deadline were moved from Monday to Tuesday, it would provide a more reasonable amount of time to get supervisor approvals into HRMS.”

----- “My largest complaints are:

1) The time delay after a change is made. If I'm going into approve time on Monday, there is a very short window and I frequently have other meetings or may be traveling. If I enter a change to address a problem, it takes several hours before I can approve that time.

2) The approval deadline for BWH is too short, especially since I could never approve Friday's time until after Friday evening because the system requires time to the exact minute.”

----- “The fact that time cannot be approved ahead of time or after the fact. My staff is not going to stop coming to work because I approve their time before the required date and time! So why not let me do it on Tuesday before I travel to a conference for the rest of the week? Better yet, let me review a single report at the end of the month for all employees and see if it's correct. Then any problems could be corrected in the next month. Now that would be an improvement--aren't online systems supposed to make things MORE convenient?”

----- “The main challenge we have with the HRMS System is the time it takes (hours) in order for the system to pickup any additions/changes to PeopleSoft time, especially when adding time off for the weekend before payroll Mondays. We are still spending many more hours on payroll now than before PeopleSoft.”

----- “We feel there's a huge assumption being made by University leadership about the ability of supervisors to be able to access the system from off site. We are told over and over again that if our professional and/or personal obligations prohibit us from being onsite when approvals are due, the system is accessible from offsite as well. This is simply not true for many of us; i.e., that we have or can find reliable technology offsite to complete these tasks.”

----- “I resent that there is such a short window of opportunity to approve the biweekly hourly employees (unless I choose to approve over the weekend). Employees sign out at 5 PM on Friday and I must approve them by 10 AM on Monday (Departmental deadline). This means that I must always do payroll first even though other issues may be much more important.”

----- “Our department's timekeeper oversees time entry for over 200 people so she has developed a system of requesting that time be submitted to her by noon on Thurs. That means that our staff (including nurses who don't leave at the same time each day) must guesstimate their time of departure on Thurs and their in and out times on Fri. Therefore, they end up needing to carry

over time to the next pay period. It also presents a problem when dealing with staff members who work part-time or per diem, since they are not always here on the day that time is to be submitted and I end up calling them at home. Submitting time early seems to me to defeat the purpose of the system, which is to capture time precisely upon arrival and departure.”

----- “We are finding it frustrating that the system does not allow any flexibility when punching out. We have part-time employees who work 6 hour days. If an employee punches out 1 minute over 6 hours, the default mealtime automatically is deducted from their pay. This then requires an override adjustment.”

4. Multiple screens, with no adaptations for routine hours worked (or no hours worked)

----- “We went to a meeting earlier in the month. According to information they gave us, there are going to be streamlined entry options coming after the first of the year. I know that our supervisor will be very happy to be able to approve all of us on one screen. Will save a LOT of time.”

----- “MUCH BETTER: The new promised all-in-one screen for each employee that we just previewed in a meeting today! YAHOO.”

----- “Problem: The length of time it takes to do payroll. (let me explain) . . . I input payroll for approximately 80 technicians on a bi-weekly basis.. 20 semi-monthly, and 40-60 monthly staff. With the Kronos Sytem and entering bi-weekly payroll, it took approximately 4-6 hrs. on the processing Monday (to input swipe errors and approve payroll). It currently takes with PeopleSoft - daily or weekly monitoring in order to stay ahead before approval Monday. Approval Monday is a lengthy day also. What appears to be the frustration (for me) . . . is the multiple windows you need to have open in order to view: Start time, stop time, total hrs., swipe errors, if applicable - holiday pay, vacation, PTO elapsed time screens, and approval page.”

----- “Navigating in this system is terrible. To not be able to use the back button without being kicked out of the system - to have to look up by employee number - to have exceptions appear that are for your student workers, but not for the job they work in your department - to not be able to run reports quickly - to not be able to change an exception from the screen that notes the exception - to not have a clear path of where to edit time - these are only a few of those on a long list of issues that cause many extra hours of work to submit and troubleshoot payroll.”

----- “There are so many steps involved in the system. The need to go into multiple areas to look at all aspects of each person's time is very time consuming. With the prior system, we could see it all one screen. It now takes two people in our section to complete the task of timekeeping where it used to only take one.”

----- “Although the overall process has improved somewhat with some of the enhancements that have been made and increased familiarity, the approval process itself continues to be cumbersome and time intensive with multiple separate screens needing to be cross referenced such as exception reports, timecards, payable time, etc. As an example, because of the way overtime is shown (or actually not specifically shown) on the ‘approve payable time’ screen causes me to question whether a punch is missing on a Friday or whether the time has actually rolled into overtime.”

----- “The approval page is not very helpful. It shows time for the pay periods in the future so that you are not able to quickly see that all of your employees are approved. It would be helpful if it only showed time for the pay period you are approving. Then once they are approved, their name drops off the list. So, at the end of the day everyone should be off the approval list for our department. Otherwise, we are constantly double checking to make sure that the time to be approved is not for the current pay period . . . When Approving time you can't see disability or

overtime. It makes it very hard to assure you are paying the employee for everything they are supposed to be getting.”

----- “Having to flip back and forth to enter Punch time plus elapsed time on one person is labor intensive. It would be easier and less labor intensive to be able to enter punch time and/or elapsed time on one screen for the whole week. This way it would also allow you to make sure that all days were recorded and nothing was missed that the employee would not get paid for. I believe that this issue results in many errors and causes many special check requests that could be avoided . . . Overtime does not show on approval page and can be a result of a missed punch so employee paid shift differential, no way to track but by time card. Overtime reports does not query the current pay period.”

----- “I have to devote a reasonable amount of time each week and every other week to do it as our department is quite large . . . It stems from the multiple steps required to enter time and save it (punched time), go back to the select employees screen to start another process for vacation/sick time (elapsed time). And of course, go back for the Approval steps . . . It has now become part of the job and I have to do it on time, on the deadline given by HRMS for ‘hourlies’ to be paid for work done that pay period . . This is an added responsibility not anticipated, but obviously accepted. I have had to reorganize my entire daily schedule to work this into it, which has now become routine work.”

----- “The whole system is still very labor intensive... having to enter punch time on one screen and elapsed time on another screen. Trying to get reports from another screen.”

----- “Things have gotten better, but not perfect. The PeopleSoft staff have been responding to department complaints and re-designing some of the screens we ‘approvers’ work with to make them more user friendly. I went to a meeting earlier this month at which they demonstrated some new screens and told us about changes coming in January and further down the road. HR is scheduling monthly meetings for those who want to go to learn more and to register any complaints. When I told them that I would like a handbook that would tell ‘why’ to use some of the features, not just ‘how’, they said that is in the making . . . There have been problems paying TAs. I did learn how to do Rapid Time Entry which involves setting up templates and then changing the dates every pay period rather than doing all the punches. There are some problems with that--one needs to set up several small templates to have them work well and dates for every in and out punch need to be changed each pay period. But, it does save a lot of time once the initial templates are set up.”

----- “Also we still do not have the ability to enter all time for a staff member on one screen. E.g., we must enter punch time for one week on one screen, save it, choose next week, enter punch time for next week on another screen, save it, go back to the ‘select employee’ screen, choose ‘elapsed time,’ select employee AGAIN, enter elapsed time for one week, save it, choose next week, enter elapsed for next week on yet another screen, save it. Then choose ‘select employee’ to start all over for another employee. Sounds crazy, doesn't it? But this is what we have to do for each hourly staff member! Then we have to wait for the Time Admin to run so we can approve the hours.”

----- “The time approval page is not a complete and accurate record of all hours worked (specifically relating to overtime hours). Regular hours (hours up to 40 hours) show on the approval page, but hours worked that exceed 40 hours do not show up. Since this happens, I then have to go into the payable time summary page to see the rest of the hours, than go back into the approval page... which is cumbersome. When you approve a given date that has OT hours... you have the sense that you are only approving the regular hours and not the OT hours... when in actuality you are approving both.”

----- “As a timekeeper and approver, I still have major concerns with the Peoplesoft payroll system. The Kronos system was excellent. This new system should be an improvement, not quite a few steps back, like the old Report Express system of 7 years ago. All the new system should have been able to do, was display what we had before as well as the functions, and extend out from there with new reports. It does not. We still have to flip flop back and forth in Report time field from punch to elapsed time, as well as having to go to other pages for approval and accrual banks for PTO and vacation. There should be commands on the 1 swipes page that allows you to view this and then go back to the previous swipes page, without having to go back several pages to get back to this one page . . . Basically you should be able to navigate all the basic needs- swipes, elapse time, accruals, from 1 swipes page and then get back to it with 1 click . . . Otherwise, much valuable time is lost. What use to take 2 hours for me to do, once in 2 weeks, takes 1 hour each of the 10 working days of the pay period.”

----- “At this point, the worst aspect is the proliferation of screens, reports, etc., which makes it very hard and time-consuming to figure out what the employee's intent was. I can see the hours to be approved, but is it really what they meant to put in? They worked in a different screen. It is easier for me to go and ask them than to go through multiple screens or create reports via an extremely user-unfriendly process; of course, this was completely unnecessary when I had paper slips they themselves filled out. There's even talk about using slips anyway to avoid all this bothersome verification.”

----- “We have a fairly small department so the general operation and management of the system is working for us, although it is still not very intuitive. Here are a couple of suggestions for ‘new’ development:

1. An employee should have the option of viewing total hours worked for a pay period (or even a day) in the reporting time section. This would avoid errors during time reporting because you would easily notice if you had 20 or only 3 hours reported because an error was made when inputting. Right now, you can go back and view your time but you have to do a search for it and it takes time and the ‘know-how’ (it’s not a very intuitive process).
2. It would also be nice if it showed sick and vacation hours available in one area and not just vacation accruals.”

----- “The problem with the HRMS system from my standpoint is this: I have to approve each and every student’s timecard, whether that student worked in a given period or not. This means it takes me upwards of 45 minutes on a Monday to look at perhaps as many as 30 time cards

although most do not have time entered on them. The system demands that I approve a timecard with no time on it. If the Human Resources people can adjust the system so that I only see hours that are logged in, that would be extremely helpful.”

----- “SYS code approval for employees with no hours worked is still a question. We have many camp staff and students who are accumulating unapproved SYS codes. This would be very time consuming to approve each one each payperiod. Could a default approval be set to approve the SYS codes when no hours are entered? By clearing up these unapproved SYS codes, the 'time admin' cycle might improve in its speed.”

----- “It would seem reasonable in this day and age to have a system which would be user friendly:

1. One screen where punches are listed with additional lines to add if vacation hours were taken, PTO used, on-call coverage or yes, if lunch was not taken etc.
2. Overtime would also show on the same screen, could be in a different color or such.
3. Vacations could be entered either singularly or by date range.
4. Approvals could be preformed either by the day or by the week.”

----- “The system is just as clunky as it was, largely due to lack of customization. At some other universities, hourly employees with regular schedules can set up a regular schedule in the system and then enter their time for an entire ordinary week with two clicks - one to access the schedule and one to confirm it. More complex procedures are required only for exceptions. PeopleSoft is perfectly capable of being set up for most of U of R's employees to do this but it seems the university is determined to make it harder for everyone by insisting on a basically uncustomized system . . . Nothing has been done to make ‘templates’ in rapid time entry act as true templates. I've given up using rapid time entry for my students because it generally takes just as much time as working without it, particularly when there's any variation at all in a student's schedule.”

----- “Using Rapid Time, it is time-consuming to add the dates for each employee each week for each in and out punch.”

----- “I did learn how to do Rapid Time Entry which involves setting up templates and then changing the dates every pay period rather than doing all the punches. There are some problems with that--one needs to set up several small templates to have them work well and dates for every in and out punch need to be changed each pay period. But, it does save a lot of time once the initial templates are set up.”

----- “There are still too many screens. Staff have multiple screens to review before approving staff time instead of just having one screen to look at to approve. This leads to many errors in employee paychecks.”

----- “Overall, HRMS is still having a big impact on work loads because, contrary to what HR leadership seems to believe, this is a large new time-consuming responsibility to input payroll data and do the double checks and approvals.”

5. Lack of accommodations for special circumstances

----- “HRMS is a constant disruption to our work, basically because it is not set up to meet the demands of our department. We have special rates for our union members, and it is impossible to input the time without trying to manipulate and calculate the hours to make up for the lack of ‘real’ codes for overtime, shift differential, boiler op. pay, call-in time etc. So, it is difficult because you can not just put in the hours and be done. You have to put in extra hours to make up for overtime or call- in pay, because there is no way to input that. Not to mention the fact that, even when we would input everything sometimes things would be dropped from the system, and you have no way to confirm that the time you put in and approved is actually being processed at payroll. So there were many times where we would have employees who were paid for one week, but not the next. Or who were paid only their overtime and not their regular hours. The system puts too much responsibility on the department, but the department has no ability to follow through. So, the accuracy of the time reported is impossible to verify.”

----- “According to the information I have, student employees can still only report time worked on the same day they have put in the time. This stricture remains a problem when, as in the case for my students, they work at home or in the Hopeman Cleanroom or off-campus, say at RIT doing microfabrications. In these circumstances, students are forced to invent something and record work on different day, thus sort of perjuring themselves. This inflexibility wrt time reporting modes does not foster respect for honest reporting of hours actually worked . . . I must repeat my request that all part-time and summer undergrad. student employees be allowed to record their hours worked once per week, instead of on the day worked. The present system fosters disrespect for the system (already mentioned) but it also squanders valuable time on meaningless bean counting.”

6. Lack of timely, accurate, and comprehensive reports

----- “Being able to run a report to review exceptions department-wide and for a specific time period would be a large time saver for our payroll clerk. We currently have to scan each time card individually or run an individual exception report by group to look for problems. Being able to run multiple groups for exception reports, similar to running reports for time cards and time-to-be-paid, would be helpful. We have found the Time to Be Paid report to very helpful.”

----- “Report run time problems. When we first went onto the system in July and August the reports ran within a minute or two. Once they started trying to adjust the system after the Sept meetings, there is no guarantee on how long a report will take. Some short ones can take up to ten minutes and I have had ones take as long as 25 minutes. This is disruptive, when you think it is short and it should be done in 2 or 3 minutes and you keep checking. Then if the selection was done incorrectly and you have to re-run it, you have wasted a 1/2 hour easily. The same day I was having problems in Bausch & Lomb, I went over to Wallis Hall and items ran much quicker, so it could be a multiple of issues, including band-width, and usage issues.”

----- “Viewing vacation/PTO accruals is a very cumbersome process. When I need to know a staff member's vacation or PTO balance (whether BWH, SMO or MON), I end up asking the employee to go into HRMS and view their last paycheck and tell me their balance, since that's much easier than running the necessary report to check the balance. (This is not very customer friendly).”

----- “Over payment on stipends and salary - Every change that is submitted to the Service Center we review for accuracy, which is new in the graduate area, but we are doing it. When we print out the 506 forms off of the system, it shows the correct information. When the students get their paychecks, they have been paid more than what the system information shows. This was never caught by any checks and balances in PERC or HRMS. Our department had to request multiple times for a report to be run to determine this. A report was run once but has not been set up or given to us again. When I addressed this issue to Chuck Murphy and Tim Eldred in an e-mail dated Sept 7th, Barb Saat responded saying that her office would provide the information but they did not, they just sent our request onto the HRMS. So we continue to have incorrect pays and it is hit or miss if they are caught. As a side note, we would not have made it through this process without the River Campus HR office they have been great but they are not payroll specialist or computer programmers.”

----- “Most reports that I am familiar with running, (ie. timecards) are extremely time consuming in general to generate with multiple steps, screens, and mouse clicks to access them. Often time just waiting for the system to ‘refresh’ while compiling reports can feel like an eternity and take minutes to complete . . . I am unsure how and/or where to find information/reports that were received previously that would be helpful to my managers regarding "paid out" dollars and/or hours . . . Some of the items I see with using the system seem like they would be easy to resolve but I realize may not be. For example, below are a couple of examples relating to the individually printed timecard report -- 1) Although the time card now gives a total for the PAYABLE TRC totals, it includes the ‘1.00’ Z-payroll/Accrual Processing Code in the total so

we have to automatically subtract it when we review the total hours for the 2 week period; 2) PAYABLE TRC totals on the timecard aren't necessarily the 'approved' hours. The timekeeper has to visually review the timecard under PAYABLE TIME to make sure each daily line shows as approved so it will be paid . . . There is much more that could be said, however, it feels somewhat difficult to express completely via an e-mail.

----- "To avoid problems with payroll and to make sure everyone is paid correctly, I proactively run timecards on all of our hourly employees. Each two weeks, on the Thursday prior to Monday's deadline to approve 'bi-weekly' time, the process begins. I ask employees to have their time entered by 4 p.m. on those Thursdays, so that we have time to correct problems. I generate timecards, review the data, make corrections and then re-run timecards again; a process that often is repeatedly required to correct errors. The software is exacting; i.e. the corrections don't always 'take' and must be redone by deleting the original time and reentering. Realizing the time involved in entering time for each hourly employee would add up, our department chose to enable each employee to enter their own hours. However, they often have difficulty and I, or someone else in the department, must still enter or reenter the time for them. Even employees who pay meticulous attention experience problems and report a lot of frustration. For me, entering or reporting time takes no less than eight screens to get to the point where I can begin to type in their time. The process to enter time is laborious, exacting and provides few alerts when the user errs. And there are continuous mistakes in the entering of time. For example, users often enter an 'out' time before the 'in' time, and the system does not give any indication that there is a problem unless the time approver generates a time card and checks for 'outstanding exceptions.' However, the employee will not be paid for that day until that particular error is corrected. Exact time in and out must be entered daily, and mistakes happen, especially when employees forget to indicate PM vs. AM (the default). The system would have paid one of our students over 200 hours last week had I not ran and checked a timecard, due to this type of mistake. The process to run timecards takes no less than 13 screens, and this is after you know what to enter and which line(s) to choose on which particular screen. The software interface is often confusing and provides little 'intuitive' interaction. Once the timecards are generated, I review each employee's data for accuracy. My department's hourly timecards generates a pdf of approx. 35 pages of tiny, 7 point type. After reviewing each person's timecard and making notes of the needed corrections, I reenter HRMS and choose each employee individually to make those corrections. Again, multiple screens are involved. The delay time for the sytem to process has improved a lot since the inception of this system. Intially, it often took up to two minutes for the software to 'process' the data and get to another entry screen. This now takes seconds. Still, the time involved in the seemingly simple tasks adds up significantly. Following corrections, the timecard must be rerun and checked again. The user must wait to give HRMS system time to process the entry. There is also a delay from the time an employee enters their time until it is processed through the system and ready for approval. You can look to see if an employee has entered time, but the only way to determine if an hourly employee's time has ran through the system, and is actually ready to be approved, is to run a timecard. If time is approved before it has processed through the system, the system is 'closed' and the person will either not be paid for that work until the following time period, or the department will have to pay \$25 for a special check."

----- “In general the new system overall requires much more time. I feel as though there are several checks and balances I must perform each pay period to ensure there are no errors of either over or under payment. Just a few examples are as follows:

- a. It is cumbersome to have one menu to edit/check punch times and yet another page/menu to input elapsed time.
- b. I run several time card reports during each pay period to check hours before approvals, if changes are needed, I have to wait yet another few hours or a day until approvals can be done.
- c. I have to run a program to check accruals before using them in the elapsed time since I cannot remember how many accruals 20 people have.
- d. I have to remember to go to yet another program to take care of any outstanding exceptions.

I understand the importance of the system to the University as a whole, thus I have taken the extra time as needed to learn the system and make sure my department is properly accounted for. I can only imagine how cumbersome the system must be for those users that have hundreds of employees.”

7. Problems with employee lists visible to supervisors

----- “My ‘employee list’ when I ‘get all employees’ always changes and often includes people who I don't even know.”

----- “Last week when I was told I finally had access to the system as a manager, I went into the PeopleSoft manager page only to find all of my colleagues . . . listed and none of the writing tutors I oversee. I should not have had access to all of my colleagues' employee ID numbers. I can't help but wonder who has inappropriately had access to all of my own personal information because of problems with this system.” [This specific problem has now been resolved.]

----- “There is no way to update the system for the department. So, our Housekeeping supervisor can not approve all of her staff, because half of them are listed under our Trades Supervisor and vice versa. So, it is often a combined effort to approve the time between 3 people, all of us at one computer. It takes a lot of time. And obviously we can not just put our department on hold since it is a customer service oriented department.”

----- “Getting students in/out of the HRMS system. This has been problematic for months. We need a quick way to get the students in and out of the system, and so far we have had to ask repeatedly for weeks to get these taken care of - we were even told they were done manually and they still remained as they were. Our student workers need to start the week prior to the start of the school calendar, yet we are not permitted to have them in the system until after the school year starts - this delay is a huge headache for us - we have 65+ workers that need to be in the system asap in August/September.”

----- “The Eastman Community Music School is part of my oversight for the Summers only. The staff member who does their payroll has to find their way through 460 names to pay the approximately 130 that are actually employed. (Many of the other names belong to Eastman students who have received graduate awards. Despite work with our finance department, we can't seem to rid ourselves of these unneeded names.)

----- “When I approve time, I should just see those employees that I can approve.”

8. Employees with multiple pay sources

----- “I’ve had to notify 3-4 students who have other jobs that I am deleting their extra hours. For example, one student’s hours (a total of nearly 24 hours) was showing up on my payroll for approval. Obviously they are swiping their times into the system, but forgetting the Empl Record #.”

----- “There are still issues with undergraduate student payroll that have not yet been resolved, as we continue to experience problems with the salary distributions for students with more than one position or account number.”

9. Vacations and holidays

----- “There remain problems with accrued vacation time for staff. There was not a clean walk-through from the old paper-based system to HRMS . . . Keeping holidays off the system until the proper payroll period has arrived would be an improvement. Also, can holidays show up on elapsed time just like SYS codes appear (and can’t be deleted) so that staff will know that the holiday is there? We had several inquiries on this for the Thanksgiving holiday.”

----- “During Holiday payroll periods it seems there is always running time admin problems and holidays show up in the wrong payroll period.”

10. Forms

----- “Another part of the system that has added to the department level work load is the process to complete forms such as 506/520s, 610s etc. to hire or make changes for faculty, staff, graduate students and post-doctoral fellows. Previously, forms were requested from and provided by PERC. The department completed the form and sent it to the Dean's office. From there, the Dean's office mailed the pages of the multi-part form to the appropriate places. Now the process to generate the form is at the department level and requires going through a dozen or so screens that use terms that are, at best, confusing. After the form is generated, rather than being able to complete the information on-line, the form must still be completed manually, exactly as it was before and handled exactly as before, with the exception that there is now an added layer of processing through HRMS. Also, the Dean's office now only sends a copy to HRMS, and returns the form to the department to mail to others as needed. The multi-part forms provided the extra copies, so why should the Dean's office have to suddenly pay for the extra copies? If these forms could be handled completely on-line, this process would be helpful. As it is, extra work and extra cost is now at the department level.”

----- “I'd like to see the service center continue to run PAF forms for annual wage and salary programs and new employees, I still have not had the time to run new forms from the July 2004 increases.”

----- “Generating forms is burdensome. The system is extremely slow in processing appointment and appointment change forms for printing.”

----- “One of my biggest complaints is the awful cumbersomeness of obtaining forms when I need to get one. After doing 100 keystrokes to get the form, I still have to write the info in. It's the awful, awful procedures to get the forms, and to boot - the words we use and click on don't make any sense.”

----- “HRMS Service Center data entry errors - this issues has gotten better, but the quality of data entry is not to the level it was before we went onto this latest Peoplesoft version before the HRMS service center was created. Forms 506, 510, 610 still do not get entered correctly for river campus. There is only one person assigned to River Campus data entry out of the HRMS service center.”

11. Job applications

----- “There still appear to be problems with the job posting/applying function of the new system. As the payroll manager for the department, I am the only one who can open and print out resumes from applicants. Prior to PeopleSoft, I would note on a job requisition the contact person (since we are a research department, that would typically be a the P.I. of the lab) and resumes would go directly to him/her. However, now I need to remember to check the system, open up resumes and print them to give to the person who will do the hiring. It would be very helpful if this could be changed so that the person who will ultimately be making the hiring decision can view and print resumes also, not just me. I have also had comments from outsiders (including the Department of Labor) that the on-line application system is difficult and confusing to navigate.”

12. Macintosh compatibility

----- “The system is very, very slow for macintosh computers. Reports or forms take between 6 and 8 minutes to process.”

13. Confusion regarding division of responsibilities between HR and PERC

----- “We don't know who is fixing what, when there is a problem. It use to be if there was a problem with payroll, we went to PERC. Now we have 5 places to go - our HR rep, the HRMS service center, PERC, River Campus HR or the HR project team. There has not been a clear delineation of duties between the different offices, so when we have a problem we get shuffled around. On one of our recent issues, we had done all our communications through the HRMS service center. After the 506 items were supposedly corrected, the corrections were entered wrong and I went back to the service center and the people I had worked with. They said ‘oh that's not our problem - that is PERC's problem they did the data entry.’ PERC has not answered, so my issue is still unresolved. We use to have a rep that fixed things in PERC, now we spend our time trying to track down who can address our issue. There is no tracking of outstanding issues and no list of who is assigned to resolve them. So issues from July are still outstanding and unresolved, because I don't keep bugging PERC and HRMS service center. It is totally the department's responsibility to keep bugging someone until it is resolved. This means phone calls, e-mails multiple times.”