

## HIGHLIGHTS

### OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Auburn wanted to eliminate all manual processing of international payments into its Banner student information system, with its staff better able to access dashboards to track and reconcile transactions. Finding the right solution would eliminate an error-prone and time-consuming process for the school's Office of Student Financial Services.
- ▶ The University sought to engage a qualified business partner with proven knowledge and skills within international payments management, cross-border money movement technologies, and industry compliance laws and regulations.

### CHALLENGES

- ▶ Auburn's leadership was sensitive in vetting what partners and programs it would plug into its Banner student information system because of related security and privacy concerns.
- ▶ A complex vetting and vendor review practice, involving numerous offices and individuals, would add to the selection and implementation process.
- ▶ Educating its international students and program staff about the benefits of the online payment process.

### SOLUTIONS

- ▶ While the payments solution default link placement would have been in its Banner self-service module under a student registration section, Auburn opted to copy the logic and place the international payments tab into its 'My Finances' portal along with their e-billing tab.
- ▶ Use of APIs and baseline programs enabled Auburn to fully implement the new process within a sixty-day period.

# PARTNERING WITH AUBURN UNIVERSITY FOR INTERNATIONAL CROSS BORDER TUITION PAYMENTS

## SIMPLIFYING INTERNATIONAL PAYMENTS WHILE OPTIMIZING COSTS

Trying to eliminate the time-consuming manual and tedious process of international students' payments, while reducing potential delays and reconciliation issues, led Auburn University to look for an innovative payment alternative that could be compatible with its student information system, Banner, and other vendor solutions to simplify and streamline this taxing business process.

While Auburn already utilized a separate firm to handle its electronic billing and domestic payment processing, identifying a firm with experience and knowledge of the international payments space was critical. At the same time, it was important for the University to engage a business partner that could meet its strict criteria for handling and securing its students' data on a global scale.



## HIGHLIGHTS

### OUTCOMES



- Migrating international payments to a digital streamlined solution enabled Auburn to create a virtual one-stop location in its portal for student finance information and transactions.
- A simplified payment processing solution enables cashiers and other staff to use dashboards and innovative tools for improved transaction tracking, enhancement of student services and an overall superior user experience.
- Coordination with the University's Office of International Programs will better communicate and promote changes with its degree-seeking and intensive English language non-credit students.

### ADVICE TO OTHERS



- Engagement with IT staff early in the process helps to identify unknown issues and ultimately, expedite the implementation process.
- Collaboration is vital within the approach for soliciting feedback and necessary approvals from other key constituencies on campus.



## ASSESSING THE MARKETPLACE

Vetting a potential business partner was a critical and extensive process for Auburn staff. It was important to the University's Office of Information Technology and their Procurement department to understand what innovative efficiencies a prospective vendor could bring to the table prioritizing data sensitivity, both while doing business together and if the partnership ended.

Seamless integration with its student information system, ellucian Banner, was also essential with a new partnership. In addition, the University examined how a prospective vendor would comply with numerous federal and state laws and regulations, as well as University policies. Issues such as meeting Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for its web portal and how a company would handle data security and privacy, were also major factors in Auburn's decision-making process.

Besides the normal legal reviews for vendor contracts, Auburn also required internal vetting and approvals from its Business and Compliance (Internal Audits) offices, along with its PCI group, which reviews processes and controls for all payment offerings.

## SEAMLESS INTEGRATION

Auburn's Office of Information Technology (OIT) included four staff members to facilitate implementation of the **PayMyTuition** solution. These resources were engaged in different aspects of the project including: Overseeing network management (firewalls), database administration to set up the integration between **PayMyTuition** and Banner, and business analysis to determine requirements and map the new process.

OIT found that the implementation process was much simpler to manage with documentation and process maps that were "easy to understand and follow" early in the onboarding process. With a close collaboration between OIT and the **PayMyTuition** technical team, Auburn was able to complete its implementation and take the solution live within sixty days from the contract signing date.

In addition, integration between **PayMyTuition** and Banner required no customization, relying on the use of APIs and baseline Banner.



**IT'S A MUCH  
MORE**

**EFFICIENT AND  
SAFER PROCESS TO  
HAVE OUR  
INTERNATIONAL  
PAYMENTS MADE  
ONLINE, ESPECIALLY  
WHEN WE HAVE  
FOREIGN STUDENTS  
ARRIVING WITH  
LARGE SUMS OF  
CASH TO MAKE THEIR  
TUITION PAYMENTS."**

Greg McCoy

Director of Student Financial Services  
Auburn University

## **AUBURN UNIVERSITY**

Established in 1856, Auburn University was the first land-grant College in the Southern United States. With an enrollment of 30,440 students in 2019 and full-time faculty and staff of 5,100, the University has over 2,000 international students enrolled in its 15 schools and Colleges, as well as having 1,300 students studying abroad annually.



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