



MCDANIEL
COLLEGE

From Paper-based to Automated and Digital

Modernizing the Purchasing Process at McDaniel College

McDaniel College's motto is "E Tenebris in Lucem Voco," which means "I call you out of darkness into light." But it was McDaniel College's purchasing processes which were stuck in the dark, relying on paper-based forms and manual approvals.

During the pandemic, the inefficiency caused by their manual, paper-based purchasing processes became more acute, with the volume of paper increasing and the time lag between purchase requests and approval growing longer every day. The college knew its current processes were no longer sustainable. And with a strategic imperative to modernize their technology, the team knew something needed to change.

McDaniel College selected Ellucian Purchase to complement its Ellucian Colleague ERP system, enabling them to modernize their antiquated processes, minimize paper-based forms, and reduce the time for purchasing approvals.

CHALLENGES



- Paper-based processes
- Manual, time-consuming approval processes
- Lack of automation
- Imperative to modernize technology

RESULTS



- Reduced paper-based forms and manual processes
- Shortened time to approval through automation
- Increased data accuracy
- Opened up more time to focus on strategic goals of the college



More efficient workflows freed up time so that everyone could spend more time focused on the strategic goals of the college”

The Impetus for Eliminating Paper

Prior to the pandemic, McDaniel College managed purchasing via paper-based forms, shuffled from one approver to the next. While inefficient and frustrating, at the time, the process was tolerated by those who used it. Until the pandemic hit.

With most of the campus community working remotely, management of purchasing approvals fell to a handful of individuals who were in the office. Printing email requests and matching them to invoices was a burden. And the time lag between a purchase request and an approval was long, and growing even longer as the days wore on.

With a strategic imperative to modernize facilities and technology, the team knew that it was time to evaluate manual, time-consuming processes and get rid of as many paper-based forms as possible. The college selected Ellucian Purchase to complement their existing Ellucian Colleague ERP solution, providing an integrated solution to meet their purchasing needs.



Ellucian Purchase provided the college with an affordable way to deliver the technology needed to digitize and automate their purchasing process, enabling the team to reduce paper, improve process efficiency, increase visibility into purchases, and shorten time to approval. More efficient workflows freed up time so that everyone involved in the purchasing process could spend less time tracking purchases and more time focused on the strategic goals of the college.

“Everyone brings something to the table, and has their area of expertise. And we have to do our best to focus on allowing them to focus on doing what they are best at,” said Julie Fisher, Controller, Financial Services department at McDaniel College. “The last thing you want is for your biology professor to waste hours of time trying to order supplies for his experiment, when he could be focusing on the lesson itself.”



“[With ESM Purchase], your workflows are more efficient. And when your workflows are more efficient, you can focus more on the larger, strategic goals of the college”

Driving Adoption Across Campus

Self-described as needing to modernize technology across the board, the team at McDaniel College knew they needed to roll out their new system and processes in a way that met the needs of their user community. The team assigned a resource to focus dedicated time to the project, which is not only helping to expedite the rollout, but is also enabling them to be more successful as they roll out the new system more broadly. Working department by department, and often individual by individual, the team is training their colleagues on the new system at a pace that works for the college.

Pro tip: assign a project management resource who can focus on the project and dedicate a specific amount of time to it throughout the duration of the implementation. That way, you can ensure a swift, successful rollout.

The good news is that the learning curve to use Ellucian Purchase is small for most departments. Because people are familiar with online shopping, the new experience is familiar and easy-to-learn. And for teams such as student engagement and student experience, the benefits add up quickly.

Because the student engagement and student experience teams work closely with student groups, the demand for an easy-to-use, consumer-like experience is





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high. Students identify what they need for an event or activity, and using Ellucian Purchase, the program sponsor can easily place an order and receive approval quickly, eliminating the need to track down a code or receipt and submit an expense report. As a result, the team has greater visibility into purchases and can better deliver on student expectations.

Shifting Focus to What Matters Most

As an institution that prides itself on providing “a diverse, student-centered community dedicated to excellence in the liberal arts and sciences and professional studies,” and to changing lives through “careful mentoring and attention to the individual,” it’s important that everyone can allocate the time needed to make this mission a reality. Because staff now spend less time managing purchasing processes, they can shift their attention to focus on supporting this mission and changing the lives of their students.

“[With ESM Purchase], your workflows are more efficient. And when your workflows are more efficient, you can focus more on the larger, strategic goals of the college,” said Fisher.

By continuing to expand access and drive adoption across campus, the team will increasingly free up time, enabling them to help make McDaniel College’s mission a reality for each and every student.

MANUAL TO MODERNIZED

As many institutions look to make the change from manual to digital, ESM looks forward to helping more new customers modernize procurement by eliminating paper-based, manual processes. If you’re interested in learning more about how ESM can help your institution, please contact us to request a demo.

Talk to the ESM experts about your education institutions’ procurement and spend management needs

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