



# Summary of Findings and Recommendations

*Banner Discovery – Human Resources/Payroll*

*Tennessee State University  
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Think before you print.

## Executive Summary

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Based on the discovery conversations between the Ellucian Consultant and Tennessee State University, several findings and recommendations were identified. The recommendations provided will assist Tennessee State University in increasing their return on investment with the baseline Banner system and to improve current business processes whenever possible.

Tennessee State University's Discovery focused on the areas of Position Control, Onboarding and Hiring, Benefit Administration, Lifecycle of the Employee, Time Entry and Payroll Processing and Other General Human Resources functionality.

Human Resources and Payroll staff have a high level of understanding of the Banner Human Resources System and have done an excellent job of managing the processes and data. Overall, the data that currently exists in the Banner Human Resources Module is clean and meets best practices. However, there are a few recommendations that can improve efficiencies and business processes.

## Position Control

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### Discussions and Findings

Reviewed pages and processes in Banner Human Resources Position Control module hierarchy. Completed a thorough discussion of setup and proven practices.

- Payroll Identification Code Rules (PTRPICT)
- Payroll Calendar Rules (PTRCALN)
- Employee Class Rules (PTRECLS)
- Salary Group Rules (NTRSGRP)
- Salary/Structure Rules (NTRSALA)
- Position Class Rules (NTRPCLS)
- Position Definition (NBAPOSN)
- Position Budget (NBAPBUD)
- Employee Jobs (NBAJOBS)

Budgeting and Fiscal Year End processes and documentation were discussed. The primary components reviewed are:

- Fiscal Year (NBAFISC)
- HR/Finance Set up Rules (NTRFINI)
- Salary/Rate Structure Rules (NTRSALA)
- Salary Group Rules (NTRSGRP)
- Mass Salary Table Roll Rules (NTRSTRL)
- Mass Salary Table Update (NBPMASS)
- Budget Roll Process Parameter Rules (NTRBROL)
- Budget Roll Process (NBPBROL)

Positions and Budgets appear to be set up and managed as recommended. The Budget Team has a great deal of knowledge in managing positions, budgets, and the fiscal year end process. There are a few recommendations to consider.

There are no outstanding concerns regarding the Fiscal year End Process.

Tennessee State University indicated they have canceled or frozen some positions that are no longer used; however, several are still active. Currently creating a list of active positions and vacancies is very time consuming.

The Reports To field on the Position page is currently not being maintained. This field can be used for Time Entry or Leave Reports approval routing queues. The value in the Reports To field can also be used to populate/update the supervisor information on the job record (NBAJOBS). Rules can be defined so that the supervisor information on the job record is automatically populated when a new job is created provided that the Reports To position is currently filled.

Position budget labor distributions are updated when changes are required. This change is also completed on the job records. Labor distributions on the position budget, job and payroll records should be monitored for funds, organizations, accounts, and programs that have been inactivated by Finance. These records will interfere with the posting to Finance.

At this time Tennessee State University Encumbers salaries using the recast method. The Grants department does not want any salary labor restricted fund to encumber. This requires IT involvement to remove the records after the encumbrance maintenance process is ran and before the Finance feed process is began. Doing so, makes the encumbrance feed process lengthy and results in the process not being ran as frequent as needed.

## Recommendations for Process Improvement

- It is recommended to keep the list of active positions current. Positions that are no longer used should be canceled and an end date added. These positions can be reactivated later if needed. This will allow Human Resources and Budget staff to create and run an ARGOS report that will quickly and accurately report a list of currently filled positions and vacancies
- Reports To – Populating the Supervisor information on the job record (NBAJOBS) using the Reports To field on NBAPOSN allows for easier reporting of Supervisors and their Team. Populating and maintaining the Supervisor information is key in implementing the My Team functionality in Banner 9 Employee Dashboard. Recommendation is to use the Mass Salary Table Update process (NBPMASS) to automate the updating of Supervisor information on the job record. This process can be scheduled to run automatically. The Reports To or Supervisor information can also be extracted and used to create organizational charts.
- Consider running the FOAPAL Validation Report (NBRFOAP) to revalidate entries that were previously made in Positions, Jobs and Payroll Records. FOAPAL (Fund, Organization, Account, Program, Activity, and Location) elements must be valid as of the date they are entered. Since there is no backwards validation if an element is terminated or inactivated in Banner Finance, it is recommended to periodically execute this process to highlight records that require change. Invalid values can cause feeds from payroll to finance errors.
- Encumbrances – Banner Human Resources does not include the functionality to limit which funds encumber. Proven practice is to keep Finance ledgers up to date by running the encumbrance maintenance process to recast after each payroll. The need to remove the restricted fund postings slows down the process. Consider working with IT to create a process that can be ran through job submission immediately after the encumbrance maintenance process to remove the records. This allows the user to proceed with the process to feed to Finance.

## IPEDS Reporting

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### Findings

Baseline IPEDS report (PERIPDS) is being used at Tennessee State University. The IPEDS data drives how employees are categorized when filling out the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) survey for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reporting. Using this functionality will ensure that your nationally reported IPEDs data appropriately represents the University of Harford as portions of this information can be view nationwide.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

IPEDS Reporting – Human Resources are familiar with the IPEDs Setup and process. There were no concerns discovered.

## On Boarding and Employee Hiring (Employee Records)

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### Findings

Reviewed current processes for applicant tracking, hiring, and onboarding a new employee which include the following pages

- Person Identification (PPAIDEN)
- Employee (PEAEMPL)
- Employee Jobs (NBAJOBS)
- Job Changes Detail Display (PEAJCDD)
- Earning Codes (PTREARN)
- Leave Category Validation (PTVLCAT)
- Leave Code Rules (PTRLCAT)
- Employee Leave Balances (PEALEAV)
- Employee Leave History (PEILHIS)
- International Information page (GOAINTL)

Human Resources uses People Admin for Faculty/Adjuncts/Staff new hires, rehires, stipends, salary changes, promotions, and other types of personnel transactions. Currently the process into Banner is manual data entry. People Admin 7.0 will include the ETHOS integration and testing will begin soon. Student Employment uses a paper form for hiring which is also results in manual data entry into Banner

Currently Tennessee State University does not track Visa information for non-citizen employees (including student employees). Use of the International Information page (GOAINTL) will ensure information and expirations dates can be monitored. GOAINTL allows tracking of Visa information, required documents, passport, alien registration number, certification of eligibility and nationality information.

Non-Paid Non-Employees currently need to be set up with a non-paid employee position, non-paid employee class and non-paid payroll ID. This will ensure they are not pulled into a payroll run.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- Consider implementing Personnel Actions (EPAFs) in Banner Self-Service to process which would allow Human Resources Student Employment transactions to be submitted, approved, and applied electronically. Originators, approvers and superusers can track and view EPAFs throughout the entire process to ensure transactions are processed in a timely manner. EPAFs also support returning to the originator for correction, provides an audit trail, electronic signatures and adding comments by originators and approvers. Email notifications can be created and scheduled through Banner Communication Management (BCM). These notifications can occur once or multiple times daily.
- Consider using the International Information page (GOAINTL) to enter Visa information and/or Alien Registration Number for any employee who has a non-citizen citizenship code on the Employee Record page (PPAIDEN). This is also a requirement for IPEDS reporting.
- To set up Non-Paid Non-Employees follow the steps in the *Job Aide -Banner Human Resources – Setting up Affiliates – Non-Paid Employees* documents that was provided during the Discovery sessions.



## Deferred Pay and Job Records

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### Findings

Tennessee State University is currently using Banner Human Resource Deferred Pay functionality. Deferred pay is used for employees (mostly faculty) who work and earn pay during a contracted period that is less than 12 months, then allows them to be paid over 12 months. The deferred pay functionality allows for the entire annual salary for the employee to be expensed during the timeframe in which the employee earns the salary versus when it is paid. A portion of the employees' earning is 'accrued' each pay period and fed to a Finance liability account. The employee's deferred pay balance can be viewed on the Employee Job page (NBAJOBS) under the base tab. During the off contract pay periods, the employee is paid from the liability account. During the academic year, the full amount of the expensed salary is charged to the job labor distribution so that the financial reports accurately show when the money was earned versus paid.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- No concerns or additional recommendations.

## Benefit Administration - Benefit, Deductions & Taxes

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### Findings

Below are the most used pages within Benefit Administration:

- Benefit and Deduction Rules (PTRBDCA)
- Benefit Categories (PTRBCAT)
- Benefit and Deduction Mass Change Rules (PTRBDMC)
- Benefit and Deduction Mass Change (PDPBDMC)
- Employee Benefit/Deduction Setup (PDABDSU)
- Employee Benefits/Deductions (PDAEDN)
- Employee Deduction History (PEIDHIS)
- Life Insurance Rules (PTRLIF)
- Life Insurance Premium Rules (PTRPREM)
- Life Insurance Calculation Process Parameter Rules (PTRLIFE)

The Benefit Category Rule (PTRBCAT) page allows you to use the benefit codes defined on the Benefits and Deductions Rule (PTRBDCA) page to establish benefit packages and assign them to specific employee categories. There are some benefits and deductions listed that are no longer used.

Benefits and Deduction Rules (PTRBDCA) labor distribution overrides have been causing issues when the payroll feed error out in Finance. This can be a result of missing overrides for an employee class or a FOAP element has been inactivated in Finance yet still used in Human Resources.

Human Resources currently manually monitors contributions limits to retirement plans. Banner HR provides functionality to facilitate an easier method to comply with 403(b), 401(k), and 457(b) retirement processing options from which an employee can choose, the calculation rules and deduction/benefit processes are used to check for the maximum levels of contribution.

The Employee Benefit/Deduction Setup page (PDABDSU) allows for the quick setup of benefits and deductions for newly hired employees. Using rules set up on the Benefit Category Rules page (PTRBCAT) benefits and deductions can be set to automatically populate, set as required, or manually selected. This allows for quicker and more efficient initial benefit/deduction setup. This page also allows for selection of the appropriate plans for each benefit and deduction.

The arrears functionality on the Employee Benefits/Deduction page (PDAEDN) is used when allowing the payroll calculation process to keep track of arrearage when a full deduction amount cannot be taken. This also can be used to manually set an arrears balance when the employee owes extra toward a premium. Currently the 'Add' functionality is being used to deduct an additional amount and has to be set up each payroll until fully paid.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- It is recommended that end dates be entered on the Benefit Category and Rule (PTRBCAT) page for those that are no longer used. Entering this date prevents the accidental assignment of a benefit or deduction code. When ending a benefit or deduction, add 'DNU' to indicate 'Do Not Use' at the beginning of the codes title on the Benefits and Deductions Rules Page (PTRBDCA).
- Labor Distribution overrides on the Benefit and Deduction Rules (PTRBDCA) are set in groupings by employee class. Proven practice is to set up each employee class with a labor distribution override whether they can enroll in the benefit/deduction at this time. In the future, if a benefit/deduction is opened up for an employee class, the override will be in place and the feed to Finance will not suspend.

- If a payroll feed document is suspended in Finance, the detailed information needed (employee, position, etc.) can easily be found using the Labor Distribution Data Inquiry (NHIDIST) page. In the key block of the page, choose to which category to search (expenses, liabilities, encumbrances, accruals, payout, clearing account, fringe actuals, and budget). Once in the detail block use the filter to find the records that caused the error.
- Consider using banner Human Resources combined limit functionality. This process is initially set up on the Benefit/Deduction Combined Limit Rules page (PTRBDCL). There must at least be two Benefit/Deduction Codes activated and in use for Combined Limit checking during the PHPCALC aggregation process. For system setup, do not utilize this functionality when only one PTRBDCA codes is being used. This feature allows benefits administrators to establish individual deduction code limits as well as regulate an employee/employer combined limit, define an Annual Compensation Limit, and establish limits for catch-up contributions for employees.
- Consider using the Employee Benefit/Deduction page (PDABDSU) to enroll new hires. Setting defaults on the Benefit Category Rules page (PTRBCAT) for the Federal and State Deduction Codes to allow the initial setup even though the employee's W4 has not been received. Once the employee fills out their W4 information, the defaults can be overridden the Employee Benefits/Deduction page (PDADEDN). Also consider using the default functionality for other benefit and deductions as needed.
- Consider setting up the arrears balance and maximum recover amount on the Employee Benefits/Deduction page (PDADEDN). Also be sure to check the active arrear status box. This will allow the deduction to be processed each payroll until the balance is at zero.

## Lifecycle of Employee & Employee Leaves

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### Findings

Discussed the following:

- Employee FMLA Information (PEAFMLA)
- Employee Accommodations (PEAEACC)
- Faculty Administration (PEAFACF)
- Employee Review (PEAREVW)
- General Information (PPAGENL)
- Person Skills (PPASKIL)
- Certification Information (PPACERT)
- Person Experience (PPAEXPR)
- Comment (PPACMNT)

The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides certain employees with up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. Currently FMLA leave is officially being tracked Banner.

#### Terminating Employee Records and Employee Jobs

- Graduate Assistants, Student, and Adjuncts Employee Records (PEAEMPL) are currently not terminated on a regular basis if they are no longer employed.
- Banner allows for different leave statuses to be used on Employee Records (PEAEMPL) and Employee Jobs (NBAJOBS). Valid statuses are Active, Terminated, Leave Without Pay with Benefits, Leave Without Pay Without Benefits, Leave with Full Pay and Benefits, and Leave with Partial Pay and Benefits. At this time, the only additional status used on the job record is Leave Without Pay Without Benefits.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- FMLA Leave – Recommendation is to use the Employee FMLA Information Page (PEAFMLA) for an employee claiming a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act. This page allows you to track FMLA hours used, record and monitor leave and back to work dates. Continue to work toward using this process to track employee's FMLA leave.
- Recommendations for changing employee/job statuses and terminations.
  - Proven practice is to terminate Employee Records (PEAEMPL) when an employee is no longer employed at the University. Consider creating a report of active employee records where they have not had an active job record within a pre-determined amount of time. Three years is the most common amount of time for terminating Adjunct employee records, however; it can be different. This will allow you to run reports to see your active pool of Adjuncts whether or not they are teaching in the current term. Be sure to change the Employee Records (PEAEMPL) status to Terminated.
  - Future Dated Terminations - After terminating an employee's job records (NBAJOBS) and all benefits and deductions (PDAEDN), a future termination date can be added in PEAEMPL or by using the Employee Status Change Page (PEAESCH). In either method, if the termination date is in the future, the employee status can remain Active (A).
    - When a payroll that encompasses the termination date is ran, the employee's status will be automatically updated by the Pay Period Update process (PHPUPDT).

- If the termination date does not fall within the last payroll for the employee or the payroll has already been completed, the status will not get changed. These records can be viewed and terminated via the Termination Verification Process page (PEATMVF).
- Tennessee State University had a long list of employees displayed on this page. These records indicate the employee's last date worked and term reason is populated on the Employee Record (PEAEMPL), yet the status remains 'Active'
- These records should be cleaned up by checking the box to terminate form this page.
- PEAESCH also allows you to put all employee records, job records, benefits and deductions on a Leave status and then return them from leave from the page.
- Also using PEAESCH ensures that the last date worked is populated on the Employee Record (PEAEMPL) as it is needed by IT.

## Payroll Processing

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### Findings

Reviewed and discussed all pages and processes for the Payroll Processing.

- Payroll Identification Code Rules (PTRPICT)
- Payroll Calendar Rules (PTRCALN)
- Employee Jobs (NBAJOBS)
- Verification of Student hours (PHPSHRS)
- Life insurance processing (PTRLIFE) and (PDPLIFE)
- On-Line Time Entry (PHAHOUR)
- Payroll processes, reports, and online inquiry pages

Currently Student Employees are not monitored to determine if they fall below federal enrollment guidelines for enrollment and if they are subject to FICA and Medicare deductions.

Tennessee State University uses Banner Human Resources Self-Service Time Entry and Leave Management for most employees; however, Student Employees continue to submit time on paper.

Time Entry begin dates, submission deadlines and approval deadlines are driven by dates entered into each pay period set up on the Payroll Calendar (PTRCALN). The current Semi-Monthly timesheet is not opened up for entry until the previous payroll is processed, which could be more than a week into the current payroll.

During our conversations it was indicated that Payroll does not run PHPFEXP and NHPFIN2 until 1-2 weeks after the payroll is completed. The Finance feed creates transactions to post expenses, liabilities, and etc. Delaying the feed to Finance results in the Finance ledgers not showing current information.

- It was discovered that many payroll adjustments and labor redistributions (current and prior years) were never completed or fed to Finance. This included checks that were voided in HR but never fed to Finance. This could be a result of waiting to feed to Finance and never doing so.
- The Grants department currently processes labor redistributions. The majority of the labor distributions are due to a change in the grant funding source. Timing of these changes is key to successfully payroll processing and feeding the correct information to Finance.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- Student Employment Enrolled Hours – Proven practice dictates that the Verification of Student Hours (PHPSHRS) process be ran to check enrolled hours. PHPSHRS will toggle the FICA and Medicare status either from Active to Exempt or from Exempt to Active on PDAEDN based on pre-defined rules.
- Student Employment Time Entry – Consider implementing Self-Service Time Entry for student employees. Timesheets can be entered by the student employee, routed through approval queues, and pulled into the payroll process. This eliminates the manual effort needed to review for accuracy and total hours.
- Proven practice is to open the Self-Service timesheet on the first day of the pay period. This promotes entering time as worked/taken in a timely manner instead of waiting until right before the submission deadline.

- The payroll feed to Finance (PHPFEXP and NHPFIN2) must be ran at the time the payroll process is completed. The processes should be ran after payroll adjustments and labor redistributions as well. This will ensure that Banner Human Resources and Finance are current and in synch.
- Labor Redistribution processing is used for exceptions where the job labor distributions were not updated prior to the first payroll when the change becomes effective. Allowing an erroneous funding source to feed to Finance results in a large number of redistributions to be processed. Proven practice is to review and plan for any labor redistribution changes that are needed prior to the payroll run. This will ensure that Payroll and Finance records are in synch and reflect current and accurate information. Doing so will greatly reduce the number of redistributions needed.
  - Review a report on a regular basis to ensure that all adjustments and labor redistributions are fed to Finance in a timely manner.

## Employee Self-Service

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### Findings

Banner Employee Self-Service (Banner 9) provides a highly configurable web-based interface that provides your employees access to Banner Human Resources information. There are many options for selecting the information that is displayed through the Employee Dashboard, referred to as the Employee Profile Dashboard. A demo was presented, and discussions followed.

- **NOTE:** The question came up about displaying Leave Balances in days or hours. This is determined by the Day or Hour Indicator on the Leave Category Validation page (PTVLCAT)

Currently Tennessee State University used Banner 8 Self-Service Electronic Time Entry and Leave Management. Time Entry and Leave Management (Banner 9) will leverage current setup and includes several enhancements, capabilities to configure functionality, and a more contemporary look and feel which is intuitive to the user. A demo was presented, and discussions followed.

Currently Tennessee State University does not use Electronic Personnel Action Forms (EPAFs). EPAFs, can be configured to create/update information on PPAIDEN, PEAEMPL, and NBAJOBS. Reviewed the module through a PowerPoint.

Faculty Load and Compensation (FLAC) merges faculty information in Banner Student and Banner Human Resources to capitalize and deliver a robust, contiguous, and a comprehensive business process that automates the derivation and calculation of appropriate compensation packages for part-time employed faculty members based on their individual workloads. Tennessee State University reviewed the option of using FLAC a few years ago and did not move forward.

### Recommendations for Process Improvement

- Continue to work towards implementing Employee Profile Dashboard. Use the Employee Self-Service Configuration Handbook to help with configuration decisions. Employee Profile Dashboard must be implemented prior to implementing other Banner 9 Self-Service modules.
- Once Employee Profile Dashboard is implemented continue to work toward adopting Time Entry and Leave Management (Banner 9). The added enhancements and configurations will result in gained efficiencies for employees and Payroll.
  - Additional functionality has been added through configuration changes such as:
    - Presents the timesheet and leave reports is a calendar view.
    - Preventing an employee from approving their own timesheet.
    - Selecting Time In and Time Out Intervals from 1, 5, 10, or 15 minutes.
    - Limiting the number of hours an employee can enter per day.
    - Allow approvers to view employees leave balances.
    - Workarounds for approver positions that are vacant.
    - Prevent overlapping time across multiple timesheets.
    - Delivered Banner Document Managements (BCM) Event notifications and reminders for employees and approvers.



- Consider implementing Personnel Actions (EPAFs) in Banner Self-Service to process which allows Human Resources Student Employment transactions to be submitted, approved, and applied electronically. Originators, approvers and superusers can track and view EPAFs throughout the entire process to ensure transactions are processed in a timely manner. EPAFs also support returning to the originator for correction, provides an audit trail, electronic signatures and adding comments by originators and approvers. Email notifications can be created and scheduled through Banner Communication Management (BCM). These notifications can occur once or multiple times daily.
  - EPAF Examples:
    - Salary Change
    - Hourly Rate Change
    - New Hire (faculty, staff, student, etc.)
    - Re-hire (faculty, staff, student, etc.)
    - Job Termination
    - Job Labor Change
    - Title Change
    - Etc.
- Consider the possibility of using Faculty Load and Compensation (FLAC) to calculate compensation and create job records for Adjunct Faculty.

## Conclusion

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### Findings

Tennessee State University has a great understanding of the Banner Human Resources functionality, however there are pieces of baseline functionality that are not currently used or some that can be enhanced.

### Recommendations

Tennessee State University looks to make continual improvements to gain efficiencies through process improvements relative to its technology investments. There are opportunities to consider moving forward with to maximize the effectiveness of the endeavor using the Banner Human Resources Module. Below are a **few** highlights of the recommendations noted throughout this report:

- Encumbrances – Banner Human Resources does not include the functionality to limited which funds encumber. Proven practice is to keep Finance ledgers up to date by running the encumbrance maintenance process to recast after each payroll. The need to remove the restricted fund postings slows down the process. Consider working with IT to create a process that can be ran through job submission immediately after the encumbrance maintenance process to remove the records. This allows the user to proceed with the process to feed to Finance.
- Reports To – Populating the Supervisor information on the job record (NBAJOBS) using the Reports To field on NBAPOSN allows for easier reporting of Supervisors and their Team. Populating and maintaining the Supervisor information is key in implementing the My Team functionality in Banner 9 Employee Dashboard. Recommendation is to use the Mass Salary Table Update process (NBPMASS) to automate the updating of Supervisor information on the job record. This process can be scheduled to run automatically.
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- It is recommended that end dates be entered on the Benefit Category and Rule (PTRBCAT) page for those that are no longer used. Entering this date prevents the accidental assignment of a benefit or deduction code. When ending a benefit or deduction, add 'DNU' to indicate 'Do Not Use' at the beginning of the codes title on the Benefits and Deductions Rules Page (PTRBDCA).
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- FMLA Leave – It is recommended using the Employee FMLA Information Page (PEAFMLA) for an employee claiming a leave of absence under the Family and Medical Leave Act. This page allows you to track FMLA hours used, record and monitor leave and back to work dates. Continue to work toward using this process to track employee's FMLA leave.
- Student Employment Enrolled Hours – Proven practice dictates that the Verification of Student Hours (PHPSHRS) process be ran to check enrolled hours. PHPSHRS will toggle the FICA and Medicare status either from Active to Exempt or from Exempt to Active on PDAEDN based on pre-defined rules.
- Student Employment Time Entry – Consider implementing Self-Service Time Entry for student employees. Timesheets can be entered by the student employee, routed through approval queues, and pulled into the payroll process. This eliminates the manual effort needed to review for accuracy and total hours.