

Western New England College

Customer Profile

Kronos Earns High Marks from Western New England College for Streamlined Payroll and Human Resources Management

Western New England College is a nationally accredited college located in Springfield, Mass., offering a broad range of undergraduate and graduate programs in engineering, business, arts and sciences, and law. The college enrolls approximately 2,400 full-time undergraduates, 600 in full- and part-time programs in the School of Law, and approximately 1,000 in part-time undergraduate and graduate programs offered on campus and at seven sites throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Leading those thousands of students: more than 1,700 faculty members, staff, and student employees.

Meeting the challenges of disparate, old applications

Previously, the college relied on multiple systems to manage its human resources, payroll, and time and labor processes that were decidedly “old school”: disparate 20-year-old mainframe applications that were growing increasingly difficult to maintain. The systems were also difficult to integrate and inconvenient for employees to access. What’s more, in many cases, they still required manual paperwork to complete basic practices.

“We had hundreds of people — mostly work-study students — who were still using paper timesheets and timecards to capture time and attendance,” says Suzanne Fontaine, payroll manager and application administrator for the college. “In other instances, some employees would have to travel across campus to enter their time before they could start working. It was time-consuming, wasteful, and created some challenges with the accuracy and quality of the data we were collecting.

“We also had filing issues, too. For instance, we had to combine data from these separate human resources and payroll systems just to generate simple 941 or W2 forms. It might have taken several days to create a quarterly 941 or Mass TeleFile reporting. And with work-study students, there is a layer of additional reporting that we must do for the federal government.”

Looking for a single solution

Searching for a way to migrate away from the mainframe application, Western New England College began a careful and thorough search for a solution that could accommodate its diverse workforce and bring its human resources automation into one centralized system. The key requirements: the ability to handle complex pay rules, provide broader options for data collection, and make data available for analysis and reporting from a centralized database.

“We had a disparate group of applications across the college and human resources had remained a predominantly manual task,” says Allyn Chase, director of the office of IT for the institution. “We wanted an institutional-level application that was best-of-breed and that handled all of those needs in a single product. That’s why we chose Kronos as our timekeeping, HR, and payroll solution.”

Kronos Workforce Central: reliable, cost-effective, and streamlined

To meet its needs, the college chose the Workforce Timekeeper™, Workforce HR™, and Workforce Payroll™ applications, all integral components of the Workforce Central® suite.



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Allyn Chase, Director,
Office of Information Technology

Western New England College

Business Type: Higher Education

Employees: 2,000

Locations: 1

Products: Workforce Timekeeper,
Workforce HR, Workforce Payroll

“Previously, we had a separate system for student payroll,” Fontaine explains. “That meant a lot of extra time to process our payroll — and we couldn’t see all of our payroll in one picture. With Kronos, we’ve consolidated all of that into one unified system for salaried faculty, hourly staff, and student employees.”

In addition to streamlining payroll, Kronos also supports and automates many of the institution’s human resources functions. All employee-related information and data collected by Workforce Central is shared by all its applications. For example, human resources staff no longer need to manually track leave time and accruals for the college’s employees.

More accurate and consistent data

Information is more accurate because it is collected at the source, and more consistent because it is centralized in one database. Using Kronos’ Workforce Connect™ integration tool, Western New England College has even been able to integrate the Workforce Central suite with other business systems, including the college’s student information system, general ledger, and public safety system, further reducing data entry and inconsistency.

“We now have much more control over our internal payroll data and our overall labor costs — including overtime,” Fontaine says. “It’s much easier for a manager to approve an employee’s time, and our confidence in the data means we no longer waste time trying to validate it. Plus the data is so much more practical. What used to be tedious and unreliable tasks, like generating year-end financial reports or quarterly filings, are now reliably accurate and just a few clicks away,” she explains.

“Our employees have been very enthusiastic,” she continues. “We’ve recovered at least a half-hour per day in employee work time — which we estimate saves us \$50,000 a year. We’ve reduced payroll discrepancies and errors. And we’ve saved \$10,000 a year just by eliminating the paper timesheets and punch cards.

“Overall, we’re very pleased with what we’ve been able to accomplish,” says Fontaine. “We were able to complete the installation in five months, and the Kronos team was a big part of that success. It’s given us the confidence to look at other ways to use the Workforce Central suite on campus. Moving forward, we’re planning to roll out employee self-service to give our employees direct access to their benefits information. From my perspective, the implementation has been very successful — I love the software,” she adds.



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