Project Definition and Detailed Scope

Document Revision Log

Updated By	Reason	Date	Version
Matt Dumouchel	Draft	April 12, 2011	1.0
Karen Chelladurai	Updated by Study Team	June 30, 2011	2.0
Matt Dumouchel	Final review and update by SGPS- sent to Rob Brennan for further stakeholder approval	July 19, 2011	3.0
Karen Chelladurai	Added automated process to assign checklists as that was removed from 110A in order that it can be done prior to HE upgrade development freeze (feb 2012)	Aug. 3, 2011	4.0
Karen Chelladurai	Updates per meeting with Glen, Lori and Susan.	Aug. 24, 2011	5.0
Karen Chelladurai	Final Updates - Ready for Advisory Group Review	Sept. 9, 2011	6.0
Karen Chelladurai	Additonal information added as a result of the planned checkpoint after meetings with departments. Note: at this time project completion date approved by PSAG is not known.	Dec. 9, 2011	7.0
Matt Dumouchel	Revisions based on preliminary meetings with stakeholders	Jan. 25, 2012	8.0
Matt Dumouchel	Revisions based on technical estimates, final review	March 5, 2012	9.0
Karen Chelladurai	Summarized Resource Estimate Section	March 13,2012	10.0

Glossary of Terms

- N/A

Stakeholders for this project

Stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in the success of the project or who will be impacted by it. This project has stake holders who will have direct interaction with the project as well as stake holders who are not directly involved in the project but who will be impacted by the outcome.Direct Interaction:

- The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (SGPS)
- Office of the Registrar (OOR)
- Western Information Systems Group (WISG)
- Information Technology Services (ITS)

Indirect Interaction:

- Graduate school applicants
- Society of Graduate Students (SOGS)
- The Office of the Registrar
- OUAC
- Privacy Office
- Faculties
    - Directors of Administration, Administrative Officers
    - Associate Chair, Research
- Graduate programs
    - Graduate chair
    - Graduate assistant
    - Faculty members/Faculty Relations
    - Graduate admission committee members

Justification and Goal(s) of the Project

SGPS has used a third-party online application since 2001 (although not all programs made use of the online application in the past). In the fall of 2008, SGPS moved to the OUAC Graduate Application. From that point forward, all programs were required to use this system. While the relationship with OUAC has yielded improvements relative to our previous application, it has not been without limitations. SGPS is now confident we can build our own application system that will move Western into the forefront of service, collection and distribution for both graduate applicants and graduate programs at Western. Since we introduced the OUAC application process, SGPS has created complementary technologies that reduce and/or eliminate the number of hard-copy documents that are sent to individual graduate programs. These are features that were built either to advance or improve upon the shortcomings of the OUAC application. One example is our electronic reference system that transmits, collects and distributes references directly into our document management system (Laserfiche). OUAC will not consider creating a digital reference system for graduate applications. These complementary technologies all sit anchored to a system that is outside of our control. We face a number of challenges and limitations with the OUAC system. These include:

- Lack of control of the development and improvement of the application. While we have requested innovations to the existing application to meet the needs of our programs, OUAC has been unable to address the majority of our requests.
- Western does not have a central recruitment database or access to prospective students who have started an application, but have not completed/submitted the application. Information concerning prospects and partial/incomplete applications is something programs are anxious to have. OUAC reports that 40% of applications are not submitted therefore remain a mystery to Western. Critical initial connections are made between OUAC and the prospective student, not Western.
- Applicants to the over 70 graduate programs are still required to send hard copy supplemental documents, for example writing samples, CV/resume, interest statement,

etc. This means that over 70 different practices exist across the campus providing a highly varied service experience for prospective graduate students.

- Applicants are given multiple ids and passwords for various independent systems all required as part of the application process.

The goals we aim to achieve in developing our own online application include:

- Centralizing the simple elements of the application process allowing programs to focus on the recruitment and evaluation of quality applicants,
- Facilitating improved service models on campus and promoting best practices to benefit the graduate community,
- Improving communication with prospects/applicants by accessing partial application information,
- Leveraging of pre-existing technology available within PeopleSoft HE and Laserfiche
- Developing a new admissions process that is career-neutral
- Enabling transparency to all stakeholders involved in the recruitment and admission process, and
- Adding convenience for graduate program personnel and admission committees in faculties and departments.

SGPS is now advocating for two important objectives:

1. By September 2013, we plan to introduce our own graduate application system that will capture information from the prospect through admission stage. The application would leverage PeopleSoft and the complimentary technologies already available at Western in order to secure an efficient recruitment process for all stakeholders.
2. We plan to consolidate the application process within SGPS. The current OUAC-based system has applicants applying online and then providing hard copy documents to the specific graduate program for assessment. SGPS would facilitate the electronic collection of application materials/information, distributing this information to the graduate programs electronically.

These objectives would require the following elements be in place for completion:

1. Discussion with WISG in order to propose developing both an application within PeopleSoft HE and revisions to the Student Center which would facilitate the collection of digital supporting documents.
2. If WISG is unable to support an application within PeopleSoft HE, an in-house model must be created in line with our existing admissions modules.

Graduate programs would continue to make admission decisions. We anticipate this to be revenue neutral solution; instead of paying OUAC at $15/application, SGPS would collect this fee which would then support the application development at Western. Development of an internal Western application model would make possible the use of the model for academic communities of graduate studies both on a large scale and a component by component method.

Detailed Scope Statement and Definition

In Scope

- The project will supply The University of Western Ontario with a method to effectively collect, communicate and process graduate applications from initial contact (prospect) through to the admissions decision.
- The project will centralize the collection of applications and supporting documents within SGPS.
    - A new business process supervised by SGPS for the collection of all admission documents distributing them effectively to graduate programs
    - A method to manage required supplemental application documents for each program/degree, including automated adding and removing
    - Review of security requirements relating to the sharing of documents and application information
    - Creating and maintaining an inventory for application documents required by each/all graduate programs
- One guest identity from prospect to applicant for access to all project elements which will be built and include:
    - Access to the application (applicant roles in Student Center)
    - Submission of supporting documents (Student Center)
- Investigation of establishing student initial trust improvements
- The collection of proposed thesis supervisor and/or academic supervisor information where applicable
    - Requirements gathering for collecting and maintaining actual supervisory data for future initiatives
- Electronic assessment of application documents including admission decisions using workflow approval points to replace GAPS
    - Design approval workflow for admission decisions
    - Applications and supporting documents presented within Student Center for faculty, administrators and other relevant stakeholders – secure access to the Center
    - New business process for transitioning admissions statuses in real-time
- Use of PeopleSoft HE 9.0 for managing electronic documents and viewing of documents within Student Center
- Investigation and, if possible implementation of EDI/XML functionality for transcript collection
    - Pending decision, automated calculation of admission averages
    - Pending decision, implementation of manual process to replace the existing EDI transcript processing for grad admissions
- Communications to applicants mapping the progress of their application and updating them on relevant information
    - Communications to prospect groups connecting them with various timely matters (3Cs)
- New processes using prospect data associated with active recruitment of individuals
- Requirements gathering for program offer letter information and implementation if possible
- A process to manage application fees

Out of Scope

- The manners with which graduate programs make decisions relating to applications.
- ORPAS, M.Sc. Management and MBA application & supporting documents

- All non-Grad career applications
- Any changes identified for the application grid on Student Center (leveraging functionality updates made in 110A)
- **Checklists**
- Ongoing management of Academic Advisor and/or thesis supervisor information
- Selecting faculty members from prompt list for advisors at the time of application (this came out as a requirement by departments but is not being included in this project)
- **A method to set up user profiles for Faculty Members in HE and give them access to Faculty Center (this will be done as part of the Faculty Center project)**

Deliverables

1. An online admission application in PSoft serving all Western graduate applicants (except for ORPAS, M.Sc. Management and MBA)
   - Includes the ability to enter PSoft as a guest, create an application and submit it
   - Includes collection and storage of PROPOSED academic advisor and/or thesis supervisor information in PSoft at time of application or of admission, where applicable.
2. Process change and required development to ensure the student Western userid is issued when application is submitted and can be used for all aspects of the application and documentation. (i.e email, to submit documents, to check application status, etc) This includes Initial trust improvements or recommendations for improvements that can be incorporated into the Identity Management project. This improvement is around the information that has to be entered in order to get initial password.
3. A method to collect application fees and distribute to departmental accounts
   - Fee levels based on the program(s)/faculty(s) selected
   - Option for SGPS to override the payment requirement
4. A centralized and automated model of supporting document collection and management to determine what documents are required by what programs to support Graduate applications.
5. A method for applicants to submit all supporting documents - through Student Center accessible from the application record in Student Center.
6. A method to collect reference letters in support of applicants (from referees who may be external people to Western's community) and store in Student Center (accessible from Student Center)
7. A new business process (supervised by SGPS) for the collection of all admission documents and their distribution to graduate programs in a timely manner. This may include workflow notifications
8. A system to collect and display applications and supporting documentation to admission committees. This includes a secure method to display the information by program and/or by student. (leveraging deliverable #7)
9. Faculty and Admin access to view the application and supporting documentation pages.   This includes maintaining their academic program security and admission committee membership. (access to admission applications will be based on apps for the acad programs they have access to.)
10. A new business process and approval workflow for the transitioning of the application status through approvals and application life cycle. This process will be to accommodate the various unique methods that graduate programs (staff and faculty) assess admissibility.

11. Documented requirements for program offer letters and, if possible in project time frame, delivery of requirements as per the Departmental focus groups.
12. Automated communications to students as the application transitions.
13. New business process for active recruitment which uses new prospect data (no development)
14. Documented requirements for the collection and on-going maintenance of ACTUAL thesis supervisor/academic advisor data (no development)
15. Checklist process for admission condition fulfillment for those offered admission (required documents i.e. final transcripts, study permit).

Resource Requirements

Work Breakdown and Estimating Resources (Rough Order of Magnitude estimate*)*

- SGPS will backfill 1 staff to allow SGPS staff to work on the project (SGPS funded)
- The development of the project may require the addition of a contract web developer to support the creation of the project. (If not using delivered application in PSoft)
- See detailed requirements: Q:\HE\Worklists\HE890Documents\ #277_SGPS Admission App Project 110B\ Requirements Management\ Online app Requirements.xls

Work	Who	Duration Effort	Notes	Duration of project time
Initial Requirements Gathering	**SGPS and Departments**: Ron, Matt, Teri, Jane, Departmental reps	4 weeks		Done
Analysis & Functional Spec	WISG and SGPS: Jane, Teri, Matt, Susan , Don	38 weeks (6 wks done)		32 weeks
Technical Specifications	WISG – Developer A	4 weeks	Some in parallel to func. spec	1 week
Development and Tech testing	WISG – Developer A - 16 weeks WISG – Developer B – 17 weeks WISG – Developer C – unknown development (see below)	29 weeks + unknown	some in parallel to testing	16 weeks + unknown
Testing in DEV and QAT		43 weeks	Some in parallel to development	31 weeks
Documentation, Training, Integrated Testing	SGPS: Jane, Teri, Matt, Susan	8 weeks		8 weeks
Development Unknown:	1. Part B of project: guest id functionality. If guest ID functionality not able to be used, will need more development . Estimate TBD, pending further analysis in HEDV9 2. Part I of project: Development for dept specific offer letters – Estimate TBD, pending information	Unknown		Unknown

	from Matt				
Project Duration Left (including known work)					**22 mths**

Current Business Process

 Additional Costs

Future Support/Maintenance Costs

- Since the OUAC applications will not be administered by the OOR after implementation, grad applications will be administered by SGPS instead, addition SGPS support staff will be needed.

Success Factors & Measures

Success means:

- All graduate programs effectively manage their applications and make admission decisions via the process – no longer processed through OUAC
- All graduate applicants monitor their progress and supply a majority of their application documents electronically. There will be some exceptions such as official transcripts.
- The collection of application documents is effectively collected and managed in a central manner via The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.
- Student applicant service improved – measured by applicant survey.
- More prospect, not offered and incomplete application data

- No drop in number of completed applications due to this new process
- Fewer than 40% of total applications left as incomplete (OUAC's current measure)

Constraints (including timing) and Potential Risks

Project Drivers:

The order of importance of project drivers is:

1. Time to complete – Once project is underway and communication to OUAC, the new application must be in place.
2. performance standards (not related to the online application and ability to offer admission)
3. budget and resources

Constraints:

- The HE Upgrade to version 9 must be implemented prior to this project in order to use the new application and application fee functionality
- Project 110A (Checklists) must be implemented prior to this project in order to use the checklist set up and functionality that will be introduced with it.
- Once OUAC is notified, we are locked in to the target date.
- There may be technical resource constraints if this project is undertaken at same time as HE upgrade.
- There will be functional resource constraints if this project is undertaken at same time as the HE upgrade, MTCU pathways initiative, Hub implementation and OUAC modernization projects.
- **This project is dependent on the Faculty Center project being implemented before at same time as this project since the Faculty members will not be able to view applications until Faculty Center is in use.**

Risks:

- The OUAC application was only implemented three years ago. A quick change of this magnitude could upset programs if not treated properly. The early phase of information gathering will give adequate time to adjust and engage them in requirements gathering.
- New processes must cater to each graduate program and how they operate. Early requirements gathering will ensure their needs are known.
- PeopleSoft system instability or down time at time students are trying to apply online. WISG involvement in stress testing will be incorporated into the test plan.
- Once OUAC is notified, if Westerns online application is not implemented, students will not be able to apply to Grad Studies at Western. Testing and monitoring of the project will ensure this does not happen. Implementation date will be aligned with slower application times of year.
- Cutover from OUAC applications to Western PSoft application will be handled carefully to ensure no in progress applications are lost and appropriate communication to applicants is done. This will be planned carefully with OUAC.
- May be adverse affect on OUAC applications processing for non-grad careers. This will be mitigated by inclusion of OOR representation during test cycles of this project.

Assumptions

- There will be technical and functional resources available as needed since this is a time driven project
- HE Upgrade will be done in Fall 2012
- Faculty Center is completed prior to this project
- HE System can handle additional self service load
- Administrator and Faculty access to HE and ongoing maintenance will be able to be done in and automated way
- Initial and real time distribution of userid for applicants – ITS involvement
- If an upgrade to laserfiche is needed to performance, it can be done to Grad repositories only and it can be done as needed by this project.

Project Study Team Members

The following people collaborated to create this document:

- Don Graham
- Jane Baratta
- Karen Chelladurai
- Kimi Maruoka
- Matt Dumouchel
- Ron Wagler
- Teri Hern

Project Definition & Scope Approval

Project Sponsor and Stakeholder Approval:

Ron Wagler, Director of Administration, School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

Date Approved: July 19, 2011

Glen Tigert, Associate Registrar, Office of the Registrar

Date Approved: Sept. 9, 2011

Rob Brennan, Director, Western Information Systems Group

Date Approved: July 21, 2011

Jeff Grieve, Information and Technology Services

Date Approved: August 9, 2011 (per Rob Brennan who obtained Jeff's approval in a discussion prior to Aug 9)

Project Coordinator/leader approval:

Matt Dumouchel, Project Coordinator

Date Approved: July 19, 2011

Teri Hern, Project Coordinator

Date Approved: July 19, 2011