

Monarch Makes the Grade for Higher Ed Reporting & Analysis

Easily Transforms Banner System Reports into Live Data

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The University of Scranton, founded in 1888, serves about 5,000 students annually in its campus in Northeast Pennsylvania. Like all higher education institutions, the University of Scranton needs easy access to data within its Banner enterprise information system. Monarch has proven itself as a programming-free solution for higher educational institutions to easily access, analyze and export Banner data.

“Banner is one of the most popular information systems for higher ed,” says Anne Marie Stamford, Assistant to the Provost for University of Scranton. “However, it is often difficult to get needed data out of the system. We find a database programmer is needed to get the correct data reliably from the Banner databases. We decided there had to be an easier way to get at our Banner data.

“Instead, I have used Monarch for years to transform Banner’s numerous existing reports into the data we need, quickly and easily. Monarch can make anyone in higher ed self-sufficient in getting at the data they need, with no database programming and no need to re-key report information into Excel.”

At the heart of the University of Scranton’s operations is its Master Schedule. “Our Master Schedule is loaded with information,” says Anne Marie, “including class descriptions, students per class, class capacities, instructors, number of credits, by college, by department — it goes on and on. Monarch has turned what would be a 4-inch thick paper report into a treasure trove of immediately available information.

“For example, I can perform any type of ad hoc Master Schedule data query using Monarch. If we are considering canceling classes due to a snowstorm, how many

classes and students will be affected if we cancel all classes, or just delay the opening of the campus until a certain time? Using Monarch and some simple data filters, I have an immediate answer to these kinds of important questions.”

Monarch also enables critical trending analysis as well. “I can open multiple Master Schedules for previous semesters to identify various trends,” says Anne Marie. “I can track course registrations over time, attrition rates, compare statistics for Spring versus Fall classes, and more.

“This trending analysis, made possible by Monarch, also helps analyze and forecast the need for part time faculty. This must be managed to ensure our education quality remains at a very high level.”

“The typical higher ed institution must budget two years into the future,” Anne Marie adds. “Monarch enables us to quickly get at the data we need now to proactively determine needs for the future, by leveraging the data buried within our existing Banner reports, without programming.”

The University of Scranton also mines data from its Banner financial module reports using Monarch. “Our financial report is about 700 pages,” says Anne Marie, “but again Monarch lets us easily transform the report into a data table, which we can easily filter, sort, and export to Excel anytime.

“Monarch enables easy analysis of financial data for many analytical projects such as actual versus budget analysis, spending by vendor, and expense analysis. Monarch helps us follow the money and identify possible efficiencies to avoid unnecessary expenses.”

“Monarch just gets better and better, including the ability of Monarch Pro to mine data from PDF reports. Monarch is more valuable than ever for higher education institutions looking to easily work with data from their enterprise information system... I can’t imagine working without Monarch!”

Still another area Monarch makes its mark at the University of Scranton is its ability to easily work with data from the school’s Faculty Workload module from its Banner system. “This module combines student, finance and HR data,” Anne Marie explains. “It is quite complex. This module produces a compensation report, which we use Monarch to mine into live data, to analyze faculty pay, including faculty ‘overloads’ – additional payments to faculty beyond their required annual credit hours. The amount of overloads must remain in line with union agreements. Monarch helps ensure overloads and other faculty compensation are managed properly.”

Anne Marie first used Monarch for DOS earlier in her higher ed career as an Institutional Researcher. Since then, Anne Marie says, “Monarch just gets better and better, including Monarch Pro’s ability to mine data from PDF reports. Monarch is more valuable than ever for higher education institutions looking to easily work with data from their enterprise information system, and easily bring needed data into Excel. I can’t imagine working without Monarch!”



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