

Boston University Promotes a Culture of Shared Services Through Advocate


ADVOCATE

SITUATION | With over 17 years at Boston University, the Administrator at the Office of Judicial Affairs, Jarrod Clement, had employed every possible case management process, from a paper system to homegrown databases and Excel spreadsheets. Workflows kept changing as technology evolved, and as time went by, the technology kept becoming more obsolete and the databases were becoming harder to maintain. The office was looking for a centralized platform for all student records that could streamline many of the old processes and provide a more effective case management process.

The university also wanted to foster a culture of shared services, which meant campus departments had to find ways to cut expenses and collaborate to conserve resources. However, cross-departmental communication was very inefficient, usually done through email, phone, or fax. Sharing student information was challenging and time-consuming with every office claiming they had the master list of records.

The Office of Judicial Affairs at Boston University wanted to move away from its old-school case management processes to a more streamlined form of records management. The databases in place were hardly sustainable, and tracking student files was time-consuming and ineffective. Cross-departmental communication was also challenging, as there was no centralized location for all disciplinary records. Furthermore, campus offices were asked to collaborate to conserve money and resources, which meant the current systems had to be leveraged more efficiently.

“Advocate was able to deliver to us efficiency and time-savings, as well as a centralized location for all our disciplinary records.”



SOLUTION | In 2010, the school began looking at third-party vendors for case management, ultimately selecting Advocate because of its cloud-based functionality that would allow for easier access to student records. Jarrod and his staff worked with Symplicity to customize the site to meet the school's administrative needs, such as setting up single sign-on authentication. After a challenging implementation process, the site went live in January 2012 and was very well-received across campus.

As shared services became increasingly important, Jarrod proposed that academic departments use Advocate to run their background checks and handle cases of student misconduct. He pulled together a group of administrators representing BU's 20 academic colleges and set up an Advocate demo to showcase how many of their processes could be streamlined through the site. Jarrod also learned that the International Students and Scholars Office was looking for a software solution to handle non-academic misconduct cases for study abroad programs. Having recently worked on the academic misconduct project, he recommended that the office implement Advocate for this purpose. He created a section on the Incident Report so misconduct cases that occurred overseas could be reported and tracked through the system.



Institution Name | **Boston University**
 Symplicity User Since | **2010**
 Institution Type | **Private Research College**

Location | **Boston, MA**
 Student Enrollment | **1,903**

SUCCESS | Since implementing Advocate, efficiency at the Office of Judicial Affairs has greatly increased. Staff members now have a centralized location for disciplinary records that is user-friendly and easy to access. Time-consuming tasks, such as running background checks and sending letters, have been streamlined and can be completed within a few hours. The academic departments and study abroad programs also benefit from the conduct management system, which helped save money and can be customized to meet their needs.

As Advocate continues to be used across various campus departments, some affiliated BU schools have expressed interest in using the system as their preferred software solution for non-academic misconduct. Jarrod recently began working with BU Tanglewood Institute, the school's summer music training program, to set up a reporting system for case management.



Case Highlights

The Office of Judicial Affairs at Boston University wanted a case management solution that would offer improved efficiency over many of its manual processes and offer easier access to student records.

As shared services took precedence at the university, the office wanted to implement a system that could also be used by other campus departments to handle non-academic misconduct cases.

Since implementing Advocate, the office has streamlined many of its services and has a centralized location for all student records that is user-friendly and easy to access.

The system is also used by the academic departments and Global Programs office to run background checks and handle academic misconduct cases overseas, respectively.

“Symplicity continues to expand its products’ capabilities, and it’s also a leader in the industry, so we don’t have to worry about it going anywhere anytime soon.”

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CONTACT:
 Symplicity Sales
 info@symplicity.com

WWW.SYMPPLICITY.COM