Mississippi State University

MSU2025041 Request for Proposals (RFP) Q&A

Lifelong Learning & Continuing Education Management Platform

February 11, 2026

1. Does MSU utilize the Ellucian Ethos API, or is a direct SQL view preferred for Banner integration?
   A. Ellucian Ethos APIs

2. What Curriculum will MSU be using for this implementation?
   A. Not applicable.

3. Are non-credit learners currently provisioned in Azure AD, or will MStar act as the primary IdP?
   A. MSU will act as the IdP

4. What is the total size (GB) of the Destiny One database to be migrated?
   A. Modern Campus externally hosts this data, so we are unable to provide an answer at this time.

5. Does Nelnet support split payments (e.g., partial credit card, partial department code)?
   A. Nelnet does not support split payments.

6. Are there existing licenses for Coursera or LinkedIn Learning that we should integrate?
   A. Currently we are managing all courses within the Canvas LMS

7. How many custom user attributes (UDFs) must be preserved from Destiny One?
   A. This is dependent on what the new solution provides, but there are not significant customizations present in the existing solution

8. Do Extension agents require offline mobile app access for rural registrations?
   A. Not applicable

9. Is the requirement to migrate *all* historical data, or only the active/audit window (e.g., 7 years)?

A. We would want to migrate all data from our current platform. Data within the current system is less than 3 years old.

10. Does MSU use a central data lake (e.g., Snowflake) that MStar must feed into?
    A. No

11. Are there specific Mississippi IHL Board reporting requirements we must automate?
    A. Not at this time.

12. Is there an integration required with the Alumni Association database for discounts?
    A. Not at this time.

13. Does MSU require Tier 1 (student) helpdesk support, or only Tier 2 (admin)?
    A. We would be interested in exploring Tier 1 support but not required.

14. Are there needs to integrate with housing systems for summer camps?
    A. Not at this time.

15. Does MSU plan to issue Blockcerts (Blockchain credentials)?
    A. Not at this time.

16. Is the April 1, 2026 start date flexible if data cleansing requires more time?
    A. Tentatively yes.

17. Will MSU provide a sanitized test instance of Banner for integration testing?
    A. An appropriate test environment will be utilized, although likely not a dedicated environment.

18. Are there restrictions on using AWS GovCloud vs. Commercial regions?
    A. GovCloud is not required

19. What is the expected concurrent user load during peak registration?
    A. Estimated 200-300 users.

20. Does the Controller require a specific format for the GL extract file?
    A. Yes; a layout will be provided

21. Are there legacy payment gateways other than Nelnet that must be supported?

A. Not at this time.

22. Does MSU have a preferred SSO protocol (SAML vs CAS)?
    A. SAML

23. Are there specific branding guidelines for the "Learner Cockpit"?
    A. Not applicable

24. Will MSU provide subject matter experts for UAT during the migration?
    A. Yes

25. Is the performance bond a mandatory requirement for contract execution?
    A. Not Applicable.

26. Does MSU require a dedicated test environment in addition to production?
    A. Yes

27. How many course enrollments per year? Are these full term length courses or shorter courses? What is average length of a course?
    A. Approximately 3000 enrollments per year. Course length is variable.

28. What is desired delivery date to go live?
    A. April 1st, 2026 (Estimated)

29. Please outline the key functionality requirements and features you need in the LMS.
    A. The system that we are looking to procure would be more aligned with a SIS than a LMS. Thus, we do not have any functionality requirements or features to request in an LMS at this time.

30. What integration capabilities are required for the LMS other than specified in the RFQ?
    A. The system that we are looking to procure would be more aligned with a SIS than a LMS. Thus, we do not have any functionality requirements or features to request in an LMS at this time.

31. Can you provide an overview of your technical environment, including current systems and software?

A. Banner (on-prem) with Ethos; Axiom Higher Ed middleware integration; Canvas LMS. Nelnet payment processing.

32. How many total active licenses are required?
    A. Please refer to Section 3 (under Users Requirements) of the RFP.

33. When do you plan to make a decision on the LMS vendor?
    A. We would not be procuring an LMS, however, our decision date is estimated to be March 15th, 2026.

34. What is your target date for having the new LMS live and accessible to users?
    A. We would not be procuring an LMS, however, our "Go Live" date would be April 1st, 2026 (Estimated)

35. Is the LMS intended solely for internal workers, or will it be accessible to a broader audience?
    A. We would not be procuring an LMS.

36. What systems do you currently use for HRIS, performance management, ATS, etc.? Please provide the names of these systems.
    A. Banner, PageUp

37. What are your essential integration needs for the LMS?
    A. Please refer to Section 3 (under Technical Requirements) of the RFP.

38. What is your plan for launching the LMS?
    A. Not applicable.

39. Who will be responsible for ensuring the LMS is properly implemented? Do you have a dedicated LMS Administrator?
    A. Not applicable.

40. How many team members will be involved in creating content, and do you have a designated administrator?
    A. Number of users and roles would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

41. Is pre-built content important to you? If so, what topics are you interested in?

A. Not applicable.

42. Who will be responsible for creating company-specific content?
    A. Not applicable.

43. How many years of historical data need to be migrated? How many courses need to be migrated from your current system on average?
    A. Approximately 2 years worth of data. No courses would be migrated from our LMS.

44. Who will be in charge of the LMS implementation on your team?
    A. Not applicable.

45. How many team members are dedicated to this project?
    A. 9-10

46. Will the LMS be managed by the HR or Operations team? Who will be the system owner?
    A. We are not looking to change our LMS at this time

47. What are your main goals for the LMS platform?
    A. We are not looking to change our LMS at this time

48. Why are you looking to change your LMS now?
    A. We are not looking to change our LMS at this time.

49. What are the top three issues you are currently facing that we can help address?
    A. Streamlining our user registration process
    B. Strong customer service and support
    C. Simplified system that is more user friendly for internal staff

50. What external authoring tools are you using currently?
    A. Not applicable.

51. What has been your experience with these tools?
    A.   Not applicable.

52. Are there any language requirements for the content?

A. Not applicable.

53. What is your budget for this LMS project?
    A. Not applicable.

54. Are you currently using an LMS? If so, who is the vendor?
    A. Canvas by Instructure

55. What tools do you use for company communication? (e.g., Slack, Teams, email)
    A. Microsoft 365 Education (Microsoft Teams, Outlook), Cisco WebEx

56. Do you have a document management system like SharePoint? Where do you store important documents and SOPs?
    A. Not applicable.

57. Are all employees on-site, or do you have a hybrid work model?
    A. Most employees are on-site with some full-time remote employees.

58. What is your current onboarding process for new hires and is the onboarding training something you want to incorporate in your LMS as a part of onboarding?
    A. Not applicable.

59. Do you have any coaching or mentorship programs as part of your learning initiatives?
    A. Not applicable.

60. What are the instructions for submitting the bid electronically?
    A. Please read Section 8 of the RFP. Reach out to the contact of this rfp if you need a link to the sourcing event.

61. What are the duplicated and unduplicated enrollment numbers for the programs that would be supported by the new software?
    A. Unduplicated enrollment numbers are unavailable at this time. Duplicated enrollment numbers for programs are approximately 3000.

62. How many administrative users will require a user ID and login for the new software?
    A. Number of users would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

63. Please provide the number of individuals who will need to participate in training, along with their titles (e.g., Vice President: 1; Director: 1; Program Manager: 2).
    A. This information would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

64. Please list the programs that would be supported by the new software (e.g., continuing education/leisure learning, professional development/workforce training, youth programming/kid camps).
    A. Continuing Education
    B. Non-Academic / Non-Credit
    C. Youth Programming
    D. Professional Development/Workforce Training
    E. Conferences

65. Which programs, if any, require an application and/or approval for enrollment?
    A. Certain youth programs would require an application and approval for enrollment. Other programs would be determined

66. How many student records will need to be imported into the new system?
    A. Approximately 3000 records.

67. Do you currently offer apprenticeships?
    A. Not at this time.

68. Are you interested in offering workforce training that leverages Pell Grant funding?
    A. Not at this time.

69. Do you plan to offer courses that provide alternative pathways to degree completion? If yes, please describe.
    A. There is currently on-going internal discussion regarding this. At this current time no, but potentially in the future.

70. What is meant by "anonymous invoicing"? What is the intended purpose or expected scenario where "anonymous invoicing" may be required?
    A. Anonymous invoicing refers to the ability for anyone to pay an invoice regardless of if they're signed into an account or the invoice is tied to their account.
    B. A common scenario for this is when employees are registering for workshops, certifications, or trainings in which they need to have them paid for by their employer.

71. Has Mississippi State University discussed this potential acquisition with vendors and/or seen demonstrations of products prior to issuing this RFP? If so, can you provide a list of those vendors?
    A. The university has not discussed this acquisition with or seen demonstrations prior to the RFP.

72. Our solution can certainly accommodate an unlimited number of users, but we do want to understand the volume and type of users. Can you provide details on the number of staff members that will require access to this system? Would they all require system administrator access, or will some require limited access?
    A. We would not be able to determine the overall number of users at this time. Our number of adminstrative users would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service. Most users would not require system adminstrative access and we would require limited access and roles for other users.

73. How many applicants/registrants do you anticipate will register for classes through this solution annually?
    A. Estimated 3000-4000 registrants annually.

74. Can you provide the versions of Banner that you are currently using and do you utilize Ethos?
    A. Banner 9x (on-premises) with Ethos

75. Do you want the chosen vendor to continue to manage the integration throughout the term of the contract?
    A. Yes

76. Can you further describe the information that will be expected to pass between this solution and the SIS (Banner)?
    A. Courses, sections, enrollments, demographic data, grades, transactions

77. Can you further describe the information that will be expected to pass between this solution and the LMS (Canvas)?
    A. Courses, sections, enrollments, grades

78. Can you further describe the information that will be expected to pass between this solution and the CRM (Slate)?
    A. Demographic data. Marketing information.

79. Are there other potential integration or data sources that will need to be imported into this solution (with the exception of Modern Campus)?
    A. Payment processor (e.g. Nelnet)

80. Do you expect this to be a product offering (COTS), or can it be a solution that we build specifically for the MSU requirements?
    A. This should be a product offering (COTS) that is configurable to meet requirements.

81. What is the current platform (if any)? Who is the incumbent vendor?
    A. This question is addressed in section 3 of the RFP

82. Is the incumbent vendor allowed to bid for this engagement?
    A. Yes

83. What are the major data pain points MSU is currently facing (e.g., data duplication, inconsistent records, reporting lags)?
    A. Account creation issues
    B. Rigid/inflexible built in reporting tools

84. Please provide the current MSU data technology stack? For example, which database, data integration, and data visualization technologies does MSU currently utilize?
    A. Banner (on-prem) with Ethos; Axiom Higher Ed middleware; Canvas LMS. Nelnet payment processing.

85. How many users will be concurrently accessing the system? Also, please specify the total number of users and their respective roles.
    A. Number of users and roles would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

86. How much data will be anticipated annually in MBs, GBs or TBs?
    A. Less than 1GB

87. Can you share the total number, type, and format of the reports that you expect to generate through this system?
    A. Rather than specific than a specific number or type, we would like configurable/customizable reports.
    B. Format types would include: PDF, CSV, XLS, TXT/RTF

88. Do you anticipate having role-based access control in place to restrict data access/features of the system?
    A. Yes

89. What specific user roles and permissions are required for the system?
    A. System Admin – Full Access
    B. Staff role – Course/Registration creation, report creation
    C. Instructor/Facilitator - View classlists

90. Can you list the data sources and systems that the new solution will need to integrate with?
    A. Ellucian Banner via Ethos; LMS via existing [Banner] integration; Payment processor via existing [Banner] integration; SAML SSO

91. Do you expect the vendor to perform any tasks on-site, or can all work be performed remotely?
    A. All work can be performed remotely unless otherwise specified.

92. Do you accept offshore resources?
    A. We will consider it during the evaluation of the responses.

93. Is SOC 2 Type II certification required at the time of proposal submission, or is it acceptable to provide evidence of active audit engagement with certification completed prior to contract execution?

A. This is dependent on the context of the solution, but in general, SOC2 is an example of a security certification that we will evaluate in combination with other assets such as a HECVAT or other industry-standard audit and certifications.

94. If a vendor operates exclusively within the United States, is GDPR compliance still required?
    A. Yes; the vendor should have a GDPR-compliant process defined for handling GDPR-related requests from MSU

95. Must PCI Attestation of Compliance (AoC) be submitted with the proposal, or prior to contract execution?
    A. Yes

96. For PCI Options 2 or 3, is the full data flow diagram required at proposal stage, or during implementation planning?
    A. Yes

97. Is submission of a completed VPAT required at proposal stage to be considered responsive?
    A. Yes

98. Is full historical financial data migration mandatory, or only active learner and course data?
    A. All data

99. Must all certifications be active prior to contract signing, or can they be completed during implementation?
    A. All certifications must be active.

100. What is the maximum concurrent user load tested?
    A. Estimated 200-300 users.

101. Do you provide auto-scaling during peak enrollment periods?
    A. Not applicable

102. Have you migrated from Modern Campus before?

A. No

103. What migration tools do you use?
    A. Not applicable

104. What data objects can be migrated (course history, payments, transcripts, certificates)?
    A. Courses, sections, enrollments, demographic data, grades, transactions

105. Will historical financial records be migrated?
    A. Yes

106. Do you provide sandbox environment during implementation?
    A. A test environment is utilized for implementation, although it is not an isolated sandbox environment

107. Do you recommend any infrastructure or configuration change at MSU side?
    A. Current Banner-to-Modern Campus integration is via file exchange and direct database access. The new solution should utilize Ellucian Ethos, which is already in place at MSU.

108. Do you currently have texting and email tools that you use related to marketing communications? If so, can you provide those systems and would you prefer to continue using those tools with the new system or replace them altogether for this solution?
    A. Cadence, Slate, and Emma are utilized for our marketing communications. We would prefer to continue using those services.

109. Do you intend for this solution to provide marketing email/sms capabilities to recruit constituents?
    A. No. However, we are open to exploring such functionality.

110. Approximately how many unique email addresses (contacts) would MSU expect to include in email campaigns annually related to this solution?
    A. This solution would not be expected to be used for email campaigns as an email marketing solution is already in place. However, if the decision was made to utilize the selected solutions email marketing system,

approximately 9000 unique contacts.

111. Related to this specific solution, on average, how many active contacts would you estimate that MSU has each month? These would be individuals that you would expect to receive at least one email or one SMS message during the month.
    A. Approximately 3000 active contacts via email. SMS would not be utilized.

112. Can you provide separate estimates of the quantity of both emails and texts that you would expect to send in a year?
    A. No texting would be utilized for this solution.

113. Can you provide a detailed description of your current IT environment and any existing systems that need to be integrated?
    A. Banner (on-prem) with Ethos; Axiom Higher Ed middleware integration; Canvas LMS. Nelnet payment processing.

114. How do you define the most critical success factors for this project?
    A. Selected platform enables a streamlined experience for our customers and staff.
    B. Selected platform allows for robust reporting and configuration options.
    C. Selected platform integrates with systems outlined in RFP.
    D. Selected vendor has exceptional and attentive customer support and service.

115. Has a budget been allocated for this project?
    A. Not Applicable.

116. Can you share funding sources and budget amounts?
    A. Not Applicable.

117. Are there any constraints or limitations we should consider when proposing a solution?
    A. No

118. What internal resources will be available to support the implementation?
    A. Internal staff, ITS infrastructure/systems

119. What CRM experience does your internal team have?

A. Slate; Supported, managed, and utilized by dedicated teams and users.

120. Has your team conducted a strategy engagement inclusive of defining current and future state business process diagrams? If so, will this information be shared with the selected partner?
    A. Not at this time.

121. Is there an existing Data Governance process/committee in place?
    A. No

122. Does your team have existing reporting tools that are currently being leveraged? If so, please list out applicable tools that maybe in consideration for this project.
    A. In relation to the service, we are using/wanting to procure; reporting is facilitated within the service.

123. Do you have a CRM Center of Excellence in place? If not, is there an intent to set one up in the context of this implementation?
    A. Not at this time.

124. Have you identified roles and staff to be assigned to this project? Can you share a list of these roles? Are these roles part of a current team, or planned hires?
    A. Users and roles would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

125. Do you have an existing marketing tool in place? If so, can you describe what is working well and highlight areas where the existing marketing technologies are lacking? Any desire to replace this solution?
    A. Regarding the primary team utilizing our current service, a email marketing platform is their main marketing tool. Generally, this service has worked well for their needs, but they are open to exploring other solutions.

126. What volume of messages (email/SMS/other) are you currently sending?
    A. Monthly promotional/course advertising emails to approximately 9000 concurrent users.
    B. SMS nor other messaging platforms are utilzed at this time.

127. Can you describe any iPAAS (Integration Platform as a Service) or ETL (Extract Transform Load) tools that are available for this project?

A. Ellucian Ethos Integration Hub

128. Does your institution have a data lake? If so, please specify the underlying technology. Are you considering an approach that leverages the data lake to meet the reporting needs specified in this RFP?
    A. No

129. To precisely quote integration costs, please list the integrations required for go-live, including system, data description, direction, and frequency? Example: Banner – Applicant Bio/Demo Data – one way into CRM - daily.
    A. Ellucian Banner via Ethos; LMS via existing [Banner] integration; Payment processor via existing [Banner] integration; SAML SSO. From [near] real-time to daily

130. Describe the amount of legacy data you wish to migrate. Example: 2 years of data for 5,000 students?
    A. 2 years

131. Do you have a preferred payment processor that will be leveraged for this engagement?
    A. Nelnet

132. We generally deliver a train-the-trainer program and leave end-user training to the university's internal team. Is that an acceptable approach?
    A. Yes

133. How many staff users will need to manage/administer the solution?
    A. To be determined

134. How many staff or faculty will need to access the solution (e.g. participate in a workflow)?
    A. Number of users would be determined after discussions with vendor and review of service.

135. How many students will need to access the solution, and how often?
    A. We would want an unrestricted number of users.

136. We often find it in our customer's best interest to have separate contracts for software licenses (provided by one vendor) and implementation services (provided by a partner). For the purposes of this RFP, if our proposed solution is selected, can multiple contracts be awarded?
    A. Yes, we would be able to award multiple contracts to different vendors if an implementation partner is needed.

137. Based on the RFP, could you please clarify whether MSU will retain responsibility for receiving and processing contracts and applications, or whether the selected platform is expected to support the submission, approval, and storage of contracts and applications within the system? Additionally, do you currently have an established contract management workflow (e.g., submission, review, approval, execution), or would this workflow need to be defined and configured as part of the platform implementation?
    A. Selected system would be expected to internally facilitate the approval process for contracts/applications.
    B. The current workflow is based on the specifications of our current system. The workflow would be determined based on the system selected.

138. While the RFP indicates unlimited usage, could you please provide estimated learner volumes for the first year of implementation, as well as any anticipated changes in years two and three, including expected growth rates or percentage increases? This information will help us plan capacity, resourcing, and implementation support to ensure optimal system performance and scalability.
    A. Estimated user counts within first year of implementation would be 3000-4000 users.
    B. Subsequent years could see an estimate of 30-45% increase in users (per year) as more university departments and partners utilize the service.

139. For content creation within the platform, do you require separate approvals for the creation versus the launch of courses, programs, and/or exams? If so, please clarify which items require approval and whether these approvals follow distinct or shared workflows.
    A. Separate approval for creation of courses is not required.

140. The RFP references support for anonymous invoicing, billing, and payment. Could you please clarify what is meant by "anonymous" in this context and describe the intended use cases or requirements associated with this functionality?

A. Anonymous invoicing refers to the ability for anyone to pay an invoice regardless of if they're signed into an account or the invoice is tied to their account.
B. A common scenario for this is when employees are registering for workshops, certifications, or trainings in which they need to have them paid for by their employer.

141. What are your required retention periods for learner records and other system logs? Please include any regulatory, institutional, or policy-driven retention requirements that should be supported by the platform.
    A. Records should be maintained for 18 months, in coordination with our LMS retention policy.

142. The RFP references support for third-party billing (e.g., employers or agencies). Could you please clarify how third-party billing is expected to be processed, including any preferred workflows, systems, or integration methods used to support invoicing, payment, and reconciliation?
    A. Third-party billing would primarily be facilitated via invoicing. Invoices would need to be payable via our payment processor Nelnet.

143. The RFP mentions support for additional payment methods. Could you please specify which payment methods are required (e.g., credit card, purchase orders, invoicing, ACH, or other methods)?
    A. We would like to have invoicing, ACH, and credit card methods.

144. Per the RFP, could you please describe how installment payments are currently managed? This includes any existing workflows, systems used, and whether installment schedules, tracking, and reconciliation are handled internally or through an external platform.
    A. Installment payments are currently configured and managed within our current Lifelong Learning & Continuing Education Platform. Payment is facilitated via our payment processor (Nelnet).