

Happy Campus

Milligan University

Getting ERP Right the First Time

Milligan University's Strategic Path to Digital Transformation

When Milligan University's legacy system, PowerCampus, approached end-of-life, the institution faced a critical decision: how to modernize its enterprise ecosystem while minimizing disruption to students, staff, and institutional momentum. New President Dr. Stephen Waers, a former CIO himself, recognized the stakes and sought expert guidance from CampusWorks to ensure a smooth transition.

Partnership with CampusWorks

ERP transitions are high-risk, high-visibility endeavors, and institutions often underestimate the internal bandwidth required to manage them effectively. Milligan University recognized this—and turned to CampusWorks as a trusted partner to fill strategic gaps in project management, functional backfill, data governance, and change management.

CampusWorks designed a comprehensive ERP implementation success support plan to help Milligan prepare for a seamless migration to a new suite of enterprise solutions: Jenzabar One (ERP), Jenzabar Financial Aid, and Slate (CRM).

MILLIGAN UNIVERSITY

- **Private liberal arts university in Milligan, TN**
- **Enrollment: ~1,200 students (~800 undergraduate)**

CHALLENGE

When Milligan University's legacy system approached end-of-life, the institution faced a critical decision: how to replace its entire enterprise ecosystem while minimizing disruption.

CAMPUSWORKS PARTNERSHIP

CampusWorks designed a comprehensive support plan to help Milligan prepare for a seamless migration to a new suite of enterprise solutions — and the culture change needed to embrace it.

RESULTS

- Clean, migration-ready data
- Streamlined, documented processes
- Aligned cross-functional teams
- Cloud-ready infrastructure
- Strategic, cost-effective contract terms

Key Services Included:

- **Process Reimagine & Redesign (PRR)** CampusWorks facilitated PRR efforts across key functional areas, helping Milligan document current workflows and envision optimized future-state operations aligned with the new systems.
- **Data Governance Assessment & Readiness** An onsite evaluation revealed that much of Milligan's institutional data lived outside the ERP in siloed Access databases—an often-overlooked barrier to successful data migration. CampusWorks helped the university centralize, clean, and document its data, ensuring that critical information would be properly migrated into the new systems.
- **Enterprise Architecture Strategy Services** As Milligan transitioned from an on-premises to a cloud-based environment, CampusWorks worked with campus IT leadership to assess and upgrade infrastructure to support the performance demands of a cloud ERP.
- **Contract Negotiation Support:** CampusWorks reviewed the University's contract with Jenzabar, helping leadership secure the right project management structure, define what the "data lake" would include (ensuring it covered all relevant data, not just ERP data), and avoid costly surprises.
- **CRM and Financial Aid Implementation Support:** When Milligan decided to adopt Slate CRM and Jenzabar Financial Aid, CampusWorks provided continuity and subject-matter expertise. Consultants helped translate PRR insights into system requirements and supported the university during key staffing transitions.

Transformative Results

Instead of rushing into implementation, Milligan took a deliberate, strategic approach—investing early in planning, process improvement, and data readiness to pave the way for a smoother rollout and lasting institutional success.

With CampusWorks' support, the University is on track to implement its new ERP system on time and on budget—without burning out its internal teams or compromising its mission.

Though the implementation is still underway, Milligan has already seen benefits from its proactive approach:

- **Preparation:** Milligan entered its implementation phase with cleaned data, clearly defined business processes, aligned cross-functional teams, and a cloud-ready infrastructure—providing a strong foundation for success.
- **Foresight:** CampusWorks posed critical questions that helped Milligan avoid common pitfalls and think strategically about long-term needs—including the student impact of system changes.
- **Accountability:** When Milligan encountered challenges, such as an underperforming vendor project manager, CampusWorks advised them on how to request a replacement—ensuring the project stayed on track.

> *"As a former CIO, I knew just how critical it was to approach this implementation with our eyes wide open. CampusWorks gave us the perspective and guidance we needed to do this right—from day one."*
>
> ***Dr. Stephen Waers***
> *President, Milligan University*



Lessons Learned: Advice for Presidents Leading Digital Transformation

From Dr. Stephen Waers, President of Milligan University

1. **Start with Strategy, Not Software:**
   "ERP transitions aren't just about replacing systems—they're about reimagining how your institution operates. Take time to clarify your goals, processes, and data before selecting tools."

2. **Ask the Questions You Don't Know to Ask:**
   "It's not about having all the answers. It's about having a partner who's been there before and knows the landmines to avoid. CampusWorks helped us think through issues we hadn't yet considered."

3. **Invest Early to Save Later:**
   "Frontloading your investment in planning, process redesign, and data governance is what sets the stage for a smooth implementation. Without it, you're just pushing problems downstream."

4. **Don't Underestimate the Human Impact:**
   "The toll on staff during major system transitions is real. Having CampusWorks fill the gaps allowed our people to stay focused and prevented burnout."

5. **Own the Outcome:**
   "As president, you must be visible, engaged, and accountable. When implementation success or failure reflects on leadership, you want to make sure you've done everything possible to get it right."

> *"One of the most valuable aspects of our partnership with CampusWorks has been their ability to raise the right questions at the right time. They helped us anticipate issues, have the hard conversations early, and avoid costly mistakes midstream."*
>
> ***Dr. Stephen Waers***
> *President, Milligan University*

