AppReview: The Final Step in Going Paperless?

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Department of Anthropology  
University of Minnesota

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The Graduate School  
University of Minnesota
Graduate Admissions

- 200+ Graduate and Professional Programs
- 3 campuses
- PhD, Masters, Certificates, Licensure, etc.
- Enrollment = 69,000 (14,000 graduate)
- 17,000 grad & professional applications I-20s, Change of Status, Readmission
- ApplyYourself, Connect, & AppReview

Anthropology

- 18 Faculty
- 64 applications (47 PhD, 17 Masters)
- 13 admitted (10 PhD, 3 Masters)
- 9 enrolled (7 PhD, 2 Masters)
- Applications must be reviewed by entire faculty in 6 days
• Ashland Theological Seminary

• Ashland University Enrollment: 6,000 total (2,300 full-time undergraduate students from 28 states and 31 countries)

• **Graduate Programs**: Doctor of Nursing Practice, Doctor of Education in Leadership Studies, Masters Programs in Business Administration, Health & Risk Communication, American History & Government, Teaching American History & Government, an MFA in Creative Writing, and Licensure & Endorsement programs.

• **Undergraduate Programs**: 70+ Majors available through the College of Arts and Sciences, the Richard E. and Sandra J. Dauch College of Business and Economics, the Dwight Schar College of Education, and the Dwight Schar College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

• **Applications**: Approx. 6,000 processed annually

• **Hobsons Products Utilized**: ApplyYourself, Connect, & AppReview
Agenda

AppReview Experiences
Live demo
Recommendations/Takeaways
   (for both audience & Hobsons)
Discussion
How many schools:

- Considering AppReview?
- Already use AppReview?
- Um….what’s AppReview?
I. Central Office Experience

U of Minnesota

• Pilot grad programs
  • Started with 1, ended up with 12!
  • Hundreds of applications went through AppReview

• Successes
  • AY performed well this year
  • Almost all pilots will use next year
  • Opportunity to learn our programs’ review processes
  • Confident we can expand next year
  • Electronic transcripts seemed to work OK
  • Late submissions no longer much work
  • Window into how programs use AY
    • We learned what they know and don’t know
    • Many weren’t using exports, queries, late-submission section, etc.
    • Future: Trainings, reminders, etc.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grad program</th>
<th>Will use next year?</th>
<th>Impression</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>DGS and staff both loved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MICaB</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Saved lots of staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Analytics</td>
<td>Yes, but….</td>
<td>Mixed (local system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist. of Science and Tech</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Saved staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ed Curric&amp;Instruct M.Ed</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Need tweaks, but OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass Comm</td>
<td>Maybe</td>
<td>Too much work for coordinator, using google drive next year instead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>LOVED!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm Dis (Duluth campus)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Both staff and faculty liked despite having extra layer of review (pre-screen process)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCDB&amp;G PhD</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>More training for staff, but OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCDB&amp;G Masters</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Mixed, but used again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMBB PhD</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>exporting GPAs and GREs was crucial, and exporting reviewer data error-free into a spreadsheet was a huge time saver.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Physics</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>New program, faculty jumped right in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psych Sciences (Duluth)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Upcoming year:
• Roll-out AppReview system-wide
  • Intro workshops with pilot programs
  • Offer trainings
  • Visit decision-makers

Longer term:
• Visit hold-out programs individually with experienced programs

Graduate Admissions toolkit
• http://www.grad.umn.edu/admissions/admissions_toolkit/index.html
II. Program Office Experiences

Anthropology

Successes
• Faculty leadership (chair, DGS, etc)
• Know each faculty and what they want vs. need
• Faculty scattered (traveling, sabbatical, etc.)
• Buy in from DGS
• Faculty behaved (overall)

Challenges
• Needed help from central office

Recommendations
• Many faculty really like their staff, AR helps staff!
• Prep with central office next year
• Remind them they hate current system!
Challenges

Last year’s concerns:
• Yet another system to manage (AY, Connect, etc.)
• Separate login from AY
• Terminology (“what’s a bundle?”)
• Peak season support – need a hotline
• Will it slow down in Dec/Jan?
• Can AppReview work for such a big school?
• No tutorials exist…. DIY!
• Dynamic sections – enough space?
• *Know what ‘dynamic section’ means?*

Other challenges:
• Browser issues
• Some programs have no process at all – forced to create one
• Large, decentralized university = default review sheets won’t work
• “Head reviewers” often weren’t used at all
Drawers vs. PDF?

- Drawers faster
- PDF more “comfortable”
Recommendations

1 big issue from last year:
Subset field limitations

Dynamic sections

For specific information on AEM application requirements, please visit: http://aem.umn.edu/teaching/graduate/Application_procedures.shtml.

PLEASE COMPLETE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING

Select the area of research that you are most interested in pursuing from the list below. This is only for our internal reference and does not, in any way, commit or restrict you to working in this area provided you accept. For more information on the research areas, click here.

- Aerospace Systems
- Computational Fluid Dynamics
- Experimental Fluid Mechanics
- Solid Mechanics
Subset fields = whatever fields reviewers want to see in inbox

- Many dynamic sections = many subset fields
- AppReview limits amount of subset fields
Subset fields

Programs want customized data in AppReview (even if they don’t use dynamic sections)

Need dynamic sections to create customized data

Too many dynamic sections = too many subset fields

Too many subset fields = AppReview won’t work

Small schools maybe OK, Big schools…???

Still an issue, hopefully not deal breaker

Same issue with Intelliworks?
Application questions do not display

Many of AY’s internal field labels were never intended for public view…but now reviewers can see them. E.g.:

AY’s PDF:

U.S. DEPARTMENT of EDUCATION RACE & ETHNICITY INFORMATION

Race: Please check any or all that apply

- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

☑ White

Ethnicity:

Are you Hispanic or Latino?

☐ Yes
☑ No

AppReview section:
Might become more of an issue w. more use of drawers

Possible solution: apply this type of translation/renaming tool…. to internal field labels?

On AppReview team’s radar (road map?)

Ethnicity 2008  Are you Hispanic or Latino?
Late materials:

- Late recommendations materials *will* appear if late
- Most other materials will *not* automatically appear if late (e.g. test scores, docs, etc.)
- Faculty sometimes confused if material submitted
- Possible solution – import/refresh button for reviewers?
General Tips:

- AR deceptively simple looking
  - Easier for reviewers than coordinators
  - Double check understanding!
  - Practice review
- Staff buy-in equally (more?) important than faculty!
- Find friendly programs
- Streamline dynamic sections
- Go paperless! (use unofficial transcripts)
- Create a user community – make this *their* new system too
- Have a back-up plan
- Remember people still adopting to recent changes, be patient
- Remove curmudgeons by force!
  - Luddite – won’t move from paper
  - Tech snob – never happy with any system
Test McTesterson has been set up previously as a ‘Reviewer’ for Live Demo purposes.
From: AppReview <system@hobsons.com>
Date: Tue, Jun 3, 2014 at 12:05 AM
Subject: New AppReview Applications Ready for your Review
To: dcollura@ashland.edu

Dear Dottie Collura,

You have new applications ready for your review in your AppReview Inbox.

Please click here to log in to AppReview to review the application(s).

Please Note: If you have forgotten your username or password you can request the information from the Log In screen.

Thank you,
The Hobsons AppReview Team
Log In!

AppReview Login Credentials

School: Ashlandg
Username: Testy
Password: HobsonsU20!4
Blue dot indicates you have new applicants to be reviewed… click on their name to see their credentials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Program of Interest</th>
<th>Program Center</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Preferred</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rogers</td>
<td>Kenneth</td>
<td>Master of Business Administration</td>
<td>Ashland/Main Campus</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td>Kenny Rogers</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gcollura@neo.mcom">gcollura@neo.mcom</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Parton</td>
<td>Dolly</td>
<td>Master of Education</td>
<td>Ashland/Main Campus</td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:djcollura@yahoo.com">djcollura@yahoo.com</a></td>
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</table>
Drawers that ‘open’ with information from the application can be seen on the Review Sheet. Click around... explore!
Time to Decide...

Your Recommendation Regarding Applicant(s)

Admission decisions are totally customizable... 😊
Admission Decision Populates in AY

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<td>Application Source:</td>
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<td>Last Updated Information:</td>
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<td>Submit Date:</td>
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<td>Decision Viewed?:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enrollment Deadline Date:</td>
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<td>Application Review Status:</td>
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Takeaways!

- See z.umn.edu/appreview
- Review process worksheet
- Grad program sample process map
- Tutorials
  - Reviewers
  - Coordinators
- Implementation guide
- Issues log (template)
- Glossary ("bundle," "app structure," etc.)
- Whatever else we come up with =)
AppReview pilot site

AppReview Pilot Site

Thank you for helping us with AppReview! Our goals & timeline:

Spring/Summer:
- get simple examples/descriptions of program review processes
- test a draft review process/create tutorials

To Do:
- Review to ALL program faculty
  - (gulp) use AppReview for the 2014 application cycle!
  - assess/course process for future and determine if AppReview is viable for the UMN

To Dos:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Dean</th>
<th>Suzan</th>
<th>Kara</th>
<th>Bill</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Ask new program if OK to pare down Ed Background section to just Name, City, Country, major, degree, and transcript link. Get</td>
<td>* test as coordinator?</td>
<td>* test as coordinator?</td>
<td>* post reviewers and coordinators draft tutorials on this site</td>
<td>* clean up AppStructure</td>
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AppReview pilot resources

AppReview - 1st round - Spring 2013

Comments from short demo videos

Anabel and Laura
- Interested in using for
  - pre-screens (piano, voice, and string)
  - academic degrees (MAs and PhDs)
- liked the customizable review sheets, having applicant summary data.
- This would be great, as we could then have pre-screen applicants right there for faculty

Jessie Eastman (Poli Sci)
- processing speed - will it slow down in peak season (e.g., docs, etc. from ApplyYourself, editing the displays seem

Jon G - Biomedical Sciences:
- Looks user friendly enough for both PLCs and Faculty
- Will then be doing the review in ApplyYourself
AppReview pilot resources (cont’d)

- Orientation w. every coordinator
- Description of their review process
  - Worksheet
  - Process maps
  - Etc.

Implementation Guide

Welcome to AppReview!
Below are instructions for getting your graduate program started with AppReview.

Step 1. Demos - Watch the 5-minute demo videos from Hobsons and give us your 1st impressions:
  Coordinator Demo
  Reviewer Demo

Step 2. Description of review process - Please send us a document outlining your program's application review process. This could include process maps, a written description, tutorials you may have created for your faculty, scoring sheets, etc. Click here to see an example from one of our programs. Or, use this worksheet (coming soon) to document your review process.

Step 3. Be a Reviewer - After we receive your review description, we'll build a test bundle for you in AppReview and start you off as a reviewer so you can see how the process works from the end-user perspective.

Step 4. Be a Coordinator - Next, we'll conduct another test round with you as a coordinator.

Step 5. Debrief - Once you're comfortable with AppReview, we'll discuss program-specific procedures such as how to handle the "Head Reviewer" role, answer any burning questions, and help resolve remaining issues.

Step 6. Run a test review - The rubber hits the road! We'll get a list of test reviewers from you and create their access in AppReview. From there you'll run the entire process yourself (but we'll still support you if necessary). Reviewer group sizes can range, but we would recommend you start small with just a few participants. For this first test review you must include your DGS or Chair because we'll need faculty help to introduce AppReview to the rest of your faculty.

Step 7. Plan for next cycle - We'll discuss the results of your test review (lessons learned, best practices, etc.) and help you prepare for the roll out of AppReview for your grad program.

Step 8. Listserv - We'll add you to our AppReview listserv! (use gradmissions?)
Questions?

Comments?

Thank You!