

The University of Texas at San Antonio

UTSA Auditing & Consulting Services

Continuous Auditing – PeopleSoft Correction Access & Segregation of Duties

Project# 2021-25

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Executive Summary

Conclusion

Within PeopleSoft, the presence of correction roles and the practice of creating roles with progressive access, which can compromise segregation of duties, continue to be a subject of concern. The UTShare PeopleSoft Security Functional Committee is now actively engaged in reviewing roles and identifying solutions.

Observation Rating

Priority
High
Medium
Low
Satisfactory

Background

As part of our annual FY21 Audit Plan, we have included a project called 2021-25 Continuous Auditing that gives us the opportunity to perform a review of University risks, controls and daily operational procedures on an ongoing basis. Areas that may be examined as part of this review may include compliance, information security, information technology systems, accounting practices, and other University business practices. The objective of this project is to monitor key internal controls for high-risk areas identified during previous internal audit engagements or while performing data analytics and observing day-to-day University operations.

The 2018 PeopleSoft Payroll Internal Audit identified excessive access granted through roles allowing correct history privilege, UT institution cross-campus modification privileges, and general update access beyond what was required for individual job functions causing inappropriate segregation of duties. The correct history capability allows a user to replace a row of data without creating a record of what was replaced. The cross-campus modification allows individuals from one UT Institution to modify another UT institution's data.

Continuous Audit Objectives

- Ensure PeopleSoft Correction Access is strictly limited and usage of the privilege approved and documented.
- Ensure proper segregation of duties is enforced through appropriate design and assignment of access roles.

Observations, ratings, and planned implementation dates:

1	PeopleSoft access roles allow correct history privileges without independent review.	08/31/2022
2	Change management process not followed to update Tree Hierarchies	07/12/2021

Audit Observations

1. PeopleSoft access roles allow correct history privileges without independent review.

High

Observation

Condition

One UTSA specific role and 36 UT institutions shared (UTShare) roles allow correct history privileges. A listing of these roles has been provided to management.

Criteria

Correction authorizations should be either eliminated or highly limited based on business need to senior personnel with knowledge of business operations and subject to independent review.

Cause

- Roles were created during PeopleSoft implementation with correction to act as a workaround for process issues and to address needs of a multi-institutional environment.
- Vendor delivered roles with correction capabilities were copied and used at time of implementation without analysis of the need for the correction functionality.

Impact

The correction capability allows a user to replace a row of data without creating a record of what was replaced. This capability create issues from poor record keeping to fraud and theft of assets. For example, a user with the ability to modify the vendor file could create a fictitious vendor from which purchases could be transacted against. The file could be modified again once the transactions were processed to eliminate any record of the fictitious vendor.

Management Action Plan

The UTShare PeopleSoft Security Functional Committee is engaged to address this concern across all UT Institutions. Each campus was provided a report of individuals with cross-campus and correction roles to research how the roles are used on their campus and determine that only authorized individuals have been assigned the roles. UTSA Audit representatives have been added as members of the functional committee to provide input to the committee and all UT campus representatives during the review of the roles.

UTSA management has already begun their review. As of the date of this report UTSA has identified one role where user workflow did not allow the use of the correction capability assigned in the role and therefore correction could potentially be removed from the role. A second UTSA specific role was noted to not be used by UTSA, thus was removed from service.

Responsible Party:

Cynthia Orth, Business Information Systems Application Services Manager

Planned Implementation Date:

August 31, 2022

Audit Observations

2. Change management process not followed to update Tree Hierarchies

Medium

Observation

Condition

Business Information Services utilizes the Tree Manager role UTZ_HR_TM_TREE_MANAGER to perform updates to the PeopleSoft tree hierarchies for UTSA in the Production environment without following a change management regime to ensure the independent and accurate implementation of changes.

Criteria

Standard practice for implementing critical changes to the PeopleSoft application is to approve a change through the Change Request process and have the Change Advisory Board review the change during a weekly meeting to ensure the appropriateness of the change and that the change was made accurately.

Cause

The Tree update process originated with the implementation of PeopleSoft and is maintained based on required needs of management due to organizational changes, which stressed timely implementation over structured review. Since then, the process has become more standardized, but still informal.

Impact

Business Information Services can use Tree Manager to modify detail trees to change department hierarchies or business unit hierarchies resulting in potential errors in generating reports from the general ledger and potentially result in inaccurate financial statements.

Management Action Plan

Management concurred with Audit's finding and drafted procedures to systematically address Standard, Normal, and Urgent Tree update requests through the Change Request (CR) process with weekly reviews being conducted through the UTSA UTS Change Advisory Board (CAB). Emergency changes will following emergency CR procedures with a priority call for review and approval along with the weekly CAB review.

Standard non-technical requests will be quickly processed with no to little review from the CAB, with non-standard requests being discussed in the CAB with advice tendered as necessary. Ultimate operational approval will still reside with the Senior Associate VP Financial Affairs. Additionally, Financial Affairs performs periodic department hierarchy accuracy reviews.

Responsible Party:

Cynthia Orth, Business Information Systems Application Services Manager

Planned Implementation Date:

Completed (July 12, 2021)

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