OVERVIEW
Following a 2009 assessment of the Payroll Personnel System (PPS) by UC controllers and other critical stakeholders, the University of California embarked on an initiative to implement a single, university-wide payroll system with modern capabilities to meet UC’s complex operational and workforce needs. The goals of the project soon expanded to include an integrated Human Resource Management System (HRMS), time and attendance tracking and the development of a more streamlined, efficient and cost effective approach to payroll and human resources service delivery.

The PPS Initiative is one of the most complex operational initiatives ever undertaken at the university. The project’s scope and workgroup structure reflect its university-wide importance and commitment to operational efficiency gains, with strong support from President Mark G. Yudof. Participants from staff, managers and senior administrators at each campus and medical center include experts in payroll, human resources, academic personnel, and information technology.

THE NEED FOR A NEW APPROACH
PPS is almost 30 years old, with 11 different versions running university-wide. Difficult to use, update and maintain, PPS requires redundant data entry, paper forms and manual processing. PPS lacks the functionality of a true HRMS, resulting in the development of shadow systems and inconsistent business processes that are costly to maintain and no longer provide timely and complete decision support data to manage UC’s large and complex workforce.

UC recognizes that its payroll and human resources processes can be greatly streamlined and standardized across locations, resulting in more efficient operations and a higher quality of service to employees. With most payroll and HR transactional activities centralized, campus and medical center staffs will have more time for value-added consultative and strategic work.

PLANNING FOR THE TRANSITION
Transitioning to new systems and processes will take significant time and thoughtful planning. Redesigning various processes is an important first step. Close coordination will be required at all locations to ensure a smooth transition and to manage impacts on personnel. Since this project involves consolidating systems and streamlining work, it is expected that fewer positions will be required university-wide. It is too soon to know specifically when or how many positions will be affected. If positions are eventually reduced, UC intends to minimize involuntary layoffs through attrition (retirements), re-training and realignment of responsibilities. For directly affected staff, there may be opportunities to learn new skills or take on new roles as the nature of the work becomes more strategic and less transactional. Project leaders will work proactively to help supervisors and employees stay informed about the project and prepare for transition. Additional information is available at: http://workingsmarter.universityofcalifornia.edu/project/s/payroll-personnel-system/overview/

TIMETABLE FOR COMPLETION
The PPS Initiative timetable calls for all phases of work to be completed in four years. Since ramping up in 2010, the project has focused on developing functional requirements for the new systems, designing a more efficient and effective model for delivering payroll and human resources services and standardizing UC-wide business practices. In summer 2011, UC selected Oracle’s hosted PeopleSoft payroll and HCM suite to replace PPS, and implementation activities are now underway.

PHASE 1 (~September 2011)
The first phase includes implementing the payroll system and HRMS, standardizing business processes and putting in place the new organizational structure to support shared services. All locations will be involved in the business process design effort to ensure UC-wide needs are met. System implementation will begin at UCLA, UC Merced, UC San Diego, UC Santa Cruz and UCOP and then rolled out to remaining locations in two more waves.

PHASE 2 (~January 2013)
While the Payroll/HRMS rollout is in progress, the project will begin Phase 2, implementation of a new time and attendance system, starting with early adopter locations and then progressing UC-wide.

PHASE 3 (~July 2014)
The final phase of the project is the implementation of an integrated UC-wide online portal with access to all systems, expanded benefits administration functions and data warehouse capabilities.