8 Things Colleges & Universities Should Look For In Continuity Planning Software
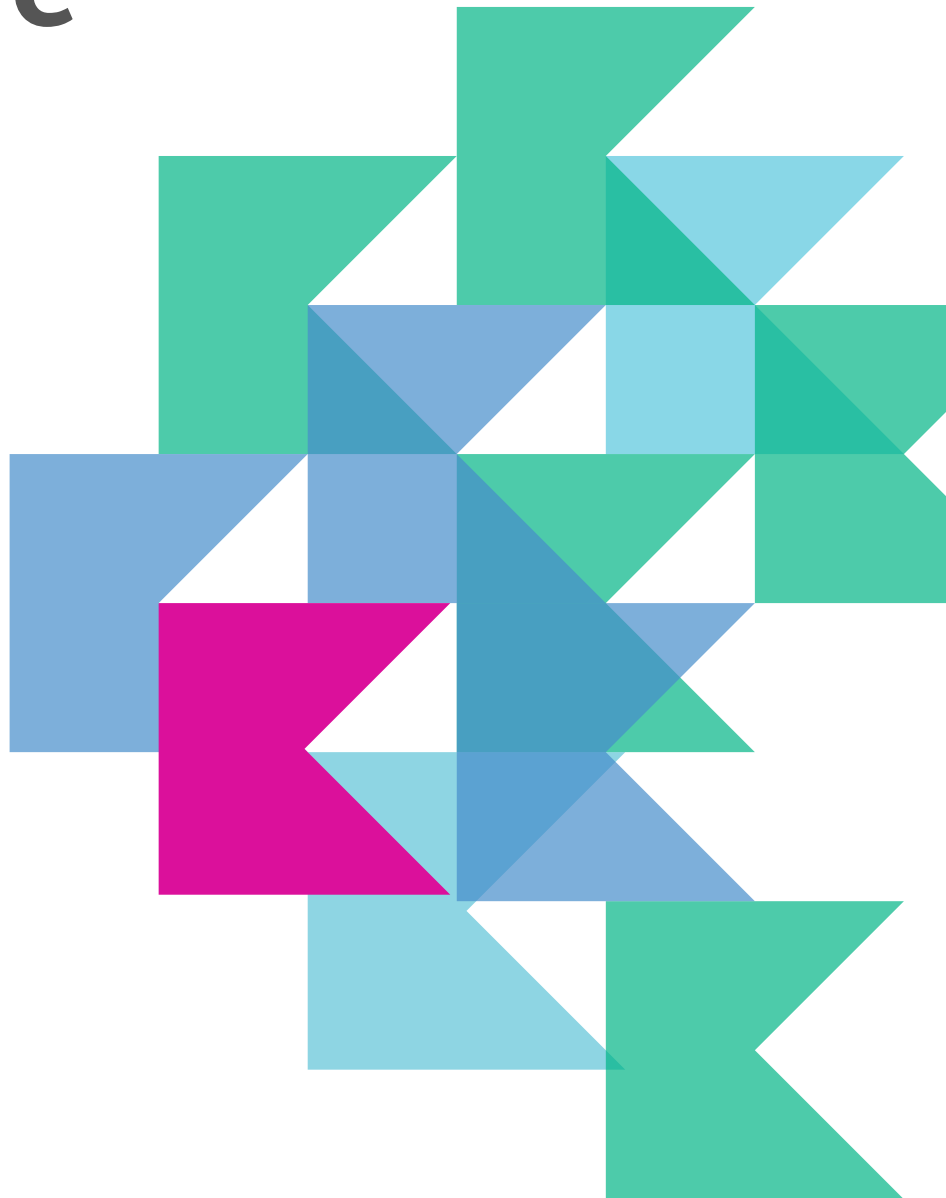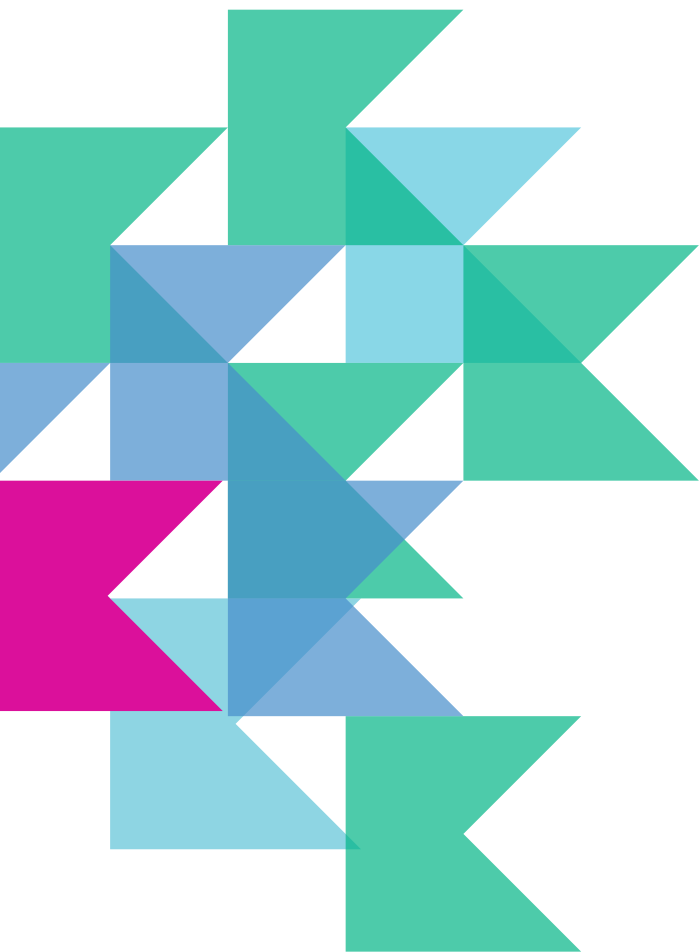
COVID-19, hurricane season, and fire season, not to mention the run-of-the-mill events like burst pipes, HVAC system failures, and power outages, have institutions re-evaluating their continuity programs. A piece of this evaluation often includes an evaluation of how the institution will efficiently build effective continuity plans and programs. With so many parts going into continuity planning it can be hard to know what to look for in a continuity planning software solution for a higher ed institution. This guide discusses what to look for in a higher ed continuity planning software solution. Use this guide to find a software solution that will help your institution efficiently build a robust set of continuity plans and build a culture of resilience for whatever events may come your way.

1. Focused Solely On Higher Ed

Continuity planning in higher ed is more complex than continuity planning for organizations in other industries. Higher ed continuity planning must consider business, academic, and research functions, along with campus security and student safety, all from several different departments in multiple different divisions. The complexity of planning is only complicated by the number of individuals, with varying continuity planning aptitudes, involved.

Look for a continuity planning software solution that uses language specific to higher ed, provides efficient processes to manage the breadth of planning, and is simple to use.

2. Exemplary Customer Service

Getting the most out of any software often requires time and resources to learn, understand, and tailor the use of the software to your institution. It's common in higher ed continuity planning for managers and coordinators to wear multiple hats leaving them with little time to learn and navigate new software. Find a software solution that comes with exemplary customer service to not only support your implementation and kick-off but stay with you as long as you use the software. Additionally, find a software solution that offers services to supplement your institution's resources to help you build a more resilient institution.

Look for a software solution that comes with more than just software, look for a software solution that comes with a support team and community of higher ed continuity peers.
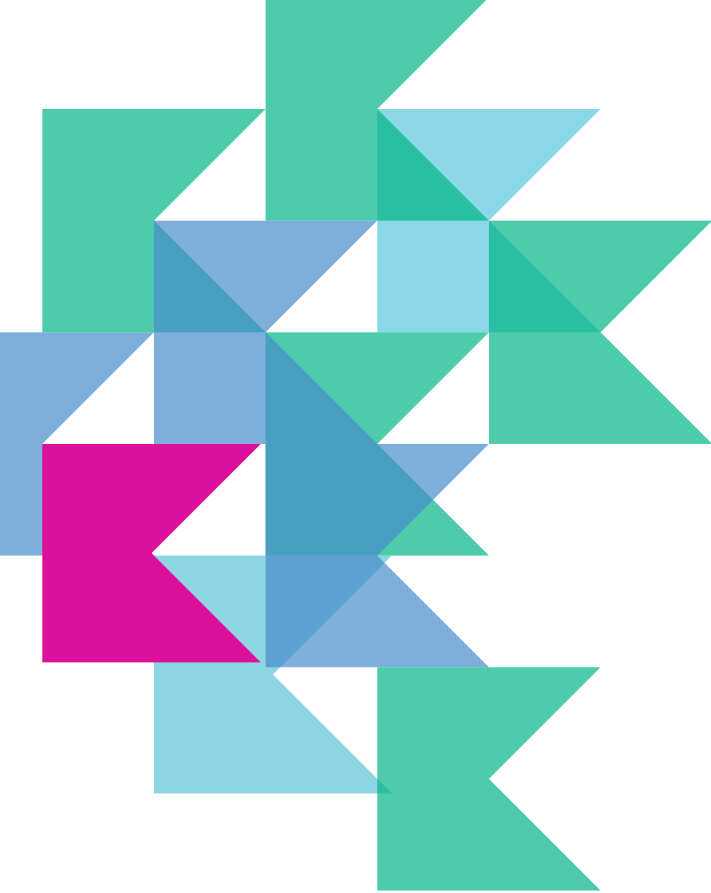
3. Built-In Continuity Planning Guidance

Higher ed continuity planning often involves several individuals from each department across campus. These individuals' expertise is often in academic disciplines, not continuity planning. And to top it off, they only need to think about continuity planning a few times per year. To bridge this gap, a quality higher ed continuity planning software solution should include built-in continuity planning guidance throughout the planning process. This built-in guidance reduces the amount of training time needed and provides tailored, step-by-step support throughout the entire planning process while removing the roadblocks felt by both department leaders and continuity managers. community service, or the administration of the institution.

Find a software solution that includes built-in higher ed continuity planning guidance and support throughout the planning process, leaving users more time to focus on teaching, research,

4. Plan Maintenance Management

Building a continuity plan is only the beginning of a continuity plan's life cycle. Testing and managing the plan to ensure it is as up-to-date as possible is just as critical as the writing piece. Any continuity planning software solution should provide an easy way to identify plans that are due for updates, easily maintain your plans, and manage your plans in one place.

Look for a software solution that aggregates data from across the system to easily manage and track the status of plans in progress as well as the maintenance of existing plans.

5. Progress and Approval Tracking

Managing a large number of plans from varying departments and divisions, each being worked on by multiple people, is a daunting task. Knowing where each plan is in the process, what approvals have been given, and which plans still need to be approved is hard to manage from multiple places and without a dashboard of aggregated data. Additionally, keeping track of feedback or action items resulting from a plan review can mean getting to a completed, robust plan faster while removing any friction that may come from many moving parts.

Look for a continuity planning solution that streamlines your management of plan progress and approvals and offers a way to efficiently communicate and manage action items.

6. Data Management and Reporting

Configuring the data used in your continuity plans means each individual, regardless of department or division, uses the same set of data, preventing data silos, and improving and streamlining your reporting.

Look for a continuity planning software that allows you to configure your data sets and produce robust reports.

7. Externally Hosted

Continuity planning software hosted outside of your own institution's servers and infrastructure provides an additional level of continuity. If an adverse event impacts your servers or infrastructure the continuity planning software will still be available and accessible to support your institutions' response.

Look for a continuity planning software that hosts your continuity plans and all related documents on a secure, external server and provides access from any internet-connected device.

8. User-Friendly for a Variety of Users

Building a culture of resilience, including well-considered departmental continuity plans requires engagement from individuals from all over campus with varying continuity aptitudes. Continuity managers have limited bandwidth so any software used for higher ed continuity planning should have a minimal learning curve and be easy to use and understand for the variety of individuals involved.

Look for a software solution that is designed and built to be user-friendly with higher ed users in mind.

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HIGHER ED CONTINUITY PLANNING SOFTWARE SOLTUION

Summary Checklist

☐ Higher ed focused language, processes, and guidance

☐ Exemplary customer service and thorough support services

☐ Built-in continuity planning guidance and support

☐ Simplifies plan maintenance across the institution

☐ Streamlines management of tracking and approvals throughout the planning process

☐ Configures your data sets and produces robust reports

☐ Secure, externally-hosted continuity plans and all related documents with accesses from any internet-connected device.

☐ User-friendly and designed with higher ed users in mind

Continuity planning software designed specifically for higher ed.

Visit www.kuali.co or email resilience@kuali.co for more info.

Continuity Planning Software Designed For and By Higher Ed

Kuali Ready is the only continuity planning software designed specifically for the needs and operations of higher ed institutions. With more than 10 years and input from more than 100 institutional partners, Kuali Ready has been developed and refined with insights from and in combination with higher ed partners. Kuali Ready helps streamline your institution's continuity planning process, connects users from all over campus, and reduces training time by providing built-in guidance and support.

To learn more about how Kuali Ready can help your institution build a robust set of thorough continuity plans or request a free demo, contact resilience@kuali.co.

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See how Kuali can help you improve your institution's resilience.

Visit www.kuali.co or email resilience@kuali.co for more info.