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Bradley and Oregon State First to Offer Students Free Clearinghouse Self-Service Verifications

Amy Gaisford, a senior at Bradley University, learned that her institution was offering online enrollment verifications at no charge. Knowing that she would require up-to-date proof of her enrollment, she decided to check it out. She was thrilled with the results. "All I had to do was log into the campus system, enter my personal identification information and pass-



Kathie Beaty (back row, far left), registrar with Bradley University, and her team enjoy the benefits of the Clearinghouse's DegreeVerify service and the new free student self-service enrollment verifications.

word, and print out the certificate using my own computer and printer. It will make things so much easier. No more trips to the registrar's office to fill out complicated forms."

Thanks to recent enhancements to the Clearinghouse's verification systems, colleges and universities can now offer their students free, instantaneous enrollment verifications any time the students need them.

Launched in April, this program enables colleges and universities to give their students access to the Clearinghouse from the school's password-protected website, where they can perform

enrollment verification tasks that formerly required assistance from the registrar's office. With the self-service verification program, students can now verify their enrollment for health insurers and others, right from their own residences. To participate in the program, institutions must be actively participating in DegreeVerifySM, the Clearinghouse's automated verification service, designed to provide registrars with a reporting solution not unlike the loan verification services originally offered by the Clearinghouse.

Kathie Beaty, registrar with Bradley University, says she was pleased when the Clearinghouse contacted her about participating in the pilot self-service verification program. "We've been working with the Clearinghouse for a number of years, and have always trusted the service they've provided us. We were excited about participating in the pilot program, but somewhat concerned that we wouldn't have the IT resources to program for the free verification service. Our IT department is always so busy! But the specifications that the Clearinghouse sent us were so easy. It took less than a day, and one of our programmers actually did the work from his home."

Barbara Balz, registrar with Oregon State, echoed Kathie's enthusiasm. "When the Clearinghouse approached us, we jumped on it. We're on the Banner system and our programmers were able to implement it quickly and easily. We added a link to our on line registration site, but haven't promoted the new service yet. Despite this, we've

already had students using the free verification service."

Barbara further believes that the registrar community should review the entire verification process. "Over the years, we've observed that every insurance company has different forms and requires different information. Some want raised seals. Others want a school stamp. We simply don't have the resources to accommodate each individual request. We made the decision to only offer the Clearinghouse verification. We've encountered no problems and the change has been well received."

Barbara and Kathie are both active DegreeVerify participants and believe that their decision to use the program has been well worth it. "DegreeVerify has easily saved our staff several hundred verification phone calls per month," said Barbara.

For more information on the free student verification service and DegreeVerify, please contact your regional director, or the Clearinghouse at service@studentclearinghouse.org or 703-742-7791.

Record Number of Institutions Participating in DegreeVerify

The National Student Clearinghouse proudly reports that it has been chosen to provide degree verification services for 276 post-secondary institutions, which grant more than 20 percent of the nation's degrees.

To learn more about DegreeVerify, call 703-742-7791 or visit our website at www.studentclearinghouse.org.

Clearinghouse INS Reporting Service – Update



By David Yeh, Registrar
Cornell University
and Chairman,
Registrar Advisory Board,
National Student
Clearinghouse

In the Spring 2002 issue of *The Record*, we invited input

from higher education professionals on the possible development of a new Clearinghouse service to assist colleges and universities in reporting enrollment data on international students to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). Thank you for your inquiries and statements of support. We received numerous emails and phone calls from registrars encouraging the Clearinghouse to research and possibly develop a program that would assist

them in complying with INS reporting requirements, and alleviate some of the anticipated workload burden.

Many of you offered suggestions and expressed your concerns related to the approach that the INS is currently taking in their implementation of SEVIS (Student Exchange Visitor Information System). The Clearinghouse is equally concerned, in particular about the proposed compliance deadline of January 30, 2003, and the lack of final specifications for the batch file report required by the INS. One potential risk is that specifications may be issued too late for institutions and the Clearinghouse to effectively program and test their reports before the January 30 deadline. Another risk is that, if the INS discovers during its own programming and testing process that

the specifications need to be changed, institutions and the Clearinghouse may be put in the position of programming twice.

The American Council on Education (ACE) and other organizations and institutions have recently made proposals to modify the schedules and sequence of events so that the INS and colleges and universities can effectively implement a sound process for monitoring foreign students. The Clearinghouse will continue to work with all parties to potentially forge a service you can use to comply with the INS's reporting requirements as efficiently as possible.

We welcome your feedback on this topic. Please contact the Clearinghouse by phone at 703-742-7791 or by email at service@studentclearinghouse.org.

AACRAO & Clearinghouse Jointly Sponsoring Workshops

Today's fast-paced college and university environment can place challenging demands on registrars and their staffs. One of the best ways to ensure that your team stays at the forefront of the changing academic environment is to invest in a solid training program. Yet, with resources at a premium, finding a cost effective training module can be difficult.

The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and the National Student Clearinghouse recognize the challenges registration professionals face in improving their staff's functionality and enhancing career growth opportunities. Sponsored jointly by the Clearinghouse and AACRAO, Registrar 101 is a professional development program designed to better instruct staff on the principles and practices associated with registrar's office operations.

Previously offered in 2001, the one-and-one-half-day workshop is being held in three locations this summer: July 1-2 in Washington, D.C., July 17-18 in Atlanta, GA, and July 29-30 in St. Louis, MO. Two fall sessions are scheduled for September 30-October 1 in

Anaheim, CA and October 11-12 in Natick, MA, near Boston.

With a panel of practicing registrars from each local area, these interactive workshops will not only serve as an introduction for those new to the profession, but also offer valuable insights to more experienced registrars.

As part of its support for the workshop, the Clearinghouse raffled five scholarship awards to AACRAO members at the recent Annual Conference held in Minneapolis. Winners received full tuition and travel expenses up to \$750. Recipients were given the opportunity either to use the prizes themselves or send other members of their teams.

Each Registrar 101 workshop will include a new module entitled "A Semester in the Life of a Registrar," a sequenced discussion on the most common responsibilities of a registrar, as they tend to occur over the course of a semester. There will also be breakout sessions by size of schools, so registrars can compare notes with others who work in similar settings. Michael Allen, associate registrar at the University of Texas at Austin, will serve

as lead facilitator for all workshops. Topics include: The Roles of the Registrar, Information Sources for Registrars, Outsourcing Services, FERPA Audit: An Overview of What Is Expected of You, A Semester in the Life of a Registrar, and Strategic Planning and Project Management. Presenters and panelists will also be available to serve as post-conference sources.

To learn more on the Registrar 101 workshops, visit the AACRAO website at www.aacrao.org.

AACRAO Annual Conference Clearinghouse – Registrar 101 Raffle Winners

Michael Carpenter, Norfolk State University, Norfolk, VA

Lisa Hyde, Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, Edwardsville, IL

Rebecca Hile, Lycoming College, Williamsport, PA

Dan Vilenski, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY

Clifford Ramirez, University of California Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA

The “Other Side” of Financial Aid



by Pamela Gilligan,
Regional Director,
National Student
Clearinghouse

I've heard these words at least a hundred times from my financial aid friends and colleagues in the last nine months: "I can't believe you've gone over to the other side!"

With twenty-four years of experience as a financial aid professional prior to joining the Clearinghouse, I have logged numerous positions at several institutions over the years, including University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Trinity College, Mount Ida College, Regis College, Boston College and Berklee College of Music. Since I am no longer sitting behind a desk at an academic institution and no longer awarding financial aid, analyzing statistical data, processing government agency applications or providing one-on-one student counseling, some of my former colleagues have commented that I am no longer working on behalf of students and the institution.

My financial aid colleagues, some of whom worked with me through my EASFAA presidency last year, believe that having left the physical confines of a financial aid office makes my motivation less altruistic than before. For some reason, many think there is a difference between exhibiting at a conference and attending a conference.

Having seen the 'other side' for the last few months, I can now speak from both sides. In my brief tenure at the Clearinghouse, I have found that I continue to work in a service-oriented profession, much as I did on a campus. I think many forget that admissions and financial aid professionals employ sales and marketing tools as they work with students on campus. Being a regional director for the Clearinghouse allows me to serve even more students, families, and staff at even more institutions.

I may not do so in the same direct manner as before, but now I work indirectly to provide and enhance service for many more clients. I have broadened my arena to work through the college and university registrars and

aid professionals to achieve a greater level of service for not one institution, but hundreds.

I continue to work for a non-profit association just as I did in my former life, and I continue to work in a profession that aids students. I continue to care that we do the best job to assist our clients – just as I did in my role on a campus.

What has changed since I went to the 'other side'? I no longer have a fifty-hour-a-month commute to my office and I no longer have to constantly adjust to changing financial aid situations. 'Change' was my middle name in the aid office. No aid process remained static – making it an endless challenge to adapt. I enjoy change, but within reason. Goal setting and goal attainment have now replaced the struggle for student 'numbers' each year. Although I did travel to a few meetings annually, I am now on the road more often to exhibit and present at conferences and for school visits, which requires so much more time and planning.

I have also learned that exhibiting is not effortless. What appears to be an 'easy gig' to many former colleagues requires timing, planning, coordination, the ability to deal with extenuating logistical circumstances, the necessary energy for setup and breakdown, and being 'on' for hours at a time. Exhibiting can be draining, but it also produces a rush of adrenaline that comes from meeting and quickly engaging so many people who share your goal to improve services.

This same feeling comes from a successful school visit or service demonstration on a campus or via the telephone. Knowing that you effectively presented your service and that it was well received produces euphoria for a job well done that must be similar to what an actor feels on opening night. I often did not have positive reinforcement while working on campus; good deeds usually went unnoticed by the masses while the opposite did not.

Friends said I would miss the daily contact and camaraderie of working in an office on campus, but I haven't. It

may not be exactly the same level of contact, but I manage to retain my sanity with the daily telephone calls, emails, and school visits and conferences. Yet, I enjoy the solitude and silence of my home office. (My cats don't talk much.)

Overall, going to the 'other side' has been a positive experience for me. It's less stressful working off-campus. I work for what I consider to be an extremely professional organization with a supervisor, peers, and colleagues who care as much about the service aspect as the bottom line. I am expanding my knowledge base and learning new techniques, such as a negotiation sales approach. My circle of colleagues has broadened to include other educational administrators beyond financial aid staff. (Yes, registrars are conscientious and caring student service professionals, too!)

The transition to the 'other side' continues. In the beginning, I let the comments of my former colleagues pass. But now, I easily respond to those who inquire. I proclaim, "I am a student services professional and a colleague with the same goals as before: service to the student and the institution. That has not changed."

Pamela Gilligan joined the National Student Clearinghouse in September 2001. Prior to joining the Clearinghouse, Pam served as director of financial aid with the Berklee College of Music in Massachusetts, where she was responsible for financial aid and debt management counseling programs for more than 3,000 students and the management of cost center funds in excess of \$24 million annually. Pam has also served as associate director of financial aid with Boston College, and as the director of financial aid with both Regis and Mount Ida Colleges in Massachusetts. She has almost twenty-five years of experience in financial aid program management, is the immediate past-president of EASFAA (Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators), and a past member of the NASFAA (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators) board of directors.

Institutional Research Service Now Offering Access to Degree Data

Suppose you were tasked with a massive institutional research study on transfer-out behavior. Among other things, you would want to learn where your former students continued their education, what degrees they earned, and their major fields of study.

Now you can access both enrollment and degree data through the Clearinghouse's newly enhanced EnrollmentSearch® service. With a database of enrollment and graduation records for 13 million current and 35 million former students, EnrollmentSearch is the only single source that can provide actual confirmation of enrollment and degree achievement for use by institutional researchers, enrollment managers, and other higher education professionals in understanding enrollment patterns at their institution.

Using EnrollmentSearch you can obtain information on:

- what other institutions your students attended after graduating from your institution, and what degrees they earned;
- where your prospects who didn't submit applications to you actually enrolled;
- prior enrollment and degree information on applicants you are admitting;
- where those applicants who were accepted for admission, but did not enroll, actually attended;
- prior enrollment and degree information on your current students;
- which institutions students attended after dropping out of your institution;
- where TRIO and other outreach program participants attended.

The amount of detailed degree information contained in the Clearinghouse database is rapidly growing as the number of institutions participating in the DegreeVerify program expands. In order

to access degree information, your institution needs to be an active participant in the DegreeVerify program.

To learn more, contact the Clearinghouse at 703-742-7791 or visit our website at www.studentclearinghouse.org.

Announcing New Clearinghouse Website

The Clearinghouse is currently updating its website to offer enhanced usability and to create a new, more exciting look. Our fast, state-of-the-art functionality will remain unchanged however. Watch for the new site to be unveiled in September.