PESC Fall 2005 Workgroup Summit Announced

PESC is pleased to announce its Fall 2005 Workgroup Summit, October 11-12, 2005 in Atlanta, GA at the Sheraton Atlanta. Summit information including registration information is posted on the PESC website, www.PESC.org.

The tentative agenda is as follows:

**Tuesday October 11, 2005**
- 10:00am - 11:30am PESC Membership Meeting
- 11:30am - 1:00pm PESC Membership Luncheon
- 1:00pm - 3:00pm Concurrent Workgroup Meetings
  - High School Transcript
  - Student Aid Inquiry
- 3:00pm - 3:30pm Break
- 3:30pm - 5:00pm Concurrent Workgroup Meetings
  - Degree Audit Request and Response
  - Admission Application
- 5pm - 6pm PESC Reception

**Wednesday October 12, 2005**
- 7:30am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
- 8:30am - noon Concurrent Workgroup Meetings
  - Higher Education Data Model
  - Data Transport
- Noon - 1:30pm Lunch
- 1:30pm - 4:30pm General Sessions
  - PESC Update
  - Steering Committee Update
  - Workgroup Updates

**Student Aid Inquiry Workgroup Launches**

Chaired by Tim Cameron, Project Manager for Meteor, and Doug Jabbour, Director of Strategic Relations for ELM Resources, this workgroup kicked off through a conference call held on June 15, 2005. With 36 participants on the initial conference call, this workgroup is off to a great start! Minutes from this first meeting are attached on page 5 along with details on the next call date and time.
Google is offering coders up to $4,500 to work on projects for different open source groups. Programmers can apply to the “Google Summer of Code” initiative through a sponsoring open source organization. Project ideas come from Google as well as open source groups, including: The Python Software Foundation, The Perl Foundation, The Apache Software Foundation, Ubuntu Linux, The Mono Project, The Gnome Foundation, The Wine Project, The Subversion Project. Google has allocated funds for up to 200 participants in the program, which, together with the mentor organization outlay, could total a $1 million dollar cash infusion into the open source community. For more information, visit www.internet-news.com/devnews/article.php/3509211

The University of Texas at Austin is clearing its undergraduate library of nearly all books to make way for computers and a coffee shop. Transcripts from a live, online discussion with Frances J. Maloy, president of the Association of College and Research Libraries, about the pros and cons of moving books and journals out of libraries to make more room for computers and technology services, can be accessed at http://chronicle.com/free/v51/i43/43a02701.htm.

David Clark, leader of a year-long project financed by the National Science Foundation, will try to determine how computer scientists can create a new and improved architecture for the Internet. Mr. Clark, a senior research scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, will ask computing experts what they would do differently if they could rebuild the Internet from scratch. He expects, may would choose to make the Internet more secure.

Microsoft has announced its plan to use XML schemas in the
In 2004, nearly one million students nationwide enrolled in courses that took place completely online, according to a recent Eduventures’ report. According to the report, about 937,000 students were enrolled in all-online education programs at the end of 2004. By the end of 2005, Eduventures expects more than 1.2 million students to be taking such courses, making up about 7 percent of the 17-million students enrolled at degree-granting institutions. The report is only available to Eduventures’ clients.

What are high school students looking for in a college admissions Web site?” Students are looking for information on how they will fit on a campus, academically and socially,” says Judy Hingle, director of professional development at the National Association for College Admission Counseling. “Features like webcams, virtual campus tours, chatting with professors and students and information on campus activities can help get a sense of what life is like.”

Researchers at the University of Arizona have taken a giant leap toward creating a computer the size of a fingertip. The scientists have discovered a way to use quantum mechanics to turn single molecules into working transistors — and now a Canadian research team reports doing the same thing by chemical means.

About 70 percent of applicants to the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor fill out their forms on the Web, and half of prospective students at Eastern Michigan University do the same. Administrators say they’re happy with that development — because online applications save paperwork, and because they can’t be plagued by bad penmanship.

Too many colleges are budgeting barely adequate amounts for technology to improve their business processes, according to a Educause Center for Applied Research. The report, “Good Enough! Information Technology Investment and Business Process Performance in Higher Education,” collects the results of a survey of 350 campus technology officials. Many of the officials said they had no plans to change their methods for making business decisions, even if they described their current practices as merely satisfactory. To view the report, visit www.educause.com.

Wikis — communal Web sites that can be altered by anyone who reads them — have been around for years. But the only such site that most Web users are familiar with is Wikipedia, the popular group-edited encyclopedia. The next wiki to make a splash could be wikiHow. The site, which is four months old, collects the kind of information a group-run portal should be good at presenting: how-to instructions on a wide range of topics. For more information, visit http://wiredcampus.chronicle.com/2005/06/wikis_in_12_eas.html

Educause and the Dartmouth PKI Lab are...
sponsoring a meeting focused on real-life PKI deployment issues in higher education. The meeting will allow attendees to benefit from the valuable technical and policy experiences of others deploying client-side PKI in higher education; learn about and influence the implementation of higher education inter-institutional PKI trust fabrics (Higher Education Bridge Certification Authority and U.S. Higher Education Root); learn about Educause-negotiated PKI vendor deals; find out how PKI bridges can enable grid resource sharing; hear about the federal government’s far-reaching end-user PKI deployment plans; learn about different Certification Authority options from those who have successfully used them; and network with others who are deploying PKI in higher education and elsewhere. For more information, visit www.educause.com.

Enterprise portals have become the technology of choice for providing users with a single web workspace for handling and managing business information and content. One starting point for a custom-built portal is to use an open-source portal solution. Many open-source portals provide capabilities such as content management and collaboration. To access an article discussing open-source portal products, and review the pros and cons of using them, visit http://www.b-eye-network.com/view/1016

A recent Java World article introduces Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA), discusses why enterprises need SOA, what a service-oriented architecture is, and what comprises SOA infrastructure at the core, platform, and quality-of-services level. With a set of standards, SOA brings better reusability of existing assets or investments in the enterprise and lets you create applications that can be built on top of new and existing applications. To access the article, visit http://www.javaworld.com/javaworld/jw-06-2005/jw-0613-soa.html.

The Association of American Publishers has asked Google to stop scanning copyrighted books until it can answer questions about whether the company’s planned scanning project complies with copyright law, reports the Chronicle of Education. While not all libraries that Google will be working with are allowing the use of copyrighted material, two, Michigan and Stanford, have agreed to let the company scan books that are still in copyright. Google officials say the have not yet formally responded. In the related news, The University of Michigan at Ann Arbor has released the details of the contract it signed with Google to digitize books and allow the texts to be searchable online, according to The Chronicle. The contract says the agreement between the University of Michigan and Google must follow copyright law. “If at any time, either party becomes aware of copyright infringement under this agreement, that party shall inform the other as quickly as reasonably possible,” the contract states. It continues: “If either party reasonably determines that a portion of the Selected Content that was previously thought to be in the public domain is actually subject to copyright, that party shall promptly notify the other party in a writing that particularly identifies the portion(s) and provides an explanation for why the portion(s) are believed to be subject to copyright.” The contract further indicates that the university is not making any money in the deal. The contract can be accessed on the University’s website at http://www.lib.umich.edu/mdp/index.html

The Value of Standards

Standards equal liquidity. This is the message that keynote speaker Tom Koulopoulos of Delphi delivered at the 2nd Annual Conference on Technology and Standards. The report provides significant insight into how organizations can benefit from standards and the report is still available on the conference homepage at http://www.pesc.org/events/ACTS2/presentations/standards.pdf.
Meeting Minutes
PESC Student Aid Inquiry Workgroup
June 15, 2005

Participants:

1. Rhonda Allen, Sungard SCT
2. Richard Allen, NYHESC
3. Ron Bennett, FSA
4. Rob Boisen, Great Lakes
5. Tim Cameron, Meteor
6. Cliff Clevenger, Sigma Systems
7. Marion Dilbeck, Oklahoma
8. Betty Ende, College Board
9. Doug Falk, National Student Clearinghouse
10. Cathy Fox, College Board
11. Todd Froyland, Sungard Bitech
12. Leonard Gude, University of S. Florida, NASFAA
13. Elisha Harris, Oklahoma
14. Anthony Humphreys, Datatel
15. Doug Jabbour, ELM Resources
16. Steve James, College Board
17. Rick Johnson, NSLP
18. Bob King, Citibank
19. Jennifer Kim, PESC
20. Wayne Kirby, South Carolina
21. Rich Loftus, University System of Georgia
22. Steve Margenau, Great Lakes
23. Adele Marsh, AES
24. Judy Martin, Pearson
25. Lisa Matta, Columbia University
26. Vicki McCright, Campus Management
27. Shawn Monk, ASA
28. Donna Parker, Pensacola Jr. College
29. Jane Reny, VSAC
30. Gary Sandler, ELM Resources
31. Michael Sessa, PESC
32. Cliff Smallwood, Campus Management
33. Ruth Smith, NYHESC
34. Ricky Steel, Oklahoma
35. Will Thien, TGSLC
36. Karl van Ness, College Board
To kick off the workgroup call, Michael Sessa provided the team with an overview of the scope of the workgroup and the review process for the work product(s) created by the team. A brief synopsis is as follows:

- PESC would assist with community notification of the project to ensure wide community support and participation. This participation could include FSA, software vendors, schools, guarantors, lenders, loan servicers and other interested parties. The interested parties will determine what the business needs are and what schemas should be developed.
- Co-chairs will be selected from the group of interested community participants. The co-chairs will be responsible for scheduling the conference calls, laying out the project plan, following the project plan, and providing written reports to the PESC Standards Forum Steering Committee.
- All interested parties will work together to identify the necessary data elements and negotiate the definitions and facets of each of the components.
- Once the components are identified, they will be reviewed to determine if the components exist in the XML Registry and Repository for the Education Community. If the components exist, they will be reviewed to ensure that the purpose and usage is consistent with the current component. If the components do not exist or the purpose or usage is not consistent, then the community workgroup will recommend the definition of a new component.
- Once that phase is completed, the components will be submitted to the PESC Submission Advisory Board for review and approval. The PESC Submission Advisory Board will then submit the components to the PESC Change Control Board for review and approval.
- After the submission is approved, technical representatives from the community will build the schema.
- The schema will be submitted to the PESC Submission Advisory Board for review and approval. The PESC Submission Advisory Board will then submit the components to the PESC Change Control Board for review and approval.
- After the schema is approved, the new schema will undergo a 30-day community comment period. Community comments will be reviewed and changes made as necessary.
- Following the community review, the PESC membership will vote to accept the new standard.
- If the PESC membership votes to accept the new standard, then the PESC Board of Directors will ratify the vote and release the necessary related documentation.
Tim Cameron, Workgroup Co-Chair, provided the team with some background information which led to NCHELP/Meteor submitting the request for PESC to form the workgroup. He noted the following:

The Financial Aid community has realized the necessity of providing real-time inquiry access to student aid data. At the time the Meteor Project was started, an industry XML standard was just starting to emerge and Meteor used the standard as it existed at that time. Although collaboratively developed, the XML standard for real-time inquiry of student aid data as used by Meteor is not a fully accepted industry standard. It would be beneficial to the financial aid community to collaboratively develop a student aid data inquiry XML standard.

Currently, student aid data is exchanged in a variety of proprietary formats. These include both XML and flat files. Some of the current processes include Meteor, NSLDS, ELMNet, and other proprietary processes implemented between business partners. It is costly for organizations who participate in several of these processes to maintain each of these proprietary formats. By developing a student aid data inquiry XML standard, organizations will have the ability to leverage the development of common modules to support multiple processes. These types of standards also allow organizations to implement changes more efficiently and cost effectively.

This collaboration would result in the development an XML standard to be used to allow organizations the ability to respond to any type of student aid inquiry. The standard would be built on the existing PESC Core Components and would include application, origination, disbursement, repayment, default and any other related student aid data that the participants would require.

Tim Cameron then proposed that the team form a matrix that identifies all of the data elements currently being exchanged today between trading partners as it relates to student aid inquiry processes. The team concurred that this would be a good starting point. Several organizations indicated that they would share their file formats that are currently being used today to be included in the matrix. Those organizations are as follows:

- Campus Management (Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, Ohio, Texas, and Washington state reporting)
- College Board (PROFILE data layout)
- ELMnet
- Meteor
- NSLDS
- University of South Florida (Florida FSAG eligibility determination file, Florida Program grade and hours layout, Florida Programs master eligibility list layout)
Organizations are to submit these formats or a list of data elements to Tim Cameron by July 8, 2005. Tim will draft the first cut of the matrix by July 20, 2005 and the team will have its next call on July 27, 2005 at 3:00pm Eastern, 2:00pm Central, 1:00pm Mountain and Noon Pacific. The focus of the next call will be to take a look at which data elements being used today have already been defined by PESC. Those elements will not be reviewed. The team will focus the discussion on data elements not currently defined by PESC.
10 Predictions for the Adult Student Market

Many of the forces that will shape the adult learner market in the next few years already exist, says the president of a company that specializes in helping institutions recruit and retain adult students.

During the recent Magna Publications audio conference “Marketing to Adult Students: The Future is Already Here,” Carol Aslanian, president of Aslanian Group, Inc., detailed these trends and what they mean for the next decade.

Demographic trends

The United States’ population is increasing (largely due to immigration), and that means that the adult learning market is expanding. “We’re gaining people, and that’s good for education,” Aslanian said.

While 25 percent of adults in the United States have a bachelor’s degree, half of American adults have never attended college, even though an increasing number of jobs now require some sort of postsecondary credentials. As a result, many adults will be interested in attending college for the first time to stay employable, Aslanian said.

Adult students play a role in the current college enrollment boom. In the last 25 years, college credit enrollment grew to 16.5 million from 8.6 million. For-credit enrollment is predicted to go as high as 18.2 million in 2013. (Aslanian said she hasn’t seen any data about non-credit enrollment, “but I can assure you it would be at least 16 million,” she said.)

High school graduation enrollment can’t explain all of the college enrollment increases. High school enrollment is projected to reach 3.1 million in 2012, up from 2.9 million in 1970. However, the number of adult college students is expected to rise to 6.5 million in 2010 from 2.4 million in 1970.

“Things are even better as we look ahead,” Aslanian said. We keep growing and growing, and there’s no end in sight. The question is, are you going to get your fair share of this market?”

Motivation and needs

Adult students are “utilitarian buyers” looking to enter, advance in, or change careers, Aslanian said.

The Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council launched a working group in late May to propose a format for a standard, national XML high school transcript.

The ultimate goal is to make processing admissions applications easier by creating a common transcript language among high schools and postsecondary institutions, said Michael Sessa, PESC executive director.

“Part of the issue right now is that you have how many thousands of high schools, how many thousands of colleges,” he said. “And those high schools are sending in transcripts in whatever form they want.”

Paper transcripts and mismatched electronic formats not only cause processing delays, they make it hard for colleges and universities to detect the “thousands of fraudulent documents flying around,” Sessa said.

While HTML tags dictate how material should appear on a Web page (in italics or bold, for example), XML tags describe what the material is (a phone number or a GPA, for instance), making it easy for software to extract a specific datum.

In 2004, PESC approved an XML format for college transcripts. After that, “the need for an XML high school transcript...”

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Adults come back to school because they’re making some kind of life change."

That life change doesn’t have to be large or jarring; it can be whatever renders an adult’s current skills inadequate, Aslanian said.

“Most of you fail in your advertisements [about adult programs] because you talk about yourself and you don’t talk about why they should come back to your place,” she said. Marketing should describe the benefits of attending your institution, “and it better be related to their career aspirations,” she said.

Adult students tend to value convenience—the right time and location—more than low cost, she said, even though 60 percent of adult students finance their own education.

“Location and schedule—there aren’t two factors more important,” she said. “This has turned into a client-centered industry.” Adult students want logistical and administrative ease, including hassle-free admissions, registration, payment, advising, parking, and financial aid.

For example, suburbs are growing faster than cities, and 60 percent of adult students drive to school from home. As a result, a downtown location might not attract as many adult students as one located near residential areas.

It also appears that the demand for weekend programs is higher than the supply: While 6 percent of adult students are enrolled in weekend programs, half of the remaining adults say they would be interested in such a program, Aslanian said.

Predictions

According to Aslanian, the following trends will exert greater influence on the adult learning market over the next few years:

1) Life changes will continue to be the primary reason adults enroll in post-secondary education.

“They’re there because they have to be there,” she said.

2) More adult students will enroll in certificate programs or individual courses, rather than degree programs.

The proportion of adult students enrolled in non-degree courses is about 30 percent and will increase because these courses let adult students choose only what they need to fulfill their career objectives, Aslanian said.

“Breaking up larger programs into smaller bites is a great way to attract older students,” she noted.

About 30 percent of adult students currently study full time; Aslanian predicts that proportion will increase as more institutions offer convenient packaging such as accelerated programs and online classes.

3) More institutions will offer accelerated and fast-track learning.

About 25 percent to 30 percent of adults are in accelerated programs, but Aslanian asserts that this proportion will increase.

“To adults, [accelerated programs are] a great offer,” she said. An accelerated program could almost be called a form of financial aid, she said, because students can complete it more quickly to land a job or a promotion.

4) Institutions will provide more online instruction.

Adult students say they’d prefer classroom courses if they’re available, but they are willing to take online courses if they’re not, Aslanian said.

Classroom courses with online features (being able to check grades or chat with the instructor) are very popular, she said.

5) Institutions will treat organizations as “students,” doing business with employers to meet their training and education needs.

Higher education will increasingly take a “business-to-business” approach
Changing Parent Demands Fuel State FERPA Waiver Plan

It’s not new that some campuses ask incoming students to sign privacy waivers that allow their parents access to their educational records. What is new is how strong parent demand for access—and student willingness to grant it—has become. Tennessee, for example, is poised to make such waiver programs mandatory statewide.

On May 24, the Tennessee legislature approved a bill for a pilot parent information program at Middle Tennessee State University. If the governor signs the bill and if it all goes well with the pilot, the state will require all campuses—public and private—to create similar programs. The press officer of the sponsoring state legislator, Sen. Rosalind Kurita, said she expects the governor will sign the bill into law.

The legislation calls for all colleges and universities to “provide any information about a student’s well-being, academic progress, or disciplinary status to any person who is responsible, at least in part, for the payment of the student’s tuition and fees, except with respect to information that is required to be kept confidential by federal law.”

In the MTSU pilot, called “Partners in Education,” the university won’t share student record information with parents unless students sign a confidentiality release form that overrides the privacy requirements of the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. (The release does not apply to personal counseling or health records or personal financial information unrelated to school tuition and fees.) If students don’t sign the waiver, FERPA guidelines remain to prohibit the institution from sharing student educational records with third parties, including parents.

But students who sign the waiver give the university permission to let their parents or guardians access their final semester grades and university-maintained financial and disciplinary records. Students who enroll in PIE can opt out at any time. Participation ends automatically when students turn 21.

In most situations, parents must initiate the contact by seeking out the information, rather than the university sending unsolicited information to the family, said Robert Glenn, MTSU’s vice president for student affairs. In addition, the program’s voluntary nature keeps it FERPA-compliant.

“We determined in our conversations with the Family Compliance Office [which supervises FERPA] that there was some flexibility that we could work into the program to make the institution more responsive to parental concerns,” Glenn said.

However, the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association isn’t so sure. Although students can opt out of the program after they enroll, the university will notify parents that the student has done so, said association president Claude Pressnell, Jr.

“I don’t know if FERPA allows for that kind of aggressive notification,” he said.

What parents want

Sen. Kurita, who introduced the bill in February, said she drafted the legislation after she was frustrated by FERPA restrictions when seeking information about her own child.

Such situations aren’t new, Glenn said. “We’ve been getting those calls from parents for twenty years. Quite frankly, FERPA is confusing to most parents. When their sons or daughters were in high school, they had complete access to all of their records, but when a student comes here, that suddenly changes. Now the students are in charge.”

But today’s students and parents are different from previous decades’, Glenn said. PIE should help MTSU work with them more effectively.

“There’s a lot of research coming out on this generation of parents that they want to be involved. And the research also indicates that the students don’t mind them being involved,” Glenn said.

“Students in the 1970s or 1980s would have sooner swallowed ground glass than have their parents be involved in what was going on on campus. That’s not the case now. Students today are quite comfortable with their parents being involved in all of the decisions they make. And so the vast majority of our students are more than willing to sign a release to give their parents access to the records that they’re concerned about.”

However, Pressnell questions whether legislation is the best approach to balancing students’ needs and parents’ desires.

By allowing parents to view disciplinary or other student affairs records, an institution could also give parents information about counseling or health care, which FERPA does not allow. For instance, if the university requires a student to attend counseling as the result of a disciplinary hearing, a parent couldn’t access records about the content of the counseling session, but he or she would be aware that the counseling occurred.

That in itself might be enough to keep students who need help from getting it, Pressnell said. In most cases, “counselors will encourage students to inform their parents about situations,” he said. “But in some cases, a parent may be part of why the student is seeking help.”

“We want to make sure that counseling sessions remain private, and this bill might jeopardize that,” Pressnell said. “But we also have a strong desire for students to have good working relationships with their parents. So we understand the balancing that needs to take place there, but [legislation], I think, is a difficult way to approach it.”

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The pilot program
If a student signs a release and designates a parent as his or her program “partner,” that partner will receive access to:

- parent newsletters—Each semester, the parent will receive a newsletter that contains reminders of important deadlines, campus news, and discussion of new academic policies, curricular changes, and advising concerns.
- final grades—Students usually access their grades online. However, MTSU will send final semester grades to students and parents participating in PIE.
- academic advising—Parent partners can arrange meetings with their students’ academic advisors.
- discipline records—The partners will have unrestricted access to their students’ disciplinary records. In addition, MTSU will contact parents if (1) a student reports to the university that he or she has been the victim of a violent crime or non-forcible sex offense or (2) if the student is under the age of 21 and is found responsible for an alcohol or drug-related offense.
- telephone assistance—Parent partners can call MTSU’s Academic Support Center staff during weekday business hours. Staff will track down answers to parents’ questions.

The program’s stated goal is to recruit parents as retention allies. According to the PIE information, “All activities of Partners in Education are directed toward strengthening the collaborative relationship between the student, the family, and Middle Tennessee State University, with the goal of improving the academic success and retention of students.”

Pressnell said that the legislation is primarily a reaction to news about the prevalence of student mental illness. “This has all arisen out of a desire for parents to become more involved in the social aspect of the campus environment,” he said. “It really was not driven toward finding out how [students] are doing in their classes or how they’re doing in terms of bill payments. It was more directed toward their social conduct. It was brought because of fear of student suicide.”

The program, if mandatory, will place an “enormous burden” on administration at private schools, which wouldn’t receive direct funds from the state to pay for it, Pressnell said. If the state mandates a web-based program like MTSU’s, schools must not only pay programming costs but costs for revamping administrative procedures.

“We also have concerns about the state of Tennessee mandating any type of student affairs policy” for private schools, he said.

Whether the state mandates the program or not, MTSU is going ahead with it, Glenn said.

“This was something that has been in place on other campuses,” Glenn said. “We got the idea here from Southwest Missouri State University, where a similar program has been in place for a number of years. We’ve adapted the program to suit our needs and to suit the needs of our students.”

Parents
from page 3

Students in the 1970s or 1980s would have sooner swallowed ground glass than have their parents be involved in what was going on on campus. That’s not the case now.’

Transcripts
from page 1

script was soon recognized by the post-secondary community,” said Bruce Maron, chair of the working group and associate director of student information systems at the University of Texas-Austin.

The cost of retooling will depend on how an institution currently processes applicant and student data. At institutions using SIS vendors—which account for about 70 percent to 75 percent of all campuses, Sessa estimates—the vendors, not the institutions, will need to make the changes. However, institutions with “home-grown” student information systems will need to spend more in the short term to make the adjustments.

“In the long term, though, they can eliminate the multiple ways they’re [processing high school transcripts] and do it one way,” Sessa said. “Knowing that every state is having significant cost and budget issues, everything is under the microscope. Standards are a major way to contain costs because you’re not doing the same thing 15 ways.”

Timelines and opportunities for input
Sessa guesses the working group will agree on a proposed format and open it to public comment in about six months.

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Institute Will Create Retention Clearinghouse

The Educational Policy Institute, a non-profit organization that focuses on educational opportunity, has announced the creation of a national clearinghouse for student retention information.

EPI will operate the National Student Retention Clearinghouse with the University of Oklahoma, which currently runs the Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange. The consortium is made up of about 450 North American public and private two-year and four-year institutions that collect and share undergraduate retention and graduation data.

EPI anticipates the clearinghouse’s website (www.studentretention.org) will go live this month. However, creation of the clearinghouse’s core project—a database of effective, retention programs and strategies—will be ongoing, said Watson Scott Swail, EPI president.

Any type of college or university will be able to submit data about a retention program, strategy, or practice; however, not all submissions will make it into the database, Swail said. A peer-review panel will vet submissions, which will need to include not only a description of the program or strategy, but also evidence of its effectiveness.

That evidence is important because higher education institutions are increasingly being held accountable for their persistence and graduation rates, Swail said. “So we’re not interested in building a database of just anything that’s out there,” he said.

The panel will also rate each submission’s usefulness by a system that has yet to be created. Visitors to the site will also be able to rate how useful they think different entries are, much like readers rank the helpfulness of other readers’ book reviews on Amazon.com.

“It’s a different approach for education, but one that I think works,” Swail said.

EPI hopes to build a comprehensive database including information that applies to all institution types, including proprietary institutions, and to all stages of the undergraduate career, Swail said. Part of the clearinghouse’s mission will be to dispel the myth that retention is just a first-year concern.

“We’ve been kind of programmed to focus on retention as only a freshman issue, and it’s not,” he said. “The freshman year is probably the most important year—I wouldn’t argue against that at all—but we get lured into this belief that if we do [retention work in] the freshman year, we’ve done our job. But the data clearly show that that’s just not true. For African-Americans, Hispanics, and low-income students, just as many leave after the second year as after the first year. That’s important to know because it changes policy and programmatic decisions on campus. I present that data across the country [about sophomore-year attrition], and everyone’s shocked when I show it. No one believes that’s the truth, but I’m using national data sets to show it.”

The clearinghouse’s main mission will be to disseminate information to help practitioners do their work while demonstrating the need to take retention seriously.

“Something I always say to people— I’m kind of harsh on this, from the institutional point of view—is that if you’re willing to admit a student to your university or college, you’ve entered a contractual relationship to do whatever you can to ensure that the student has a high probability of success. The student is also entering an agreement that says, ‘I’m going to do what I can.’ There has to be an understanding that it comes down to that type of attitude to make it happen. If it’s just pushing people and pushing paper, students get lost.”

The clearinghouse will also conduct research, sponsor national retention awards, and host the National Student Retention Conference October 3-5 in Dallas.
“Once we ‘bless’ that standard and we put it out there for the public, we will then track who’s implementing it and start advocating for the implementation of the standard,” Sessa said. “So there’s really two steps: One is coming to agreement on what should be in that standard: What do you need to be sent back and forth? The second step is then implementing it. And that takes years.”

According to the minutes of the working group’s first weekly conference call in late May, a guide to implementing XML high school transcripts should be ready in the next few months. An early suggested transcript schema is available at www.pesc.org/workgroups/hstranscript for review and pilot tests.

(According to the May call, working group chairman Marton said he encourages “all interested parties to use it and test it to discover bugs and deficiencies.”)

The May call was attended by 39 people representing 24 organizations, including PESC, student information systems vendors, federal and state education agencies, university system boards of regents, and individual campuses. Meeting minutes are available at www.pesc.org/publications/standard/05-05.pdf.

For information on joining the working group conference calls or to comment on work so far, contact Michael Sessa, PESC executive director, 202-293-7383 or sessa@pesc.org.
Study Explores the Impact of Affirmative Action

In “The Opportunity Cost of Admission Preferences at Elite Universities” in the latest issue of Social Science Quarterly, Princeton University researchers Thomas J. Espenshade and Chang Y. Chung argue that race-blind admissions at elite colleges would cause dramatic declines in the numbers of African-American and Hispanic students accepted. At the same time, they say, ignoring race in admissions at these schools would result in little gain for white applicants.

The authors found that African-American applicants’ acceptance rate would drop to 12.2 percent from 33.7 percent, while Hispanic applicants’ rate would decline to 12.9 percent from 26.8 percent.

Asian students would fill nearly 80 percent of the spots that would be caused by these decreases. In contrast, white applicants’ acceptance rate would rise by only 0.5 percentage points, to 24.3 percent from 23.8 percent.

The authors examined more than 124,000 applications to elite institutions, reviewing SAT scores, race, sex, citizenship, athletic ability, and legacy and comparing admissions outcome.

Race Had Little Force in Shaping New Berkeley Class

A review of 8,000 admissions applications for the current freshman class at the University of California-Berkeley has found that race had little influence in who the university admitted.

UC-Berkeley’s race-neutral “comprehensive review” policy, adopted in the wake of a state vote banning affirmative action, came under scrutiny when the former UC Board of Regents’ chairman argued that the policy was “impossible to audit” for hidden racial preferences. He asserted that in 2002, several hundred underrepresented minority students with SAT scores of less than 1,000 were admitted while white or Asian-American students with much higher scores were denied admission.

The study, conducted by a UC-Berkeley sociology professor, found that some students with lower SAT scores were admitted over students with higher scores because the lower-scorers had stronger high school transcripts, including higher GPAs and more Advanced Placement credits.

Race and ethnicity played a small role in two areas: Minority students had a slightly higher probability than white students of being among the 11 percent of applications that were flagged for further review instead of being denied admission. The study also found that in-state Native-American and Hispanic applicants had a “very small” advantage over in-state Asian-American students.

However, the difference carried “the statistical equivalent of getting a B instead of an A in one or two courses” in an entire high school career, the study author said.

The 76-page report can be downloaded from www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2005/05/16_houtreport.pdf.

Students Forget the ‘Science’ in Forensic Science

Television crime dramas like CSI and Crossing Jordan may be boosting enrollment in college forensic science programs (March 2003 Recruitment & Retention), but they’re not giving students a realistic picture of what the discipline is actually about, forensic science instructors say.

“We’ll lose two out of 10 [students] because they come in with these crazy views of what it’s really like,” Clair Shepard, director of the forensic science program at Georgia’s Griffin Technical College, told the Los Angeles Times. Students are sometimes surprised to find, for example, that many programs require four years of chemistry.
Educational Attainment and Race


Best Practices for First-Year Students


Educating the Net Generation

Educating the Net Generation (2005) uses data and anecdotes to explain how students use campus technology and what they demand from it. This article collection, produced by the non-profit group Educause, also explores the implications of their expectations and experiences for faculty and student services staff. The free book is available to view, print, or download at www.educause.edu/educatingthenetgen/. The online version includes links to sound, video, and supplementary data files.

Conference: Multiculturalism and Change

The National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the University of Nevada-Las Vegas will host the conference “Multiculturalism in the Context of Institutional Change and Strategic Priorities” Dec. 8-10 at UNLV. The conference will address how institutions can develop new strategic priorities in light of changing student demographics. More information is available at www.naspa.org/prodev.

Creating Conditions for Student Success

Student Success in College: Creating Conditions that Matter, a new 400-page book by George D. Kuh, Jillian Kinzie, John H. Schuh, and Elizabeth J. Whitt, looks at effective student success practices at various types of institutions and offers advice on how to implement these programs. Ordering information ($38) is available at www.josseybass.com.

Condition of Education 2005

The National Center for Education Statistics has released “The Condition of Education 2005,” a summary of important trends in U.S. education. The 2005 print edition covers four main areas: enrollment trends and student characteristics at all levels of the education system, student achievement and long-term outcomes, student effort and persistence rates, and public and private financial support of education at all levels. To read or download the report, visit http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/.

Census Bureau Enrollment Report

According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s new report “School Enrollment—Social and Economic Characteristics of Students: October 2003,” the boom in traditional-age college enrollment will continue. The number of students under age 25 will “increase markedly over the next decade, as the larger birth cohorts of the late 1980s and the 1990s reach college age,” the report predicts.

But the report also shows that older adults and part-time or working students of all ages accounted for a large chunk of the 16.6 million college students in 2003. In that year,

- one-third of students were enrolled part-time
- 60 percent of students worked while attending school
- at two-year institutions, 37 percent were nontraditional (age 25 or older) and 67 percent were women
- nearly a quarter (22 percent) of undergraduates at four-year colleges were nontraditional.

PUBLIC FORUM ON FiXS: THE CROSS-CREDENTIALING IDENTITY MANAGEMENT SOLUTION FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCIAL MARKETPLACES

AUGUST 7-8, 2005 *** MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

The Federation for Identity and Cross-Credentialing Systems (FiXSs) and the Department of Defense have implemented an award-winning cross-credentialing identity management system between DoD and industry/private sector participants that have a need for secure, interoperable employee identification and authentication as part of their joint working environment.

Recently honored by the eGov Business Solutions Center with its first Partnership Award (http://www.e-gov.com/events/2005/web/gov/expo/gsc.asp), this unique Federation has created a program consistent with DoD’s Personal Identity Protection (PIP) Program, and represents considerable strides toward compliance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive-12 (HSPD-12).

This successful collaboration is the first of its kind, supplying the governance and infrastructure to enable participating organizations to issue and accept identifying credentials in a trusted environment, allowing increased ease of access while ensuring greater security.

Come join us to learn more about the Federation and how you can get involved. By attending this forum, you will take away:

- An understanding of how FiXSs succeeds in the establishment of trust across and between government agencies and industry where others have failed.
- The complete set of policies, procedures and architecture documents that make FiXSs work. These documents address:
  - Vetting of employees (identity proofing);
  - Policies for enrollment into the FiXS system without using a central database; and
  - Credential issuance and revocation procedures.
- Opportunities to discuss all facets of FiXSs with current participants from industry and government. Participating organizations include Anteon; BearingPoint; Data Systems Analysts, Inc.; Defense Manpower Data Center, DoD; EDS; IntelliCheck, Inc.; Lockheed Martin; Northrop Grumman; SafLink; SRA; and Wave Systems Corporation.
- Detailed knowledge of how to participate in FiXSs.

Cost? $150 – See attached registration form.
When? Sunday, August 7, 2005 – Cocktail Reception, 4 – 6 p.m.
       Monday, August 8, 2005, – Public Forum, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Where? Hyatt Regency – Monterey
       1 Old Golf Course Road
       Monterey, California 93940-4908
Lodging? Rooms have been reserved at the Hyatt Regency – Monterey
         $169 per night (plus a $10 resort fee)
         Call 1.800.233.1234 by July 11, 2005 and reference the FiXS Meeting
Questions? Contact Helena Sims at 703.561.3930 or hsims@nacha.org
PUBLIC FORUM ON FiXS: THE CROSS-CREDENTIALING IDENTITY MANAGEMENT SOLUTION FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND COMMERCIAL MARKETPLACES

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REGISTRATION FORM

If more than one person from your organization plans to attend, please have each person complete and forward the form and payment. Thank you.

AUGUST 7 — COCKTAIL RECEPTION (INCLUDED IN REGISTRATION FEE)
4:00 – 6:00 P.M.
☐ I plan to attend.

AUGUST 8 — PUBLIC FORUM — $150.00 REGISTRATION FEE PER ATTENDEE
9:00 A.M. — 3:30 P.M.
☐ I plan to attend.

Date: __________________________
Name: __________________________
Title / Organization: __________________________
Address: __________________________
City/ST/ZIP: __________________________
Phone: __________________________ Fax: __________________________
E-mail: __________________________

CHECK THE FORM OF PAYMENT:
☐ CHECK: Enclosed is a check in the amount of _________
Make checks payable to "FiXS" and remit to the address below.

☐ ACH CREDIT: ACH Network Routing #022000046. FiXS Account #9835164782. Use CCD format. Place the Company Name in the "Company Name" field of the Batch Header Record and "FiXS/First Initial.Last Name" in the "Company Entry Description" field of the Batch Header Record.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM AND PAYMENT TO:
Donna Carter
Coordinator, Public/Private Partnerships
13685 Dulles Technology Drive, Suite 300
Herndon, VA 20171
Phone: 703.561.3935 / Fax: 703.561.0391 / Email: dcarter@nacha.org

All registration forms and payment are due no later than Thursday, August 4, 2005