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How might the electronic transcript be re-envisioned to meet demands of a global society? This article presents an enhanced eTranscript that incorporates educational artifacts and official university information. Additionally, innovative transcript request options will complement admissions applications or electronic portfolios. The visionary eTranscript offers new possibilities for students to demonstrate their comprehensive educational experiences to a variety of audiences.
If higher education institutions were to create a transcript from scratch, what would it look like? Transcripts have evolved along with technology, but new demands require that transcripts include more information. This article considers how institutions can better meet the demands of government regulations, global society, and student expectations through an enhanced electronic transcript.

The world has changed considerably since the first paper transcript was produced. The information about courses and grades that appears on a student’s standard transcript does not fully reflect her education. In fact, basic transcripts do not meet the needs of government agencies, admissions committees, employers, or even students. Despite providing evidence of attendance and final course grades, transcripts do not testify of the requirements of learning, service, and research that are crucial elements of a college education. Transcripts are mere scorecards; they are not sufficient to describe the entirety of a college education. For this reason and others, educators should rethink the transcript: How might it serve as a dynamic reflection of students’ learning, research, and service? A re-envisioned transcript could showcase the unique educational experiences of each student.

Accreditation agencies require institutions to demonstrate learning outcomes. The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) expands on the recommendations set forth in The LEAP Vision for Learning (AAC&U 2011), which urges colleges to “shift the focus from course categories and titles to the quality and level of work students are actually expected to accomplish” (AAC&U 2011). The document encourages intentional learning with a focus on learning outcomes. Transcripts do not currently meet these criteria, as student success in college cannot be documented—as it usually is—only in terms of enrollment, persistence, and degree attainment. These widely used metrics, while important, miss entirely the question of whether students who have placed their hopes for the future in higher education are actually achieving the kind of learning they need for life, work, and citizenship (AAC&U 2011).

Institutions of higher learning should heed the call for an expanded record that adequately reflects each student’s education.

Assessment expectations of K–12 through higher education are on the increase as government, taxpayers, and parents demand evidence of the value of the education being provided. For example, Academically Adrift (Arum and Roska 2011) challenges universities by questioning how much students learn during their undergraduate years. The study that informs Academically Adrift finds that 45 percent of undergraduates do not learn critical thinking, writing, and other key skills during their first two years of college. Of course, many educators disagree with the methodology and the conclusion. Astin (2011), for one, argues that the 45 percent claim “is simply not justified by the
data and analyses set forth in this particular report.” Yet institutions need a better way to demonstrate that higher education does add value to student learning. A transcript providing evidence of learning, growth, and outcomes would address these concerns.

New legislation requires conformity of credit hour units among institutions. In fact, the Department of Education recently defined a credit hour and supported legislation that requires universities to maintain a standard credit hour. Universities also would be required to identify new means of demonstrating classroom learning. Traditionally, credit has been awarded at the institution’s discretion, “yet credit underlies vital calculations of academic progress, faculty workload, federal and state appropriations and student aid” (Lipka 2010). One way to demonstrate greater compliance with credit hour rules would be to include more information on transcripts.

Employers, which constitute a key user group of official student records, do not find transcripts sufficient. According to LEAP Vision for Learning, only 13 percent of employers found transcripts very useful, with an additional 16 percent finding them fairly useful (AAC&U 2011). Two-thirds of the employers surveyed indicated that a faculty evaluation of a student’s internship or project would serve as a useful measure of the student’s potential as an employee (AAC&U 2011). Eighty percent of employers expressed the belief that senior projects, internships, and research would better prepare students for the workplace (AAC&U 2011). An expanded electronic transcript (“eTranscript”) would provide more robust information to employers and would enhance the connections among employers, students, and postsecondary institutions.

Graduate admissions committees often compare international students completing three-year so-called “Bologna degrees” with domestic students enrolled in traditional four-year degree programs. The limited information on international students’ transcripts is rarely sufficient, with the result that admissions committees often require candidates to submit additional evidence of their education. Moreover, given the prevalence of grade inflation and general education requirements, the information included on transcripts looks increasingly similar. Transcripts neither distinguish students nor reflect their learning and achievement. An enhanced eTranscript would provide admissions committees with electronic access to the artifacts of the student learning indicated in the official record.

**EVOLUTION OF TRANSCRIPTS**

Now is the time for the transcript to evolve. Already having moved from paper to electronic format, the transcript has tremendous possibilities for expansion. Universities should ask the following questions:

- How can we best serve our students given contemporary technological and social changes?
- How can we demonstrate learning outcomes and the value added during a student’s college years?
- How do we leverage technology to make transcripts dynamic reflections of student learning?

At Stanford University, we envision meeting these demands through a secure, linkable PDF transcript. This eTranscript could integrate with a student’s electronic portfolio (“ePortfolio”). The eTranscript and ePortfolio would complement each other, providing information about the student learning experience that the other might provide only insufficiently.

From paper to telephone to online transactions, the work of the registrar has evolved along with technology. Despite these changes, the content of the transcript has remained relatively unchanged. The first electronic transcripts were sent through the electronic data interchange (EDI) or extensible Markup Language (XML). Data streams were sent from one institution to another through a central server using common data standards. (Both EDI and XML comply with Postsecondary Electronic Standards Council [PESC] standards.) More recently, the Global Portable Document Format (PDF) has emerged as another way to send electronic transcripts. (See Figure 1.) The PDF now also meets PESC standards.

With Adobe, a transcript can be sent as a certified, secure, and digitally signed PDF document. PDF transcripts have the advantages of being electronic and “tamper evident” as well as looking and feeling similar to a paper transcript, even to the point of displaying the school seal and colors. Recipients see where the transcript originated, and the digital signature indicates whether the electronic PDF has been tampered with. Technology now exists to support the printing of watermarks on electronic transcripts.
Stanford University currently provides its students the option of ordering a certified electronic PDF transcript. Our next step will be to embed XML data in the transcript so that electronic data are included in the PDF. (The PDF transcript does not yet include embedded data for receiving institutions to incorporate directly into their student information systems.) Once XML is embedded, transfer articulation data, for example, will incorporate directly from PDFs into other student information systems.

EXPANDING THE TRANSCRIPT

The Stanford University Office of the University Registrar processed more than 32,000 transcript requests in the 2010–11 academic year. Since the introduction of the eTranscript option, students increasingly have requested eTranscripts. Greater than 44 percent of the official transcript requests in 2010–11 were for electronic transcripts. Students may request eTranscripts through the self-service portal; soon Stanford also will offer an electronic transcript request option through the iStanford mobile application. (See Figure 2.)

In an effort to meet students’ needs, Stanford expanded its official transcript to include more details about students’ academic experiences. Full course titles replaced abbreviated, hard-to-understand titles. Instructor names were added to communicate the special learning opportunities available to students. In addition, a “dissertation milestone” was incorporated into the transcripts.
of doctoral students who have applied to graduate; the dissertation title and the student’s status (“in progress” or “completed”) are included along with the completion date. These represent Stanford’s first steps to expand official transcripts.

**ETRANSCRIPT FOR LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT**

Over the next three to five years, Stanford will expand the eTranscript to describe student learning and achievement. The initial focus of this project includes creating a customized transcript engine in lieu of using the PeopleSoft engine. The “bolt-on” application will allow for more flexibility and less staff time testing PeopleSoft patches. It will deliver custom transcript set-up pages in order to create multiple transcript templates rather than requiring reliance on only the two PeopleSoft-deivered templates. The new set-up panel also will allow for more control over additional data elements to be displayed on the various transcript templates. The final phase of the project will involve utilization of new template options. In compliance with PESC standards, it also will standardize official transcripts in XML format. The most important element of the project will be the ability to hyperlink from transcript elements to digitally stored data. The expanded eTranscript will showcase the complete student learning experience by including or hyperlinking to learning artifacts. (See Figure 3.) Delivery options will include PDF and XML; XML will be embedded into the header of digitally signed and certified PDF transcripts.

In the enhanced eTranscript, hyperlinks will be embedded from the data elements, providing additional information about the academic record. Any student will be able to provide the intended recipient of the electronic transcript with learning artifacts such as an honors thesis or dissertation. Readers will be able to access details about a student’s laboratory research or community service by clicking on links in the transcript. The expanded transcript will provide transfer credit and admissions evaluators with online course descriptions and syllabuses as course names will be linked to online catalog descriptions. Instructor names on the transcript will link to a persistent URL that hosts faculty profile information, including brief biographies and listings of other courses taught. Incorporating hyperlinks into data elements on the official transcript will open up possibilities for showcasing each student’s learning experience.

The enhanced eTranscript will further distinguish a student’s academic experience by providing additional information about grading. For example, clicking on a course title will open the course syllabus along with an expanded course description. (See Figure 4.) When a transcript evaluator clicks on a course...
grade, a detailed grading key will open that will facilitate understanding of the grade.

Institutions can decide whether to include additional grading information, such as grade distributions or mean grades for individual courses. For example, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) anticipates adding more detailed information about student grades to its transcript (Sieben 2011). In fact, the UNC transcript will show how a specific student’s grade point average compares to those earned by other students in the same courses. The “schedule point average,” representing the GPA of the “average” students taking those same courses, will display by term and cumulatively (Sieben 2011). Beside each individual grade, the transcript also will display the median grade for each course as well as the percentile ranking of the student’s performance as compared to that of his classmates in each specific course (Sieben 2011). Whether other schools will adopt comparable practices is yet to be seen. Regardless, UNC’s plans expand the possibilities for the official electronic transcript.

The expanded eTranscript will permit a student’s dissertation title to link directly to a PDF of the dissertation. (Stanford doctoral students submit their dissertations electronically, in PDF format, to the university library.) As each electronic dissertation is submitted, a unique, persistent URL is created; this ultimately will be used to link the “eDissertation” to the eTranscript.

The enhanced eTranscript will enable alumni to request a certified PDF version of their diploma once their degree is conferred. The electronic diploma will be included with the official transcript in the expanded eTranscript. The “eDiploma” will satisfy the growing international demand for proof of an earned diploma, and it will complement the official transcript by serving as definitive evidence that the student graduated. (See Figure 4, on page 6.) Finally, the eDiploma will better meet the needs of our growing international student populations than the traditional diploma has.

**PAPERLESS ADMISSIONS PROJECT**

Within the next year, Stanford will begin to pilot a “paperless admissions” project: any former or current Stanford student applying to Stanford graduate school will be able to request an official eTranscript as part of the graduate application process. In partnership with our graduate admissions vendor (CollegeNET) and electronic transcript vendor (AVOW Systems, Inc.), we are working to develop a process that will obviate the need for students to leave the application site (ApplyWeb) and log in to a separate student information system in order to request an eTranscript. Former and current Stanford students will click on an eTranscript icon within the admission application and then will be prompted to authenticate via Shibboleth. Once authenticated, students will be able to request an eTranscript, which will be uploaded, matched to their application ID, and stored in their graduate admissions application file. The paperless admissions transcript request process will utilize an eTranscript Web service developed by Stanford. This same service potentially could be utilized for a similar process whereby a Stanford student could request that an enhanced eTranscript be stored “inside” her unofficial ePortfolio. The digital signature on the document would authenticate that the transcript had not been altered in any way. As a result, the transcript could be stored in any system and retain its authenticity.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

A significant challenge of the enhanced eTranscript is maintaining and archiving the hyperlinked information pertaining to courses, extracurricular activities, and faculty. Meeting this challenge will require innovation, creative thinking, and, most important, collaboration within the university community. The university library is a key...
partner in this effort at Stanford because it is the library that archives the electronic dissertations. The registrar’s office is doing its part to identify ways to store faculty profile information so that faculty names on the eTranscript can be linked directly to online faculty biographies. More possibilities for the eTranscript can be realized as various university offices partner with one another and build on extant technologies than would be were one office to advance the project alone.

Official transcripts serve many purposes, including application and admission to university, proof of enrollment, and proof of degree conferral. Students should be able to choose from an array of transcript formats, from traditional paper to the enhanced eTranscript. Eventually, Stanford students will log in through the self-service portal to a new document center. There, they will be able to request unofficial and official documents, transcripts, enrollment certifications, grade reports, instructor letters, and diplomas. Numerous transcript formats—unofficial, official, paper, standard electronic, and enhanced electronic—will be available. Many documents will be sent as signed, certified PDFs. Irrespective of their format, all data elements in the expanded eTranscript will be intact. And should the intended recipient of the transcript not need additional information, the official transcript in its most basic form still will be available.

The enhanced student record has the potential to serve numerous purposes on campus. Consequently, partnering with students and faculty is crucial. A student advisory committee will advise as to student needs for the enhanced transcript, and faculty committees ultimately will determine which content to include on the official student record. The registrar will be able to provide the faculty committees with broad menus of options for expanding student record information through the expanded electronic transcript. As a result of the collaborative efforts of university partners and the leveraging of technology, the potential of the enhanced transcript is virtually unlimited.

**STUDENT PORTFOLIO INTEGRATION**

In the enhanced eTranscript, students will incorporate papers and projects to share with faculty and advisors. Students also will be able to share their complete record with career counselors and alumni mentors as a way to initiate conversations about their education and future career paths. Meaningful examples of academic and extracurricular work will be accessed for purposes of graduate admissions, job applications, and reflective practice. Eventually, these creative manifestations of student learning may be linked as unofficial elements of the student record.

Once the eTranscript is structured to support links to learning artifacts such as papers or syllabuses, the potential to present additional information will be limitless. Already, universities encourage and even require students to compile electronic portfolios. (See Figure 6.) Portfolios document students’ contributions in and out of the classroom; they provide means whereby students can connect disparate areas of their lives, and identify intellectual, career, and extracurricular interests. Portfolios may be shared with mentors, classmates, and faculty for purposes of feedback, assessment, and guidance.

The Stanford Registrar’s Office is partnering with the Office of Undergraduate Advising and Research to identify ways to utilize the ePortfolio to enhance advising. The portfolios are “capturing and documenting aspects of a student’s learning” while students are “engaging in some form of reflection, rationale building, or planning” (Chen and Black 2010). Maintaining portfolios creates a culture of “folio thinking” in which “a pedagogical approach...focuses on designing structured opportunities for students to create ePortfolios and reflect on their learning

![Figure 6: ePortfolio's Integration with the Enhanced Etranscript](image)
experiences” (Chen and Black 2010). Electronic portfolios are a natural extension of the expanded e Transcript. Future versions of the ePortfolio will allow students to upload and store an officially signed and certified enhanced e Transcript as a means of contextualizing their reflections.

Eventually, the e Transcript and ePortfolio will integrate with each other. For example, the e Transcript might include a link to a student’s ePortfolio. This unofficial element of the transcript would be shared at the student’s discretion with reviewers of the student record. The reverse will also be true: Student-maintained ePortfolios will include a link to generate an electronic transcript— as, for example, the transcript request in the paperless admissions project. The digital signature on the enhanced e Transcript stored within the student ePortfolio would indicate that the transcript is official and valid as of the electronic-signature timestamp.

Although some registrars might worry that such integrations may decrease official transcript revenue, others might perceive them as an opportunity to change the way they charge for transcripts. An alternative model to individual transcript processing fees is a one-time document fee charged to all students upon matriculation. Stanford, for example, charges new students a one-time $200 document fee. A document fee could offset the cost of a variety of services for each student, including the generation of electronic or paper transcripts, enrollment and degree certifications, and diplomas. According to the “document fee model,” official documents could be offered electronically—without a document-specific charge—while allowing the central office to maintain these services.

Transcript options provide students with more possibilities to share what they want, when they want, with whom they want. One can only imagine the many doors the enhanced e Transcript and ePortfolio will open.

A NEW TRANSCRIPT MODEL

The enhanced e Transcript enables colleges and universities to answer increasing demands for accountability. Colleges can anticipate forthcoming government regulations while providing a meaningful learning tool for students. By documenting learning outcomes and presenting artifacts of student achievement, the new record will meet the requirements of accreditation bodies, government officials, taxpayers, graduate admissions committees, employers, parents, and students. The e Transcript will enhance advising and learning by promoting reflection; it will showcase each student’s unique academic experience, differentiate the education offered by the issuing school, and acknowledge the critical contribution of faculty. The expanded e Transcript will leverage existing technology to offer students options for their academic record and will provide evidence of the value of their higher education experience. Taken together, the expanded transcript and unofficial ePortfolio will represent the entirety of the student learning experience. We invite our colleagues to join us in creating and offering the most interactive and effective transcript option ever!

REFERENCES


About the Authors

CELESTE FOWLES NGUYEN is the Associate University Registrar for Degree Progress at Stanford University. She serves as the PACRAO Vice President for Professional Development and is the editor of the PACRAO Review. She holds a master’s in Higher Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and a bachelor’s in History and American Studies from Wesleyan University. Nguyen is pursuing a doctorate in Leadership and Organization at the University of San Francisco.

REID KALLMAN is the Associate University Registrar for Academic Records and the NCAA Certification Officer at Stanford University. He has worked in the Registrar’s Office at Stanford University for eight years. Kallman holds a bachelor’s in Communication Studies from the University of Michigan. He has been a PACRAO member for five years and serves on the PACRAO Review Editorial Board.

EDITOR’S NOTE: This is a significantly expanded version of a paper that appeared previously in the PACRAO Review.
According to the common tradition, the registrar was, or evolved from, the office of the beadle in the medieval university. This tradition is incorrect; the story is more complex. Even so, the tasks of registration and recordkeeping still connect modern-day registrars to the past and the various individuals that performed these duties in the medieval university.
the vice president of academics bought me The Registrar’s Guide: Evolving Best Practices in Records and Registration. Having just been promoted from associate registrar to registrar, I was particularly excited about my new role as I read that the beadles (sometimes referred to as “bedels”) of the medieval university were the early registrars. (I had majored in church history/historical theology in graduate school). Recently, this connection to the past re-presented itself. What could I share with fellow registrars about the origins of the office that had not been shared previously? What historical gems might inspire us today and imbue a sense of pride in our office? How does the work of the beadles of the medieval university inform registrars’ work today?

My research provided much information, but something troubled me: Authors writing about the origin of the registrar nearly always cite an article by Edward M. Stout published in College and University in 1954, but the key reference to substantiate the assertion that the registrar emerged from the office of the beadle cannot be found in the source he cited or in the sources he consulted (see below). Young’s (2006) information about the office of the beadle being the medieval origin of the registrar’s office is tied to Quann’s (1979) research; Leybold-Taylor (1999) assumes that the beadle served as a sort of registrar and also cites Quann (1979); Quann (1979) references Stout’s (1954) article and perceives the beadle as a registrar; and Kamena (1962) describes the beadle as a registrar (the article lacks references, but its language suggests that Stout was consulted). On the other hand, Marian Blair (1947), writing before Stout, argues simply that the registrar is not a modern invention, as one of the “bedells” at Cambridge became the “Registrary” in 1506. Is Stout’s work incorrect—or at least misleading—and thus responsible for leading others astray? Did others misinterpret Stout? Was the beadle the first registrar, and did the office evolve into that of the registrar?

Before proceeding, we should define “registrar.” Unfortunately, this is no simple task. A registrar at a small college performs different roles from someone with the same title at a large state university. The position also can vary by country: Johnston (1949) describes the registrar at large English universities as having little to do with “keeping lists and files” though the registrar at smaller universities performs duties such as registration and record
keeping and sometimes even acts as bursar. The position changes in response to technology. And of course, the position changes over time: Of the American registrar’s office in the 1920s, Quann (1979) writes,

*They often corresponded with prospective students, conducted high school visitations, sent and received application forms, oversaw scholarship and financial aid awards, greeted freshmen and transfer students, conducted their orientation, advised them on programs and courses, counseled them on vacations and careers, scheduled classes, forecast enrollments, predicted tuition income, analyzed teaching loads, responded to questionnaires, conducted other institutional research, suggested curriculum revisions to the faculty, signed diplomas, and even shook hands with graduating seniors at commencement.*

Some items on this list, such as high school visitations and shaking hands at graduation, do not relate to my role. Yet I do advise regarding curriculum, and I often advise students (despite not being their assigned adviser). My predecessor coordinated the rental of caps and gowns—a task managed subsequently by the bookstore (though for purchase)—and served for many years on the admissions committee. Nevertheless, records and registration constitute the essential elements of the registrar’s role. (Indeed, many registrars’ offices are called “The Office of Records and Registration”). Young (2006) writes,

*Despite the ongoing challenges of meeting the demands of expansion and diversity among institutions, programs, and student populations, the registrar is—and always will be—charged with preserving an academic record with archival integrity. Whatever changes occur in the educational landscape, academic records such as transcripts or degrees conferred reflect the historical moment in time in which they were created.*

If the office of the registrar in fact is defined by registration and records, how does it correspond to the medieval office of the beadle? Is it appropriate to call the beadle an early registrar or even the predecessor of the registrar? The beadle has some vague connection to the office, but the connection is not as strong as previously indicated. Indeed, the story is more complex, requiring a more nuanced approach—even in light of differences among the medieval universities and the many officers of the medieval university other than the beadle who were responsible for tracking records and registration.

**STOUT’S ARTICLE**

It is important to begin by examining Stout’s (1954) work, which focuses on the University of Paris. He writes, “What is not so well known is the fact that virtually all medieval universities more or less consciously imitated the University of Paris in organization” (p. 415). He describes the functions of the beadle for much of the article and provides only brief mention of other offices such as scribe and syndic. He concludes,

*Later, the date is not clear, the duties of keeping the official graduation register and the matriculation list of the university was [sic] placed in the hands of one of the major beadles with the added title of grapharius, which means clerk or registrar. It is permissible to say, then, in the heart of the Middle Ages, the office of the registrar was born, grew, and gradually enlarged its scope of duties in a republic of science and letters (1954).*

Whether Stout (1954) actually calls the beadle a registrar, as later writers do, is unclear. He does not explicitly say the beadle was a registrar before assuming roles related to graduation records and matriculation lists. He does make the connection after this happened. Implicitly, he may be saying the early beadle was a registrar, since his article is called “The Origin of the Registrar,” and because he spends much of it talking about the many functions of the beadle including glorious tasks like leading processions carrying a silver mace. It is understandable that later writers simplified the connection.

But there are some deficiencies in Stout’s research. Quann (1979) writes, “Edward Stout (1954), writing on the origins of the registrar’s office, uses *beadle* but inadvertently credits the University of Paris with developments that actually took place at Bologna.”

Second, Stout’s (1954) article focuses only on Paris. My research suggests that while there were many similarities among medieval universities, they were not exactly the same. Referring to Rashdall (1936), whom Stout (1954) references at the beginning of his article, Hackett (1984) challenges comparisons between Paris and Oxford, in par-
ticular. Despite acknowledging others’ praise of Rashdall (1936) and recognizing the legitimacy of his comparison of Oxford and Paris, Hackett (1984) writes, “Rashdall’s conclusions need correction or at least some nuancing.” He also states, “Contrary to the impression given by Rashdall, Universities. iii. 72, the system [of how to enact statutes] introduced at Oxford in the early years of the fourteenth century was anything but identical with that of Paris” (1984).

Third, Stout’s (1954) footnote to the word grapharius directs the reader to “Gabriel Compayre, Abelard and the Origin and Early History of Universities, (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons), 1901, p.189.” But that page does not reference grapharius or beadle. Even a search of all the sources in Compayre’s bibliography fails to reveal use of the word grapharius. Compayre (1899) does write that the registrar (greffier) was responsible for “drawing up acts and registers”; on the following page, he describes beadles, but he makes no connection between that office and the registrar’s. Kibre (1948), whom Stout (1954) references, writes:

According to the university ordinance of 1312 only principal or major beadles were to attend these congregations [assemblies of the faculty and university]. The beadle had one further important duty, that of keeping a register of all graduates or of those who achieved the rank of master of arts with the day and a year of graduation. He transmitted this record to the proctor of his nation.

Kibre’s source (Du Boulay 1670), which Stout (1954) does not cite, specifies that the requirement of documenting graduates was instituted in 1437 and that this was the registrar’s duty in the seventeenth century, when Du Boulay was writing.

Therefore, at Paris, the beadle did record the names of graduates. Also, in the fifteenth century, the beadle of the faculty of theology “kept records of students admitted to degrees” (Weber 1975). Beadle Laurentius Poutrel’s “Register contains the receipts and expenses of the faculty of theology from 1449 to 1465” (Weber 1975) and provides such information as the names of students starting courses and the different levels of their academic progress as well as “The newly-promoted masters, with important dates of their doctorates” (Weber 1975). But was there a registrar? And if so, what did the registrar do? Could Stout be thinking of Rashdall’s work? Rashdall (1936, vol. 1) lists the university’s officials:

The officials of the university...enjoyed the full privileges of scholars. Of these the most important were (1) the bedels whose duties were much the same as those of the bedels of Bologna; (2) the common procurator ad litem or syndicus, afterwards styled the promoter universitatis, who was the chief permanent official of the university, combining the functions of a university counsel or solicitor with some of those which would now be discharged by a registrar. (3) At a later date a scribe or secretary was appointed distinct from the syndic. The duties of registrar had in the early days of the university been discharged by the rector, who was the collector and treasurer of the common funds. (4) These last duties were afterwards delegated to a receiver (receptor or quaestor aerarii). The last two offices are not mentioned till the beginning of the fifteenth century. The nations and faculties had for a long time had receivers of their own.

At Orleans, another French university, Rashdall (1936, vol. 2) documents that there was a position called procurator generalis that combined the duties of registrar, treasurer, and syndic. Finally,Compayre (1899) states that in Italy, “the drawing up of acts and registers was confided to a...notary, to archivists, etc.”

Thus far, Paris has been the primary focus. But what was happening in Oxford and Cambridge? At Cambridge, beadles performed many functions, though I find no reference to keeping records of degrees and registrations (Hackett 1970, Stokes 1911). One of the beadles became “registrar” in 1506 while retaining his other position (Stokes 1911). His successor was given the task of reviewing applicants for matriculation (Quann 1979).

At Oxford, the beadle listed graduates; Hackett (1984) notes that he assisted proctors and masters by “listing the scholars who received the licence [sic]...” The registrar, first described in a statute from 1447, was required to register “the names of graduates and times of their degrees and their fees” (Pantin and Mitchell 1972). The position grew out of two other positions, neither of which was that of beadle: “The responsibility for drafting and recording university letters was transferred from the chancellor to
the new registrar. The duty of recording the proceedings of congregation and the granting of degrees was transferred from the proctors to the registrar” (Pantin and Mitchell 1972). It is unclear how to reconcile one author’s connection of the recording of degrees with the beadle and another’s connection of the same responsibility with the proctor.

Evidence thus far demonstrates that the origins of the registrar’s office are more complex than Stout (1954) and subsequent authors indicate. At one university, a beadle became a registrar but continued to serve as a beadle; others after him did likewise. It was not unusual for the beadle to serve in other roles both inside and outside the university (Stokes 1911, Weber 1975). Does a beadle taking on the additional role of registrar at one university provide a convincing connection between the two offices? As recently as the 20th century, the University of Sydney employed both a registrar and a beadle (Quann 1979). At a minimum, we can state with some assurance that a beadle in Paris began to keep records of individuals who earned degrees—a task registrars later performed. The evidence for Oxford appears contradictory. What about the task of registration or matriculation? And how do the many duties of the beadle compare with those of a registrar?

REGISTRATION AT MEDIEVAL UNIVERSITIES

Initially, at least at Oxford and Cambridge (Cobban 1999), Paris (Thorndike 1971), and Padua (Kibre 1948), the masters, teachers, and doctors who provided instruction were responsible for keeping records of their students. At Oxford, “there is here still no mention of a general university register, although by this date [1420] principals of halls presumably kept lists of their members. It was not until 1544 at Cambridge and 1565 at Oxford that centralized university matriculation was instated by statute” (Cobban 1999). In the sixteenth century at Oxford,

On admission a boy’s name was entered in the Buttery-book, where the Bedel looked it up. His tutor was chosen. He appeared before the Vice-Chancellor. The Subscription Book was signed. Oaths to accept the Thirty-Nine Articles, the Prayer-Book and the Royal Supremacy were taken. The necessary entries were made in the Matriculation register (Mallet 1924b).

In the seventeenth century, “The superior Bedels of Theology and Law had to examine the Buttery-books of every Hall and College, to make sure that all new-comers appeared before the Vice-Chancellor for matriculation. Heads of Houses were responsible for the appearance of their students, and fines for neglect of these arrangements were imposed” (Mallet 1924b). At this same time, Mallet (1924b) alleges, “They [the Bedels] kept the Register of Matriculation.” At Cambridge, the student had to see the Registrary to matriculate (Roberts 1938). At Paris, the faculty of artes was divided into nations—Gallican, English, Picardian, and Norman—with a proctor over each. Orleans had nations as well, and the proctor, not the beadle (who would call meetings as directed by the proctor), was entrusted with “the transcription of the acts, statutes, and regulations of the university to the registers of the nation; also the inscribing in his own hand of the names of all students entering the nation, with the time of their studies, and the amount of their dues” (Kibre 1948). In Bologna, consiliarii had the responsibility to report names to the rector and university treasurer (Kibre 1948). One fourteenth century statute, describing the duties of a rector, refers to “their matriculation lists” (Thorndike 1971).

The person responsible for matriculation thus varied according to time and location. Methods also varied according to the structure of the university at the time—thus, a student’s name initially may have been recorded on a master’s list but later was recorded on a list of the hall to which he belonged. Although beadles at Oxford were responsible for maintaining the matriculation list, this does not appear to have been the case at other universities—especially Cambridge.

THE BEADLE AND THE REGISTRAR

Some may think that limiting the responsibilities of the registrar to registration and records is too narrow. As acknowledged above, the registrar position changes, differs by country, and carries a number of responsibilities. So how does the ancient beadle compare to the modern registrar? What duties did the beadle perform in addition to those already mentioned?

In Paris, the beadle called assemblies, read edicts, kept a calendar and announced feasts (when there were no classes), visited classes, kept university secrets, attended
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exams, announced fairs for buying parchment, attended the fairs so as to guard against the fraudulent sale of parchment, announced disputationes and lectures, led processions (while carrying his mace), brought to meetings the beans that were used for voting, acted as a bouncer to ensure that unauthorized people did not attend the nation's assembly, served the masters and proctor, delivered summonses from the rector, rang the bell for religious services, helped professors maintain order in the schools, kept the key to the barricade to the schools, and participated in peace negotiations (Compayre 1899, Goulet 1928, Kibre 1948, Kibre 1962, Pedersen 1997, Rashdall 1924, vol. 1, Stout 1954, Thorndike 1971). At Oxford, beadles handled agreements between the town and the university as well as the wills of deceased scholars, accompanied other officials to Parliament, wrote letters, collected debts and fees, announced lectures, participated in ceremonies and funerals, published proclamations, made announcements at schools, and summoned university officials for trial as requested by the steward (Kibre 1962, Mallet 1924a, Pan tin and Mitchell 1972). At Cambridge, they reported first to the rectors and then to the chancellor, had primary watch over the schools and teachers, acted essentially as “the clerks of the schools,” “had all sorts of court duties to perform on behalf of the chancellor and masters,” “gave notice of sittings,” “served summonses and citations,” “saw to the execution of decrees,” took people to the town gaol to be imprisoned, made rounds to the schools, rang bells for disputations, and carried their staffs at such functions as funerals, assemblies, and ceremonies (Hackett 1970). “At Pisa the bedels were entrusted with the duty of noting the attendance and punctuality of professors, and they reported not to the rector but to the officials” (Rashdall 1936, vol. 2). At Orleans, the assembly of the nation was called by the beadle, and he led processions carrying a mace (Kibre 1948). At Angers, beadles were with the rector at ceremonies and congregations; a beadle of a nation served the proctor and called congregations of the nation (Kibre 1948). At Aix, the beadle called a general council of students, as requested by the rector, to elect consiliarii (Kibre 1948). At Heidelberg, beadles read and published commands of the rector and warned when university buildings were to be inspected; they also were present at the inspections to record the workmen’s findings (Thorndike 1971). At Padua, they put straw on the floors of the schools in the winter and kept them clean and aired in the summer (Hackett 1970). Beadles at Caen convoked assemblies (Thorndike 1971).

It may make modern registrars feel proud to have their office connected to that of the medieval beadle, but the fact is that beadle performed many different roles as compared to those of the modern registrar. Because I have faculty status, I may wear regalia at convocation and commencement, but I do not lead the procession carrying a silver staff. And while registrars are involved with the academic calendar, they do not make agreements with the towns or cities where their universities are located. Due to room scheduling, registrars care about the classrooms but are not involved in something like providing straw for the floors or, in modern terms, making sure the heat is set at the right temperature.

CONCLUSION

The origins of the registrar’s office are complex. The beadle sometimes performed functions similar to those performed by the modern-day registrar, but not generally. Also, claims that the office of the beadle evolved into that of the registrar are unjustified. At Cambridge, the official retained his role as bedel. Numerous university officials, including the masters themselves, performed duties related to records and registration. Instead, it could be said that the role of registrar grew out of any number of positions. At Oxford, it grew out of certain duties performed by the chancellor and proctors. Even if beadles in Paris performed duties similar to those of a registrar—as beadles at Oxford may have with regard to recording degrees and in reference to matriculation—the various sources consulted do not indicate consistent practice among universities. Although all medieval universities had beadles, each university had a unique organizational structure.

The office of the medieval beadle may bear some “connection” to the office of the registrar, but the similarities are few, and the story is written in shades of grey rather than in black and white. Does that mean that a registrar should feel less proud of the importance or the origins of the position? No. Our value lies not in alleged connections to the medieval beadles who carried fancy sticks but in the importance of our work with records and registration—work that is as necessary now as it was then.
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About the Author
SHAWN SMITH is Registrar at Lincoln Christian University (LCU), serving in that role since 2007. A member of the faculty, he earned a Master of Divinity degree specializing in Apologetics and a Master of Arts degree specializing in Church History/Historical Theology from the Seminary at LCU.
interview
Stanley E. Henderson

A story about an epiphany, an octopus, the “Linguini brothers,” silos, the encyclopedia, the choir, God-like personages, and incrementalism: Reflecting on a career in admissions and enrollment management
YOU’VE SPEAKEN ABOUT ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT. YOU’VE WRITTEN ABOUT ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT. YOU’VE TRAINED ON ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT. WHAT IS YOUR OWN DEFINITION OF ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT?

I am reminded that one of my early friends in AACRAO said to me, “You know, no matter what you call it—what fancy name you use—it’s still going to be admissions.” And I always have remembered that. And she really represented another era—the roadrunner era of admissions. It was the beginning of something that was very evolutionary for me—that statement that “enrollment management was by any other name admissions” into what I have always thought of as the foundation of enrollment management, which is Michael Dolence’s definition: enrollment management is a comprehensive process that helps institutions to determine, achieve, and maintain their optimal recruitment, retention, and graduation rates, where “optimal” is defined in the academic context of the institution. And, as such, it is an all-encompassing concept that intrudes really into every aspect of the institution’s functioning and culture.

In the mid and late ’90s, I was mad for structure—putting together the right combination of units and philosophies and approaches. I moved from being the structuralist to articulating the notion of returning to the academic context. We really needed to ensure that enrollment management was grounded in the academic nature of the institution. It had to be part of the curriculum and the faculty. I really think that is still at its core, what is necessary for the academy. Enrollment management has to “wear the academic robe,” so to speak, to be successful.

But in the last couple of years, I have evolved to another level of enrollment management called “the community of strategic enrollment management (SEM).” We talk a lot about the three faces of SEM: (1) the management and structure face, (2) the planning face, and (3) the leadership face. Critical is the leadership that comes from the top and moves, like the tentacles of an octopus, across campus and then back for feedback. The fourth face is one that I refer to as “the human face”—the sense of a return to the notion that “they recruit best who serve best.” If you think
about some of the things that are essential to SEM, focus on service is one of those.

**WHAT HAVE YOU OBSERVED AS THE BIGGEST CHANGE IN THE FIELD OF ADMISSIONS AND/OR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT SINCE YOUR ARRIVAL TO THE FIELD?**

Three of the biggest changes have been in technology, access, and accountability.

**Technology**

I really think that technology is the overarching change that has happened in the last 40 years that I have been in admissions and enrollment management. Technology allows you to access data, to do evaluation, to provide service, and to approach the comprehensive view of enrollment management.

I view technology in the light of that fourth face—the community of SEM face. Technology in a community of service environment becomes the servant to what enrollment management should be doing. It allows us to really carry out the firm belief that our students should be challenged in the classroom, not challenged and frustrated by trying to navigate the bureaucracy of the institution. The “community of SEM” concept takes technology and applies it in order to streamline service by allowing students to concentrate on their academic success. That is the tremendous advantage and the tremendous change that technology has brought. You have to remember that when I started, there was no e-mail. In fact, we used to mimeograph agendas for on-campus programs. And it’s astonishing to think that you could never contact anybody but only by phone and mail. And now the ways in which we can contact students totally change how we look at what we do.

**Access**

I think that not only from an affirmative action perspective, but also in those states where affirmative action has been banned, access continues to be a huge issue. Consider, for example, the growth of the Latino populations in the country and their low college-going rates. This has enormous implications for our future. If we are not bringing students of color into our colleges and universities, then we are not training the leadership of the future. It will be an incredible problem for future generations of leaders and for all of higher education in the country. We must work to ensure access for students who come from under-prepared educational backgrounds and who increasingly do not have money to go to college because of increasing tuition costs. The loan burden that we are seeing—with students graduating from public institutions with $25,000 of loan debt—cannot be sustained over time. We must work to ensure that we don’t return to the earlier days, when only the elite went to college.

**Accountability**

The third big change is one in which the full impact has not yet been seen: accountability, for all of higher education. [People] are outraged at what people in colleges and universities make and at the money we spend on recreational facilities and residence halls. They are outraged at what they see as incredible waste. They believe that is the direct result of soaring tuition. Colleges and universities cannot sustain that into the future without some serious repercussions. But I think that rather than resist accountability (which we do, in my humble opinion), we need to be much more mindful of it: We need to listen to people and not dismiss them as not understanding how much it costs to run a university.

**WHAT IMPACT DOES ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT HAVE ON STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

The key to enrollment management is what I call the “cradle-to-endowment” approach, where you start interacting with students before they even know they want to come to your university. The cradle-to-endowment approach is a way of embodying—of giving practical life to—the notion of enrollment management as a comprehensive approach. It really does impinge upon the entire process. In doing so, it helps students to be successful because it’s not the funnel approach to enrollment. I have always said that admissions, recruitment, and orientation are the beginnings of retention. If you do a good job selecting the class, and if you imbue the members of that class with the expectations of the campus and culture so that there is a good fit, then they are more likely to be successful. So the approach of strategic enrollment management encircles the entire enrollment continuum, from recruitment to graduation to life as an alumna.

Enrollment management has tools which really facilitate looking at the student enrollment continuum as a
whole rather than at pieces of it. Enrollment management has more impact on student academic success than anything taken as a piece. You really need to make sure that when we talk about student engagement in the classroom that we talk as well about student engagement out of the classroom. Enrollment management is quintessentially an academic enterprise: It is a part of the academic enterprise, and it contributes to the academic enterprise.

I AM AWARE THAT YOU HAVE QUITE A FEW PROFESSIONAL MANTRAS, OR “HENDERSON-ISMS,” AS I CALL THEM, THAT YOU USE IN YOUR WORK WITH STUDENTS. WHAT ARE YOUR MOST SIGNIFICANT MANTRAS, AND WHY?

I know that some of the things I have always said to students are “you never know who your audience is” and “there is more than one way to tell the truth.” And the one the students glom onto the most is “to be early is to be on time, to be on time is to be late, and to be late is unforgive-able.” You put those three together, and I think they form a mantra of excellence and high expectation. I would tell students that they had to approach being an orientation leader or being a tour guide in admissions or being a student leader in supplemental instruction professionally. It can’t be something that’s just a throw-away. You have to commit to it.

I also had a part of the training program for orientation leaders at the University of Cincinnati that I’ll never forget. I used to tell them, “I will make you cry, I will make you laugh, and I will always support you.” That was a way of expressing my personal commitment to their success and [of affirming that they were] the most important people on campus because of what they were doing for students.

Here is one of the things that I value the most about working here [at the University of Michigan–Dearborn]: The highest compliment I’ve ever had here, in seven years, was from a student—a former orientation leader—who said, “Vice chancellor, you’re the face of the university.” That’s very, very meaningful because it’s a way of saying “you’re doing what you said you would.”

My other mantra goes back to my days at Michigan State University: “They recruit—and retain—best who serve best.” (The original mantra was “They recruit best who serve best,” but I modified it.)

WHO HAD AN IMPACT ON YOUR DEVELOPMENT AS A CAMPUS LEADER?

There are two people, one of whom influenced me as a vice chancellor to a very large extent, both positively and negatively, and how I interact with students. And [there was] my mentor. I never go through a day without being reminded of him or of something I adapted from him. He has been the most significant impact on me.

Gordon Sabine

The one who influenced me the most in terms of my inter-actions with students was Gordon Sabine, who was vice president of special projects at Michigan State University (MSU). He was the man who created what I consider to be the first enrollment management–oriented admissions office (actually, more of an enrollment management op-eration). This was back in the 1960s, a full dozen years or so before Frank Capanella at Boston College wrote about enrollment management. Sabine put together an admissions operation with an embedded financial aid compo-nent, a scholarship program (the Alumni Distinguished Scholarships), and an orientation program that he pulled out of counseling and testing services—a brilliant combination that nobody was doing at the time. He was a “larger than life” kind of person—a faculty member—and a solid communications theoretician. He was a very demanding kind of individual.

Russell Wentworth

My mentor is Russell Wentworth, who was one of the first people I met at MSU. He was part of the recruiting process. And when I went to work in my first job in the admis-sions office at MSU, Russ was a part of that operation. Russ became the dean in the national search Wichita State did. He hired me to be director of admissions. So I went to Wichita (at 24 years old, I was the youngest admissions director at an NCAA Division I school in the country). I am quite certain that I was one of the most obnoxious 24-year-olds you could possibly imagine—“full of myself” doesn’t quite fit. But it was a great experience because Russ provided so much teaching. He was so creative in what he did and had such commitment to students. He was an incredible presence who influenced me in so many ways. My speaking comes from Russ. He’s a splendid speaker; He is
absolutely amazing in how he can capture an audience and pull them in.

Incidentally, Sabine was also Russ’s mentor. I couldn’t possibly have accomplished what I have if I had not been influenced by those two people.

**WHAT’S THE SIGNIFICANCE OF YOUR UNOFFICIAL CAMPUS TITLE AS “VICE CHANCELLOR OF HOLIDAYS?”**

It began when students in the Muslim Student Association came to me early in my first year here and asked me if I would send something to faculty/staff about Ramadan because they sometimes had difficulty with faculty who didn’t understand that Ramadan was a holy month of fasting and what it was all about. So I did some research and I wrote something and I sent it out to faculty. Just as soon as I had done that, I realized that that year, Ramadan was very close to the high holidays of Judaism—Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur—so I had better do something about those as well. Pretty soon, it was Canadian Thanksgiving, then U.S. Thanksgiving, then it was Hanukkah and Christmas and Boxing Day and Kwanzaa, and that particular year, Eid Al-Adha came in there, and I ended up doing something for all the month of December that particular year. I took the approach that students, faculty, and staff were celebrating these holidays and that that really said something about who we were and that it gave new meaning to the phrase “happy holidays.” I’ve kept it up throughout all of the years, and it sort of has become an expectation and a way of expressing the sense of community of UM–Dearborn.

**HARKENING BACK TO SOME OF YOUR EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES, WHICH COLLEGE COURSE WAS MOST MEMORABLE, AND WHY?**

The course that had the most impact on me in many ways was a doctoral course I had at the University of Illinois. It was the “History of American Higher Education.” It really was a wonderful introduction. The professor, Joann Fly, was a splendid teacher; what a wonderful teacher she was. That is what got me interested in writing history. Doing the “On the Brink of a Profession,” the history of SEM chapter I did for the SEM Revolution, I really went back to that wonderful course, the two major texts for which were Rudolph’s *The American College and University* (1962) and Veysey’s *The Emergence of the American University* (1965). I think it’s timeless. Veysey’s is a classic, and it’s based on his doctoral dissertation. And it’s an incredible look at American universities and the rise of graduate education in America.

**WHO HAS SHAPED YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT FIELD?**

Michael Dolence is most significant for me. He was very instrumental in working with me and in developing AACRAO’s national SEM conference. He did a lot to popularize enrollment management. He introduced the strategic part to it and provided a lot of the definitions; he put it into a sort of tool set that you can use to make it work practically. Michael is certainly one of the major influencers in the field and on me.

Don Hossler, a wonderful researcher from Indiana, is the one who first introduced the academic perspective of enrollment management: He put it into the research and took it out of the marketing area [in which] it first began. He took it into the research halls of the academy and continues that academic practice as he now runs the research center for the National Student Clearinghouse. I have a great relationship with Don and enjoy working with him and with the Clearinghouse.

David Kalsbeek, a vice president at DePaul University, is probably the most brilliant mind in enrollment management. If you have ever seen David do a presentation, you know from experience that you have to record it: You couldn’t possibly take notes because he talks so fast! He usually has 130 slides that he goes through in 60 minutes. And they’re so dense and so incredibly labyrinthine. He’s just an amazing individual who I think is incredibly important.

Another person who is very significant is Amanda Yale at Slippery Rock University. Amanda, in my judgment, is the preeminent practitioner of retention-based enrollment management and the use of data. As she says, “If it moves, we measure it.” Amanda has done so much for that school. I consider her to be someone who has shaped my approach to retention particularly. She is someone who takes the wonderful work of people like John Gardner and Vince Tinto and the “Linguini brothers” (my way of referring to Terenzini and Pascarella) and applies it.
WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF YOUR CAREER, EITHER PERSONALLY OR PROFESSIONALLY?

I think it’s actually more than a challenge: I would call it an epiphany. I always saw my career arc as moving up the reputational ladder. You know, I started at Michigan State University, where I was trained as an admissions officer, and then I went to Wichita State, and that was a wonderful opportunity. Then I had the opportunity to go to Western Michigan University (WMU). From WMU, I went to Cincinnati, which was a Research I campus with a medical school and a law school and a graduate school. It was the step up. I had some of the most wonderful experiences at Cincinnati, including building the University Pavilion (which convinced me that in another life I would be an architect). It was a great experience, but when the Illinois opportunity came along, that was the culmination—the apex—of my career. I had been on that trajectory to end up at a real flagship school—and Big 10 was even better. And probably within the first six to nine months, I realized they had made me associate provost when what they really wanted was for me to be a director. And more important, I realized that Illinois was not a place where, in my position, I could make a difference. And what was really important to me was making a difference. And so my entire career trajectory had been false, essentially, and that was my epiphany.

Finally, UM–Dearborn was the right fit for me. It was the place where I needed to end up, where I really could feel like I could make a difference. As I moved from Wichita State to Western to Cincinnati to Illinois, I had less and less interaction with students, and that was not healthy for my career. I was made to interact with students and to work to help students achieve their dreams and goals.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE AN INCOMING NEW STUDENT TO ENSURE THAT SHE WAS SUCCESSFUL IN COLLEGE?

My one-word response is “engage.” Students need to come to college with a commitment to engage in the classroom with faculty and with other students in the class and also to engage outside of the classroom. Too many students come as passive vessels, and they expect that the university will peel back their heads and pour them full of knowledge. It simply doesn’t work that way. If you’re not willing to commit yourself to digging in—and, as I like to say to students, “sucking out everything that the university has to give to you”—then you’re not going to benefit as much. I say to our students at UM–Dearborn that they have to think of themselves as members of the community. If you’re in a community, you have to be engaged. You have to participate and contribute. That’s a part of the expectation for them.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED AS AN AACRAO SENIOR CONSULTANT?

I never go on another campus as a consultant without learning something that is useful on our campus. A part of the success of a consultant is how much he brings back to the home campus. Because there are things you see. Even if a campus is really in distress, there are some things that are going on that are great. I probably refer most often to my work with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). I’ve consulted at four different HBCUs over time. They are a wonderful part of American higher education in the legacy they give to higher education. I’m such a huge believer in the quality of the education that they bring to students of color. They provided access to higher education when it wasn’t available at predominantly white institutions. Much of what you find in an HBCU can be brought into a predominantly white institution. I have always tried to find the kernels of commitment and legacy on another campus that I find in such abundance and in such celebration at an HBCU.

THOSE WHO WORK WITH YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE AN EQUALLY TALENTED ORATOR AND AUTHOR. DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE SPEECH?

My favorite speech is probably the “Well, you made it.” speech at the end of the Medallion Scholarship Competition at Western Michigan University. I would speak about the fact that the competition was over—that was “well, you made it”—and that we had worked at challenging you throughout the day. At the closing event, I introduced the Medallion Scholars simply by saying how many of them had been presidents of organizations, leaders of this or that organization, and that they had done this many internships. It was an incredible litany of accomplishments for such a great group of people. Then I moved to “lest you think of them as God-like personages on God-like
heights, they also stumble and sometimes don’t get all As.” In other words, they’re just like any normal students, and that’s what makes them so special.

**WHAT IS YOUR PERCEPTION OF THE EXTENT OF COLLABORATION THAT TAKES PLACE BETWEEN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS AND ACADEMIC AFFAIRS ENTERPRISES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES?**

It’s exceptionally hard work. The academics are more tied to their discipline nationally and internationally than they are to the campus. There is that sense of the academics always having the solution—their solution. It leads to the notion of what makes enrollment management challenging on a college campus. It’s that silo nature of college campuses that I have used for years—the idea that college academic units are like silos. They’re not agrarian silos but the old ICBM silos from Kansas and North and South Dakota where you could drop an atomic bomb on them and it couldn’t crack them because they’re so hard. They are impervious many times to the tendrils that come out from enrollment management.

It also has to do with the incremental manner of enrollment management. That is important. Incrementalism is not a weakness. It really is a path that is more likely than a forward frontal assault to lead to success in enrollment management. Think about how long it takes for a theory in political science or a biological theory to develop: It doesn’t just spring up full-blown in the discipline overnight. We should try to bring people in a little bit more incrementally.

When we want to involve faculty in some program, I always say they need to be oriented to it. But we never want to say that we want to train faculty. We want to orient faculty because they are immediately resistant to the notion that they need to be trained, because that’s what their discipline does. Enrollment management nibbles around the edges, and it finds the friendly folks on campus—the members of the “choir.” And then we use them to proselytize for us so we don’t have to.

**HOW DID YOU KNOW THIS PROFESSION WAS A PERSONAL FIT FOR YOU?**

As I was finishing at Cornell, I was looking for a job, so I wrote to my friends in the admissions office at Michigan State. And literally, the day that my letter arrived, one of the admissions officers resigned to take another job. It was in the days before affirmative action, so they called me in and offered me the job. I got excited because, as I was trained at Michigan State, “they recruit best who serve best.” I would go out to my schools in “the thumb” of Michigan and I would always have one or two students that I had just made an admission decision on, so I would say, “Is so-and-so in the group?” And he would put his hand up. And I would say, “I want to congratulate you because I just admitted you to Michigan State last night.” And the class would clap. And I thought to myself, “Wow, this is really great!” What a cool field to be in when you can bring that kind of delight to a student. I was hooked at that point.

**MANY OF US KNOW THAT YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN U.S. PRESIDENTS. TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS INTEREST AND HOW IT HAS INFLUENCED YOUR THINKING.**

Well, it actually goes back to when I was in the third grade when I had rheumatic fever and was in bed for six weeks. I started reading the set of WorldBook Encyclopedias, and somehow I got intrigued with the articles about the presidents. I went to those articles in the WorldBook Encyclopaedia and I would copy the face shots of the presidents and would put them in my room. I learned all about them. My first presidential biography was the first volume of Irving Brant’s biography of James Madison which I bought in 1959. [My collection] has grown: I now have a definitive biography of all of the presidents except for about three. It’s become my hobby to learn all of the trivial kinds of things about the presidents.

It’s been a wonderful part of my relaxation to know and understand the presidents. When you get older, you need to exercise your mind, so I’ve started memorizing the presidents’ wives’ names, their wives’ maiden names, their vice presidents’ names, their opponents in the elections, and now I’ve finished memorizing all of the names of the children of the presidents.

**About the Author**

**CHRISTOPHER W. TREMBLAY** is Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. He has known Vice Chancellor Stanley Henderson since 1991, when Tremblay served as an orientation student leader at Western Michigan University. Since then, Tremblay has served under Henderson’s leadership in five different capacities at two universities. Regardless of Henderson’s title, Tremblay will always know him as “Mr. H.,” just like all of the orientation leaders whose lives he touched.
Leadership Lessons for New Professionals

By Louise Lonabocker

Forty years ago, I arrived in Boston with an associate’s degree and two years’ experience in the corporate world. The idea of working at a college appealed, so I boarded the B line trolley to Boston College. I arrived on campus, found the human resources office, took a typing test, interviewed with the director of freshman financial aid, and received an offer of employment the following week. I’ve been there ever since.

Over the years, I admittedly have been in the right place at the right time. My career trajectory was fast, as was often the case in those days. After serving for three years in two support positions, I was given responsibility for transfer admission. Three years later, I moved to the registrar’s office, where I served as assistant and then associate registrar; I was promoted to registrar by the time I was 30 years old. Simultaneously, I continued my undergraduate and graduate education; in 1981, I earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration from Boston College.

Not only was I in the right place at the right time, but I also had the privilege of working with leaders and mentors who went on to become nationally recognized experts in enrollment management, information technology, and testing and measurement. These leaders taught me countless lessons, some of which I share here.

HIRE THE BEST

Great leaders surround themselves with outstanding people. As one graduate school instructor admonished, “Never be afraid to hire good people, they’ll always make you look good.” Exemplary leaders assign responsibility, hold employees accountable, offer advice and support, stay out of the way, allow employees to learn from their mistakes by helping with the recovery, and celebrate accomplishments. Leaders advocate for staff, support their development, capitalize on their strengths, and encourage them to take on new challenges. Leaders find creative ways to retain the best employees; these may include flexible work schedules, telecommuting, and short leaves to accommodate unexpected life events. Leaders know it’s the little things that mean a lot—for example, casual Fridays, lunch or snacks during peak times of busyness, and recognition for work well done. We are fortunate to also have the opportunity to train and develop student employees and graduate assistants, who bring skills, talent, energy, and insight to the organization. Encourage everyone to contribute, listen to their ideas, and serve them well. In turn, they will serve you—and your institution—well.
EMBRACE CHANGE

Early in my career, paper was everywhere. But as computers arrived, automation began both at the institutional level and on the desktop. One mentor, always on the prowl for the next technological “edge,” taught me the value of projects that resulted in broad, sweeping change. In those days, that meant distributing transactions to end users that included academic departments, students, and faculty. Today, similar transformations are being wrought by social media, digital documents, data marts, open source, cloud computing, and mobile applications. Many trends begin outside higher education; the smart leader follows and learns from these. (Banking, retail, travel, and other industries often are among the early adopters of new technologies and services—for example, online chat.) Be alert to customer services that please you—the bottle of water offered by a car rental agency during check-in or an impressive service recovery after a transaction gone bad. Learn from these interactions, and evaluate the potential for developing similar practices on your campus.

KEEP LOOKING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE

Most of us do not have the opportunity to be involved in transformational change on an ongoing basis. But continuous improvement is something to which we should aspire all the time. Each year, I prepare goals for the office for the upcoming year, link them to university strategic goals (where applicable), and share them with staff. Staff members incorporate the goals into their annual reports, in which they are encouraged to describe their own accomplishments and goals; these subsequently inform performance appraisals. A chart of noteworthy accomplishments from the past decade hangs in one of our common areas to remind staff that we are always on the quest to improve processes. Improvements include small projects like creating a Facebook presence, technical projects like issuing electronic refunds, and major projects like implementing a curriculum management system. Improvements may be identified as a result of inviting staff to tinker with an iPad or Google Apps to search for potential applications for these technologies; asking for ideas for improvement after major events like the opening of school; or taking staff to a local deli that demonstrates outstanding teamwork and customer service. The key is to foster an environment that encourages staff to value teamwork, to offer their ideas for operating more efficiently and effectively, and to foster mechanisms by which to provide the best possible customer service.

IT’S ALL ABOUT THE DATA

One mentor was a firm believer in metrics and measures. Data proved the facts and were used to drive decision making. I learned that you can talk and provide anecdotal information all you want, but nothing is as persuasive as data to prove trends or identify patterns, as in enrollment, retention, advanced placement, telephone usage, appeals, etc. If you support your requests with data that you understand, you will increase the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes.

GET INVOLVED

At the start of my career, I worked and attended classes and did not devote a lot of time to professional activities. That changed in 1981, when I joined my first AACRAO committee. There I met an extraordinary group of local professionals and national leaders who were always willing to share their knowledge. I discovered that by becoming more engaged, I could get to know people who had developed expertise in a wide range of areas, from compliance to technology to leadership. Joining committees and task forces not only brought me into contact with leaders in the profession but also deepened my knowledge by requiring me to prepare presentations, write articles, and research institutional practices. Now, when an issue arises, I know how to research the subject, identify experts, and contact them for further information, as needed. The same holds true for institutional engagement, to include volunteering for committee membership and professional development opportunities. These types of involvement brought me into contact with a wide range of people and practices across campus—athletics, financial services, accreditation, study abroad, and performance management. Such wide-ranging involvement positioned me to lead Boston College’s one-stop student services organization when it was formed almost fifteen years ago.

READ

Another way to engage with the profession is to read periodicals, journals, books, and publications. This is a perfect way to supplement or even supplant conference attendance
The AACRAO 2011 Academic Record and Transcript Guide

For over 60 years, AACRAO has provided best practice guidance to records professionals on keeping, protecting and disseminating transcript information. The AACRAO 2011 Academic Record and Transcript Guide is an up-to-date reference on the integrity, ease of interpretation, and technological and privacy aspects of transcript transmission. In addition to the usage of more than 50 typical database and transcript elements, the book discusses standards for electronic data storage and security training for staff; notation of SSNs, academic and disciplinary actions, and course mode of delivery on the transcript; requirements for change of name and gender; and transcripting nontraditional work and CEUs. Also included are results from AACRAO’s 2009–10 membership survey of current transcript practices and opinions.

SEM in Canada: Promoting Student and Institutional Success in Canadian Colleges and Universities

Canadian colleges and universities face distinct challenges in financial environments, demographic shifts, competitive forces, and public policy decisions. SEM in Canada addresses these concerns and tells the Canadian SEM story through the experiences of 30 professionals in the field. This comprehensive guide describes how Canadian colleges and universities are using strategic enrollment management to improve student and institutional outcomes. Institutional administration, financial strategies, and key student experiences (e.g., first generation, Aboriginal, international, transfer, francophone) are among the major SEM components covered. This 16-chapter, 357-page book illustrates that Canadian institutions have not only created their own version of SEM, but one that furthers the profession in the U.S. and abroad.

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and to stay abreast of professional standards and practices, regulatory compliance, new technologies, and trends in higher education. I read AACRAO publications to keep current with professional standards and practices, The Chronicle of Higher Education for depth and breadth of awareness of higher education issues, Educause Review for new technologies and applications, and the education and business sections of The New York Times for breaking news. Certainly, there are many other worthy publications, and you can choose your favorites. You also can participate in webinars, read blogs, and follow the Twitter accounts of your favorite professionals. The important thing is to devote up to 20 percent of your time to lifelong learning.

**TALK, WRITE, LISTEN**

I am not by nature an extrovert, but neither do I find it difficult to start a conversation with a conference participant by asking what’s new on her campus, commenting on a presentation she delivered, or asking about her involvement in the association. Such discussions may include mention of an idea you can implement on your campus or may lead to collaboration on a presentation or a site visit to another campus. If you are not in a position to attend conferences, then take part in similar discussions by joining listservs (or by creating your own!). I get answers to questions quickly by emailing the registrars at Jesuit institutions, Boston universities, and Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) schools.

**EXPLORE THE WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

I love to travel, and I enjoy visiting other campuses. As I’m able, I invite colleagues to lunch to talk about developments on their campuses. Sometimes I join an admissions tour or just walk around on my own and observe signage, publications, classrooms, office layouts, and hospitality. It’s a good way to take a fresh look at how institutions present themselves and to return with ideas that can be introduced on your own campus.

**COMMUNICATE YOUR MESSAGE**

Communication is a challenging process of balancing exchanges in meetings, conference calls, video conferences, and webinars with the uninterrupted time staff need to fulfill their roles and responsibilities. Fortunately, many modes of communication reduce the need for in-person meetings and facilitate information sharing (consider, for example, email, newsletters, and blogs). In addition to weekly meetings with senior staff, committee meetings, and project meetings, I enjoy getting together with the entire staff once or twice a year to review recent office accomplishments, reiterate goals for the upcoming year, and highlight institutional goals. Initiate communication with external audiences to help ensure that students do not miss important dates and deadlines related to financial aid, graduation, course withdrawals and drops, and account resolution. New students benefit from welcome checklists, guidance about student employment, and online and print FAQs. Proactive and “just-in-time” communication will minimize reactive customer outbursts and complaints.

**DON’T FORGET TO RELAX**

I noted early that my mentors led balanced lives, and I have attempted to do the same. I am focused at work, and when I leave work, I shift my focus to family, friends, reading, exercise, travel, cultural activities, volunteer work, or spirituality. After a stressful week at work, treat yourself to a massage, sports event, movie, museum, or other relaxing and stress-relieving activity. Observing and enjoying life and letting your mind wander are often the best ways to gain insight into a problem or to experience an “a-ha” moment.

Even after 40 years, I still look forward to coming to work in the morning, to seeing the construction on a new humanities building, to anticipating the university’s 150th anniversary, to following emerging trends in higher education, to marveling at new technologies, and to listening to the good ideas of my colleagues. And to think that this satisfying and rewarding career started with a convenient ride on the T!

**About the Author**

LOUISE LONABOCKER is Executive Director, Student Services, and University Registrar at Boston College. She is a past president of AACRAO and editor-in-chief of *College and University.*
What would you do to move the ball down the field? The chief academic officer to whom I once reported gave me the freedom to be creative in implementing our institution’s then-new, three-year strategic enrollment management (SEM) plan. For the fall 2010 semester, we had already exceeded projected net-tuition dollar amounts for the entire academic year. Just five months prior to successfully implementing a three-credit, module-based, graduate-level, week-long interdisciplinary institute, we began from scratch. The success of the program (measured both in terms of student assessments and financial profitability) suggests that institutions seeking to add “Jan terms,” “Maymesters,” or intensive December or summer programming to accomplish SEM goals should consider certain key steps.

**ORIGINS OF THE EVENT**

In the spring 2001 semester, I served as a graduate assistant for marketing and recruitment for graduate admissions at American University’s (AU) School of Public Affairs. The School held several intensive one- to two-week institutes, such as the Lobbying Institute and the Campaign Management Institute, that allowed students to decrease their time to degree completion and benefit from some scheduling flexibility (particularly important for students working or interning with members of Congress or other political agencies). In summer 2010, I attended the Higher Education Management Institute (HEMI) at Vanderbilt University’s Peabody College of Education and Human Development. HEMI offered an intensive, high-quality academic program, good-quality food and accommodations, and theme-based days of instruction and dialogue with Peabody and special guest faculty. Both of these experiences informed the “template” we developed for creating a unique student experience. But how could we tailor a program to simultaneously help several constituencies—students, staff, and faculty—not to mention the bottom line?

**SEM PLAN GOAL ALIGNMENT**

At the 2011 AACRAO Executive Symposium, Dr. Bob Bontrager discussed how the purposes of strategic enrollment management are achieved by “promoting students’ academic success by improving access, transition, persistence, and graduation” and by “increasing collaboration among departments across the campus to support the enrollment program.” At the time, our development office was having difficulty fundraising. And yet our SEM goals included fiscal growth of scholarship funds for a newly added education doctorate program and increased market penetration through enhanced institutional branding.
DEFINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE:
INTERNAL, EXTERNAL, OR BOTH?
Our target audience was graduate students; some were on
campus, some participated online, and others used a hy-
brid approach. The program was designed to accomplish
at least three student-centered goals: (1) decrease time
to graduation, (2) bring more students to our traditional
campus-based learning environment, and (3) offer an in-
terdisciplinary course that would meet multiple degree
requirements so graduate students could focus their re-
search papers, journal requirements, Blackboard contribu-
tions, and group work on their subject of choice (this last
goal would be accomplished as students’ academic advi-
sors and professors coordinated the academic aspects of
the institute).

STRATEGIC USE OF SCHOLARSHIPS
TO AID INSTITUTE ENROLLMENT
AACRAO Consulting had recently helped realign our
Office of Financial Aid so it reported to our chief enroll-
ment officer, who already had responsibility for scholar-
ships. Consequently, just after the start of the fall semester,
we were able to identify additional award money for stu-
dents who had been awarded scholarships but who had
chosen not to attend. As we planned for the institute, we
considered the range of costs that participants might in-
cur, including plane tickets, ground transportation, mate-
rials, museum fees (for off-campus trips during the week
and evening programs), lodging and meals.

We encouraged local students to register for an addi-
tional spring course as the institute’s start date allowed
us to count them in the spring semester for financial aid
purposes. We charged doctoral students higher fees than
we charged master’s students, and we enrolled one out-of-
state student at a substantial discount. We also offered a
discounted rate for individuals who wished to audit the
course, with the result that some senior citizens partici-
pated for personal enrichment. Because this was our inau-
gural event and we wanted to attract future students, we
budgeted for high-quality catered meals. And because our
target audience was graduate students, we budgeted for
wine and a few craft beers for receptions as well as catered
snack breaks throughout the week.

STRATEGIC UTILIZATION OF THE
“BIG-DRAW” PROFESSOR
If the biggest name in the academic field is not on your
campus already, then seek and hire one who runs graduate
seminars on a regular basis. Our dean of academic affairs
flew in a professor emeritus from a different country, paid
his expenses, and provided an honorarium. Including the
professor in advertisements immediately increased stu-
dents’ — and the community and donors’ — perceptions of
the institute’s academic legitimacy. As part of an effort to
raise scholarship funds, we invited institute students and
institutional donors to a dinner that featured a presenta-
tion by the featured professor. (As for the professor, he was
delighted that program participants were the first to use
the new edition of his industry-famous publication.)

STAFFING
Several faculty and staff collaborated to make the inaugu-
ral institute a success. We began by reallocating an admin-
istrative assistant in our distance education office to be the
primary contact for institute registration. The chief aca-
demic officer appointed a faculty member with a reduced
teaching load to serve as academic coordinator. The chief
enrollment officer, dean of students, financial aid director,
and director of distance education collaborated with four
senior faculty members who guided discussions, served on
panels, and/or lectured throughout the week.

During the institute, while academic content was being
delivered, the administrative assistant and two graduate
students in admissions coordinated transportation, meals,
and on-site registration. A member of our team sat in on
the program and texted operations staff when breaks were
scheduled — and when discussions were running longer
or shorter than planned. In an effort to help others on
campus feel included, we invited faculty and staff to a
luncheon on the first full day of the institute. The campus
president officially welcomed everyone. What made the
greatest impact on staff was the students’ introductions of
themselves: They had come from all over the country to
participate in the institute. It was at that moment that we
transitioned from doing our jobs in our separate offices to
working as a team focused on operations.
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THE INSTITUTE BINDER
Two weeks prior to the start of the institute, we e-mailed all of the course readings to students. The institute binder, which was handed to the students as they walked into the main entrance of the college, included a syllabus, biographies and contact information for the institute’s five faculty, a daily schedule that listed the reading assignments by due date, and detailed information about the trip to a new local museum that corresponded with the institute’s main topic.

THE GRAND INSTITUTE TRIP
As soon as we determined the dates of the institute, we arranged to have its attendees be the first group to tour the new national museum. With students arriving on Sunday, we scheduled the trip for Wednesday to break up the week. Before the tour of the museum, a former college president and pioneer in her academic discipline provided context for what the students were about to see. Post-institute student assessments indicated that the museum trip served as the culmination of all the students learned during the week (this despite the fact that the logistics were complicated by off-site catering and transportation options).

COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM-SPECIFIC METRICS
As an institution, we assessed the institute in five primary ways. Initially, we considered the metric of the number of students who were able to graduate in May as a result of having earned three graduate credit hours by participating in the institute; student persistence rates; and student retention rates. Senior college administrators reviewed the net tuition revenue the institute generated as well as the results of the online student satisfaction survey. Faculty members considered the institute’s academic rigor and the quality of the research that was produced. The development office sought to identify increased contributions to scholarship funds by specific donors and reviewed the transfer of institutional monies to specific funds to benefit future students. As a result of the by-invitation-only dinner, the involvement of the renowned professor, and the generosity of institutional donors, the institute generated a surplus. Even our institution helped students and the institution’s bottom line by creating a module-based academic program to accomplish SEM goals, so other institutions can, as well.

About the Author

JEFFREY LEVINE is Director of Admissions at Manor College in Jenkintown, PA. He has a B.A. in American Studies from The University of Texas at Austin and an M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration and Supervision from University of Houston. He is a doctoral student in Higher Education Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University.
As a result of President Obama’s drawdown of military troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, many service members will be returning to the United States. Present economic conditions—including high rates of unemployment—are likely to cause many to claim their G.I. benefits. The G.I. Bill is “a law passed in 1944 that provided educational and other benefits for people who had served in the armed forces” (The American Heritage New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy 2011). With service members returning to civilian life and to campuses, the relevance to a changing education environment is enormous both for this population and for today’s higher education institutions.

A changing education environment provides multiple challenges for curriculum and administrative leaders in higher education. Herman et al. (2009), authors of Educating Veterans in the 21st Century, write, “A college or university can improve a veteran’s readiness and potential to compete academically through instruction on specific study skills, broad study skills, college transition skills, and practical skills that focus on designing their course of study in college.” Indeed, some institutions have determined that a transition course is needed to support service members during their anticipated influx into higher education. A transition course provides opportunity for military service members to develop the skills required for success in the classroom, to include meeting academic responsibilities and coping with the transition from military to college life.

In accordance with principles of effectiveness for serving adult learners, “the institution supports guided pathways that lead into and from its programs and services in order to ensure that students’ learning will apply usefully to achieving their educational and career goals” (Klein-Collins 2011). Herman et al. (2009) suggest that “veterans as a group differ from non-veteran students in their level of preparedness for coping with the challenges that arise after entering college.” A transition course using the technological process is one recommendation for meeting the need to help service members succeed academically and become fully acclimated to the campus environment.

**THE TECHNOLOGICAL PROCESS**

In developing a new transition course, administrators and teachers should adhere to recommended criteria to facilitate service members’ transition to higher education. Curriculum Leadership: Development and Implementation (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006) focuses on a technological process to support important ideas and understandings and to promote the value of change in education. “The term ‘technological process’ describes...
any curriculum development model that emphasizes the importance of defining terminal learning objectives early in the process and then identifies the steps needed to accomplish those objectives” (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). A transition course designed using the technological process is a possible solution for higher education to implement as a means of developing transitional skills for service members seeking academic success.

The technological process of high-quality curriculum planning provides a guided pathway from military to academic life. The process is systemic and efficient and is commonly used in military training (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). For example, young people who enlist in the military customarily attend boot camp. Fundamentally, boot camp is a series of physical and mental tests that systemically develops soldiers’ combat skills. Similarly, the technological process of a high-quality curriculum could systemically cultivate military students’ academic skills.

Typically, the technological process of developing a new course and units proceeds in an orderly sequence. Although some details in the process may vary, a recommended model can be used for transitioning service members.

Assess learners’ needs.

Assessing service members’ transitional needs constitutes a first step. According to Life after the Military (Hill, Lawhorne and Philpott 2011), “Service members leaving the military sometimes find a gap between the civilian careers they want and the specific education or training they need to achieve them.” Recognizing the personal or situational barriers to service members’ integration into higher education will help them achieve higher levels of academic success (McMurtry, Snead and Baridon 2012). One suggestion for higher education institutions is to determine course parameters: A transition course should be designed to “ensure [that] veterans receive a thorough introduction to the university through an orientation” (O’Herrin 2011). The premise of the course is to provide incoming student veterans and military service members with transitional assistance while focusing on the personal strengths and knowledge needed to attain academic success. As important as it is to recognize veterans’ personal and situational barriers to academic success, it is just as important to assess their academic and transition needs to ensure that they are successful in higher education.

Before designing the transitional course, it is advisable to conduct research—that is, survey and interview the population to determine the support needed. “Both student veterans and campus administrators have spoken to the success of efforts that have been crafted with direct input from the enrolled student veteran population and have emphasized this is the best approach to designing supportive programs” (O’Herrin 2011). Researching the current service member student population will contribute to development of a user-friendly curriculum, a focus on instructional needs, and plans for course objectives.

Identify course objectives and outcomes.

The next step is, “on the basis of those needs and the goals previously specified, [to] identify the course objectives and the terminal outcomes desired” (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). Life after the Military advises veterans that “the transition from military to civilian life is an excellent time to take a serious look at your options for future success. Now is the best time to evaluate your educational options” (Hill, Lawhorne and Philpott 2011). Accordingly, one unit in a new transition course could incorporate career assessment for service members who are uncertain about their career goals and who need information about the skills required for specific occupations.

Several strategies for serving adult learners can be applied to transitioning service members in higher education. Strategies include removing barriers as they relate to service members’ personal or situational circumstances, identifying career and learning objectives, and selecting (or developing) materials appropriate for a transition course.

Orientation course objectives for this population differ from those for traditional undergraduate students. Thus, “The next critical step in the technological process is to determine the course objectives. Given what is known, what specific skills must be mastered?” (Glatthorn, Boschee, and Whitehead 2006). Service members and veterans should be provided with information that can help meet their transitional needs. “Veterans also require specific information on benefits and other resources, which is not typically included in the orientation for incoming students” (O’Herrin 2011).

Identifying course objectives for service members and veterans is important for their well-being, academic success, and career growth. These may include an introduc-
tion to G.I. benefits and the implications of these benefits for financial aid as well as information about student well-being and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Such units in the transition course would equip student service members with strategies to help them acclimate to higher education and become academically successful. As course and learning objectives are developed, they need to be sequenced so as to support student success.

Removing obstacles to student learning is an institutional responsibility. Nevertheless, each student also must take responsibility for his or her individual success. *Curriculum Development in Higher Education* describes learning objectives that comprise personal and communication skills (Wolf and Hughes 2007). Responsibility is one such skill; personal organization and time management are others. Achievement of these outcomes may be fostered through the identification of certain learning objectives and strategies.

**Sequence the learning objectives.**

In the process of developing a course, a teacher typically begins with an orientation to the course and the course expectations. “A well-organized curriculum will have goals stated in a clear and concise manner. Complex ideas will follow simpler ones” (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). *Curriculum Leadership Development and Implementation* suggests that “the next step is to determine the optimal sequence in which those objectives should be mastered” (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). As the teacher or curriculum leader develops the sequence, a plan for high-quality learning experiences will emerge as “blocks” of units and objectives.

The blocks are “units of study that will make up the new course” (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). For example, a starting unit typically comprises a welcome to the course and an activity for acquainting classmates and the instructor with one another. Discussion might include the course schedule, requirements, and objectives and might be followed by more in-depth topics.

In-depth topics might include review or discussion of resources for academic assistance. Ackermann writes, “A major aspect of the adjustment was re-learning study skills. An Army reservist described it this way: ‘It’s kind of like I forgot how I studied’” (Ackerman and DiRamio 2009). Re-entering civilian life and becoming a student bring unique challenges. A unit on learning and academic success for service members can alert them to the availability of personalized counseling and other resources.

Another unit could provide information about veteran benefits, health insurance, campus resources, and financial planning. Because the cost of education is typically of concern to adult learners, service members may share this concern—particularly as they seek to navigate processes pertaining to government regulations and benefits. Addressing financial issues can help student service members stay focused on academics.

Another unit might pertain to health concerns such as post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression, and substance abuse, as well as coping strategies. Learning activities may include journal writing and/or a final paper about how personal strengths and skills learned through military service may support academic and career success. Other assignments, including a variety of readings and activities, should be incorporated to ensure a high-quality unit. Supplemental instructional materials may further support student service members’ learning.

**Choose pertinent instructional materials.**

As units and content areas in a new course curriculum are developed, appropriate instructional materials should be selected to support students’ learning. This constitutes one of the final steps in the technological process (Glatthorn, Boschee and Whitehead 2006). Each course should include a reference guide that students can have as a resource. For example, an institution might develop its own “veterans’ resource guide” or disseminate its state’s guide. In Massachusetts, the state guide includes information service members need to “maximize healthcare, disability, and education benefits” (Resource Guide for Veterans and Servicemembers 2011). Resource guides include information about outreach services designed to facilitate service members’ transition into higher education. Any institution can utilize these resources to provide instructional materials and so support learning by this student population. Using instructional materials and a course curriculum specific to service members and veterans is sure to support students’ academic growth and success.

**Develop a curriculum guide.**

Once all of the strategies for a course curriculum have been identified, it is important to develop a curriculum
guide to systematize the strategies. A curriculum guide provides a rationale for the course, a listing of objectives, recommended learning activities, a listing of instructional materials, and assessment activities.

CONCLUSION

Every institution can improve its transitional services, as through a new course. Instructors and administrators can formulate better re-entry programs for service members as they seek a college education. According to Hermann et al. (2009), "Educating veterans could be achieved by making system changes in American higher education." A key recommendation is to investigate and develop methods of teaching and assessing service members’ learning. This paper assesses one method: providing a high-quality transition course.

Although a transition course is one strategy for addressing personal and situational obstacles to service members’ and veterans’ academic success, structural and institutional barriers continue to exist. Curriculum and administrative leaders have many challenges to overcome. Today’s economic climate is making it difficult for many institutions to develop and support new programs for service members. Nevertheless, curriculum and administrative leaders must develop solutions and provide new opportunities for students. The role of curriculum and administrative leaders is to manage the curriculum development process, set standards, and make data-driven decisions. As these leaders review current practice with regard to personal, situational, and institutional barriers to service members’ academic success, another recommendation is to identify and review any other obstacles that may exist—for example, attitudinal barriers.

Although this paper does not review the recommendation to review students’ attitudinal barriers, such barriers affect students’ perception of their ability to succeed in education. Many students fear failure. This is particularly likely if the student was not previously successful in school or if years have elapsed since he was last in school, whether because of enlistment or deployment (Herrmann 2009).

The process of curriculum development begins with providing an argument for a new course. Existing institutional procedures should guide the process. Although this paper addresses the development of a high-quality curriculum for service members and veterans, other strategies should also be considered in order to provide a cohesive transition plan. Such a plan would connect the education experiences of service members and veterans and support their persistence and success in college.

A cohesive transition plan might include improving the campus climate, ensuring support for service members with disabilities, and establishing specific points of contact to mitigate culture shock. Many institutions today are considering building support systems specific to service members and veterans—a student population that is likely to increase over the next several years.

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About the Author

DIANE FURTEK is the Registrar at American International College. She is pursuing a Doctor of Educational Leadership and Supervision.

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“Education is perhaps the most important engine of economic growth and individual success,” according to an organization called Strive (2010), which uses a community-driven approach to address issues relating to student success. Leadership is necessary to support this so-called “education engine.” Network leadership is an emerging approach that can have an impact on change in education and in society. According to Merriam-Webster (2011), a network is “an interconnected or interrelated chain, group, or system.” Intentional interconnectedness is what separates network leadership from other leadership theories. Network leadership can be considered one of the newest 21st-century leadership theories. Zoller and Fairhurst (2007) would call it a deviation from conventional leadership approaches.

Network leadership has the potential to redefine strategic enrollment management through an expansion of connectedness. At a time of scrutiny and demands for increasing accountability, colleges and universities can benefit from collective action associated with network leadership.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Even though network leadership is not a current, formally-accepted leadership theory, it is being referenced, and it reflects the future of leadership—especially in education. The literature focuses primarily on collective impact, community organizing, and coalition structure (Kania and Kramer 2011, Kaye 2001, Renee and McAlister 2011).

Collective impact

The primary outcome of network leadership is the concept of collective impact. First described by Kania and Kramer in a 2011 article about large-scale social change, collective impact is “the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.” Kania and Kramer (2011) identify seven necessary elements for a successful collective impact: “common agenda, centralized infrastructure, dedicated staff, structured process, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities.” Network leadership requires “abandonment of individual agendas in favor of a collective approach,” particularly as it applies to student achievement (Kania and Kramer 2011). Furthermore, Kania and Kramer (2011) indicate that collective impact is rarely achieved because it is rarely attempted. Network leadership has the potential to radically change how problems are solved and how solutions are approached.
Community Organizing
In a 2011 report issued by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University, researchers Renee and McAlister introduce and describe the concept of community organizing for school reform. This approach is an alternative to the typical changes attempted in the field of education. According to Renee and McAlister (2011), the tangible benefits of community organizing (network leadership) include increased funding, equity in educational resource allocations, and increased access, to name a few. Community organizing seeks to redefine problem identification, inclusivity in the process, decision making, and role definition (Renee and McAlister 2011). Renee and McAlister (2011) state that community organizing “leverages the collective power... to alter existing power relationships and policies and create more accountable, equitable, and high-quality schools.” Community organizing works because education is a vital part of the health of a community (Renee and McAlister 2011). Finally, community organizing is “a force...that uses democratic participation to shift the space so that it becomes more hospitable to equity” (Renee and McAlister 2011). It seeks to advance equity, create innovative solutions, and build long-term social capital in the same way as network leadership (Renee and McAlister 2011).

PRINCIPLES OF NETWORK LEADERSHIP
Network leadership is differentiated from other leadership theories and best explained through an overview of eight distinguishing attributes: scale, cross-sector coordination, capacity building, reduction of independent action, process, reframing, long-term mentality, and collective communication.

Scale
Embedded in network leadership is the concept of scale. That is, a network implies more than an individual organization. When a network is formed, it encompasses multiple organizations in order to address deeply rooted challenges to which there is no single solution.

Cross-Sector Coordination
According to Kania and Kramer (2011), “Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination.” Cross-sector coordination involves connection across industries or any other structural boundary. Renee and McAlister (2011) also discuss the need for powerful collaborations and integration through alliance building. Cross-sector coordination ensures that discontinuity is reduced.

Capacity Building
Capacity building identifies challenges and increases the ability to solve those challenges through the strategic identification of resources. Capacity building is how networks provide the infrastructure to accomplish the goals established through the common vision of involved parties.

Reduction of Independent Action
In order to successfully implement network leadership for collective impact, an organization and its leaders must be willing to look beyond its/their own self-interest(s) and take on a more global, or macro, perspective. The University of Southern California’s Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice (2011) refers to the development of “common wisdom” when collective accountability is achieved. Notice that this principle does not call for the abandonment of but merely a shift in organizational goals and focus.

Long-Term Mentality
Another attribute of network leadership is that it is best practiced when working on long-term solutions (Renee and McAlister 2011). A long-term commitment requires looking beyond the “quick fix” to many education-related and societal problems. It demands a finite and simultaneous focus on process and progress. In higher education, issues such as college access and degree completion often are handled best through the practices and processes of network leadership.

Collective Communication
As is known from the skills approach of leadership, communication is a social performance skill set (Northouse 2010). Kania and Kramer (2011) assert that regular, ongoing communication, whether in person or conducted virtually, assists in creating trust within the network. Here, “collective” means communication conducted in community; constructive dialogue is communication oriented toward goal accomplishment.
Reframing

Network leadership requires reframing the current concept of accomplishing goals. According to Bolman and Deal (2008), “Reframing requires an ability to think about situations in more than one way.” Network leadership requires a new type of command—one in which leaders may be led by the leader of the network. As a result, command requires the skill of flexibility. Finally, control is shifted to collective control—the sharing of power.

Process

Given the aforementioned principles, process is critically important. According to Reinelt (2010), “As we expand our leadership mindset to understand leadership as a collective process, more people are questioning the leadership assumptions that are embedded in traditional organizational structures and process.” Network leadership, because of its scope and scale, multiplies the volume of transactions that take place.

EXAMPLES OF NETWORK LEADERSHIP

The last decade of education reform has brought about a variety of organizations formed specifically to facilitate network leadership. These organizations include student success networks, college access networks, and policy/practice networks. This section highlights these organizations and describes how they exemplify network leadership.

Strive

Strive is an organization focused on education reform in the Cincinnati/northern Kentucky area (2010b). Often cited as a national model for network leadership (Bathgate, Colvin and Silva 2011, Kania and Kramer 2011), Strive is one of the largest examples of network leadership: more than 300 local organizations work together to support students' academic success (Bathgate, Colvin and Silva 2011). According to Strive's (2011) annual report,

The Strive Partnership serves as a catalyst for working together, across sectors, and along the educational continuum, to drive better results in education, so that every child is prepared for school, is supported inside and outside of school, succeeds in school, enrolls in some form of postsecondary education, graduates, and enters a career.

Embedded in this description are elements of network leadership: “working together,” “across sectors,” “driving results,” and “specific goals.” What is unique to Strive (2011) is its continuum, from cradle to career. This represents a commitment to the long-term, systemic changes needed to support students in their education-related pursuits (Strive 2006). It is similar to the “cradle-to-grave” funnel (model) used in strategic enrollment management.

National College Access Network (NCAN)

The National College Access Network (NCAN) was formed in 1995 as a nonprofit organization designed to provide leadership to a growing number of education professionals working in support of increased access to college (n.d.a). NCAN (n.d.a) demonstrates leadership by making education its first priority, advocating for all students, and providing the assistance necessary for college access programs to be successful. As part of its strategic plan, NCAN (2011) works to build the capacity of its members, primarily through fund raising, training, and technical assistance. NCAN (2011) also partners with school districts in Houston as well as with statewide college access networks throughout the country to foster a college-going culture. A fundamental value of NCAN (2011) is equity; NCAN demonstrates this value through its equity assessment, a member advisory committee on this topic, and a potential alliance with the National Equity Project. All of these efforts are at the national level and have as their goal the increase of college access and degree completion rates. Often, they unite disparate organizations by streamlining their services.

Michigan College Access Network (MCAN)

The Michigan College Access Network (MCAN) provides network leadership at the state level. As a network leader, MCAN plays six major roles: coordination; leadership and advocacy; professional development; local college access network (LCAN) development; statewide initiatives; and partner initiatives (n.d.b). MCAN provides leadership to a network of 48 and growing LCNs (MCAN 2011).

Community organizing, according to Renee and McAlister (2011), requires the inclusion of a broad constituency. That is why MCAN grant proposals, when evaluated by external reviewers, receive points for representation from a “diversity of stakeholders from multiple sectors, including
In their proposal for a “new social compact,” authors from the Harvard School of Education allude to the need for network leadership (Symonds, Schwartz and Ferguson 2011). Specifically, they discuss the impact of this “collective responsibility” and further explain the concept of “umbrella infrastructure,” which is similar to the concept of network leadership. These authors suggest that a first step is the creation of a map that synthesizes the various components necessary for the network leadership to accomplish its goal. This map is comparable to the schematic document used by MCAN Director Brandy Johnson. A leadership tool, this spreadsheet organizes fourteen foci among fourteen geographic regions in Michigan; one result is a listing of hundreds of community-based efforts throughout the state. Johnson (2011) describes this master document as an “asset map” and uses it to help community leaders unite otherwise unconnected assets in order to increase the college-going rate. “Creating a college access strategy is a lot easier when you are starting from a place of assets rather than needs” (Johnson 2011). This visual tool enables Johnson to demonstrate and facilitate leadership and to link various organizations—the essence of network leadership. The tool is also useful for advising community leaders and for funneling resources to fill gaps. (Renee and McAlister [2011] also identify the concept of resource allocation.) Furthermore, Johnson (2011) utilizes this tool to demonstrate service duplication and to identify additional partners—and, thus, to leverage all available assets. Tools like this schematic facilitate collaboration because they enhance the leader’s ability to demonstrate overlaps, commonalities, and intersections among services.

**The University of Southern California Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice**

In addition to the newer college access movement, network leadership is being demonstrated in other education-related areas. For example, in 2011, the University of Southern California (USC) Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice (CERPP) issued “A Call for Individual and Collective Leadership.” This report (2011) calls for colleges and universities to forgo an institutionally focused lens in favor of a more collective lens when administering college admissions. Specifically, it identifies the conceptual need “to recognize themselves as part of the larger system of institutions that make up the terrain of college choice and impact educational values and behaviors” (USC 2011). The report’s (USC 2011) authors call for leadership to support the public interest and encourage individual colleges and universities to “distinguish themselves by serving as leaders on this stage.” According to the Center (2011), this type of network leadership demands courage, imagination, and commitment. In addition, the Center (2011) notes that the actions associated with network leadership will “require a substantial coordination of efforts.” Collective commitment to appropriate moral action is emphasized throughout the report (USC 2011). Finally, given that college admissions practices are highly sensitive, USC’s Center (2011) believes that courageous leadership must be embedded in network leadership. “Creating a college admissions process that contributes more directly to the nation’s public interests will require an altered mindset in the leadership of higher education institutions,” That statement is evidence of the “reduction in independent action” principle of network leadership.

In 2011, the USC Center convened nearly 200 leaders from across the nation to discuss this very topic. In so doing, the Center became the network leader. “CERPP brings together individuals and groups to examine college enrollment issues and practices and [to] better meet the collective needs of students, institutions, and society” (USC 2011). CERPP demonstrates network leadership in its efforts to collaboratively examine and develop unified practices.

**NETWORK LEADERSHIP IN ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT**

Network leadership is emerging as a leadership practice in various capacities. In the field of enrollment management, several grassroots efforts are proving to be examples of network leadership. For example, the creation and expansion of concurrent enrollment initiatives whereby college students can enroll simultaneously at a community college and at a four-year university exemplify how network leadership is being facilitated. Another example is the reverse transfer agreement, which requires colleges and universities to provide co-leadership in order for a transfer student to receive his or her associate’s degree retroactively using

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**MCAN schematic.** In their proposal for a “new social compact,” authors from the Harvard School of Education allude to the need for network leadership (Symonds, Schwartz and Ferguson 2011). Specifically, they discuss the impact of this “collective responsibility” and further explain the concept of “umbrella infrastructure,” which is similar to the concept of network leadership. These authors suggest that a first step is the creation of a map that synthesizes the various components necessary for the network leadership to accomplish its goal. This map is comparable to the schematic document used by MCAN Director Brandy Johnson. A leadership tool, this spreadsheet organizes fourteen foci among fourteen geographic regions in Michigan; one result is a listing of hundreds of community-based efforts throughout the state. Johnson (2011) describes this master document as an “asset map” and uses it to help community leaders unite otherwise unconnected assets in order to increase the college-going rate. “Creating a college access strategy is a lot easier when you are starting from a place of assets rather than needs” (Johnson 2011). This visual tool enables Johnson to demonstrate and facilitate leadership and to link various organizations—the essence of network leadership. The tool is also useful for advising community leaders and for funneling resources to fill gaps. (Renee and McAlister [2011] also identify the concept of resource allocation.) Furthermore, Johnson (2011) utilizes this tool to demonstrate service duplication and to identify additional partners—and, thus, to leverage all available assets. Tools like this schematic facilitate collaboration because they enhance the leader’s ability to demonstrate overlaps, commonalities, and intersections among services.

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Credit earned at the senior institution—all in the name of increasing degree completion rates. These examples represent more limited practices of network leadership, but they exemplify nonetheless many of the aforementioned principles. As more and more such coordinated opportunities arise, network leadership will expand and play an increasingly significant role in the progress and success of the field of education.

CONCLUSION

Never before have partnerships, coalitions, collective actions, networks, and leadership been more critical for improving social conditions, facilitating democracy, and increasing education attainment rates. Though still new on the horizon of leadership theories, network leadership is growing in terms of recognition and action. It is emerging as a leadership practice that has the potential to make long-term contributions—and so to leave a significant legacy. Network leadership already has demonstrated its ability to effect change at the local, state, national, and societal levels. Given that “shared power and collective competence” (Drath 2008) are necessary for social change, network leadership has the power to create synergy to facilitate social change (Marx 2008). Bottery (2008) refers to network leadership as “connective tissue.”

Historically, individual organizations have focused on leadership from within; this is understandable as each organization has unique goals. Kania and Kramer (2011) refer to this as “isolated leadership.” In 2010, Education Sector, an independent think tank in Washington, DC, identified one of the four key elements of shared accountability as “strong, sustained, civic leadership” (Bathgate, Colvin and Silva 2011). Marx (2008) reminds us that network leadership will enable individuals to “get connected to forces affecting the whole of society”; surely this is what education does. Marx (2008) further describes network leadership as “connective tissue.”

Even as education organizations show strain as a result of the demands upon them, network leadership can provide support and opportunity (Munro 2008). After all, in addition to supporting the achievement of important goals, network leadership presents opportunities for leaders to enhance their skill sets (Renee and McAlister 2011). Leaders expand their knowledge, become data savvy, and cultivate personal aspirations (Renee and McAlister 2011).

Network leadership is emerging, evolving, and having an impact on social change and education reform. Specific examples in Michigan demonstrate that network leadership can arise within any given context (Renee and McAlister 2011). Particularly in Michigan, the creation of networks at the local and state levels followed the example of national networks and constituted a response to the Cherry Commission’s final report (2004), which called for leadership, the creation of networks, and significant change.

Network leadership in education can support the need to produce educated citizens (Renee and McAlister 2011). After all, the root of network leadership in education is reform and social change. Network leadership has the potential to transform society and our education system. According to Bathgate, Colvin and Silva (2011),

Bringing together a community’s myriad of service providers and getting them to pursue a single, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for youths is not easy. It will not happen naturally, and such networks cannot be assembled and sustained by a school district working on its own.

Through network leadership, organizations can discover common opportunities (Munro 2008). Marx (2008) writes, “All organizations, especially education systems, are of this world, not separate from it. To earn their legitimacy, they need to be connected with the communities, countries, and the world they serve.” Network leadership seeks to do just that.

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MCAN. See Michigan College Access Network.


NCAN. See National College Access Network.


USC. See University of Southern California Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice.

About the Author

CHRISTOPHER W. TREMBLAY is Assistant Vice Chancellor for Enrollment Management at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. He previously served as Director of Admissions at UM-Dearborn and Gannon University. Tremblay earned both his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Western Michigan University. He has a post master’s certificate in enrollment management from Capella University, and is a doctoral student at UM-Dearborn studying educational leadership. He has published articles in College & University, the Journal of College Admission, Journal of College Orientation and Transition, and the Journal of Intergroup Relations. He has presented at nearly 40 association conferences for AACRAO (SEM), the College Board, NACAC, MACAC, PACAC, NISTS, MACRAO and NODA. Active in college access initiatives, Tremblay serves on the advisory board of Project ACE, a Local College Access Network (LCAN) in the State of Michigan.

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Welcome to the first in a series of forum articles on applying project management (PM) techniques and tools to the nonprofit sector with a focus on higher education. Today we manage in an extremely competitive and fast moving environment requiring tight practice. The people we manage are knowledge workers often having many of the same behavioral characteristics as a set of managed volunteers. Good management and leadership skills are mandatory. The highly competitive and fast pace mixed with knowledge worker/volunteer staffs do not always set well. It is a challenging time — requiring new approaches to success. The articles to be found on these pages over the next couple years are the beginnings of our future book “Managing Volunteers: Project Management Meets the Knowledge Worker (working title).” We have modified the content some here to align more tightly with our world—Non-Profit Higher Education. Our approach in the pages is minimalist—meaning we want to move the organization that does no PM to some PM—our objective is not to import large scale high-end, high-tech, and high-dollar project management processes. We want to help you get a bit more organized using a relatively simple, while not always so easy to implement, set of concepts to tighten up your service areas.

We will begin with a traditional look at project management because we believe that the integration of the tools and the processes associated with PM into many of our campus offices has resulted in numerous quick wins and milestone achievements. This first article describes why the world has become a whole series of projects that need to be managed as such and has a look at the various types of project managers attempting to help you match your people with the work at hand. The next article in the series will consider why we start every activity with a “white paper” (our version of a project charter) and why and how we write work plans. Subsequent articles in the series will address the creation of a healthy workplace and building strong working foundations, the reorganization of a registration and records office, the implementation of a strategic plan, the transition from planning to working, the development and implementation of an athletic foundation strategic plan, and the application of PM into the academy—specifically, using PM tools and practices to help build academic centers of excellence.

This series will show the reader how to use PM effectively in almost all aspects of higher education practice. Some will say we are overstepping our bounds—that PM is strictly for construction, manufacturing, and IT. But in truth, that thinking is outdated. The year is 2012. A bubble has burst, and we know too well the sour taste of the “great recession.” In short, the world has changed—a lot. The
level of competition and the pace of our sector have increased dramatically. One could argue that we are moving and changing as rapidly as the private and the government sectors now. How, then, do we react to all of these external pressures—we initiate one project after another, begin one strategic plan after another in an attempt to stay current and competitive. We find ourselves in a situation where we have many projects but not enough time and resources, along with a lack of priority setting, to accomplish what is asked and expected.

We are the people of higher education. We have the ability to imagine it all—after all, we are the best at design and planning that the world has to offer. That said, too many of us end up with a laundry list of projects without always having the expertise and tools required to complete it. We hope to prove that PM in higher education can work—provided you establish goals, milestones, schedules, accountability and assessment, and good management plans internal to project work plans. Good work plans make for good work, and paper can help ensure that everyone remains friends by specifying all actions and responsibilities. Work plans start projects on the right track and ensure their progress—and, most important—their completion.

What is project management, then—and what is a project? Simply stated, it is a level of effort that has requirements or specifications. It begins; it includes some work—usually at least one deliverable that can be defined (final product); and it ends. We must plan processes to an end. Without an organized technique for tracking and managing a large number of work efforts within a unit, college, department, or entire university, how can we measure our progress? So often we merely react and manage chaos. We move from one crisis to another, never setting any priorities and never developing any “work break-down structures” (by which we mean documents that describe what to do next).

All of this can be fixed. For example, in Indiana State University’s (ISU) registrar’s office, we just created and implemented well over 50 project white papers while defining and documenting recurring daily maintenance activities. This led to the development of a meeting rotation and scheduling program that saved more than one-half of an FTE of effort in an office of eighteen employees. We now have the right resources in the right meetings, rather than leaving staff feeling they are going everywhere all the time. The lesson to be learned is that unit organization and PM can be accomplished. It takes time, but the result is an increase in productivity; moreover, your staff knows what to do next and what is expected, and people start to enjoy their work more. (Some even start to have a little fun and smile!) In addition, and perhaps most important, when someone comes at you with one more project, you will be organized and able to see clearly how resources and schedule will be affected. You then can ask leadership, “What goes away?”—or, “Which schedule do you want adjusted?” If the new effort is a priority, then something else is not, and certain data, objectives, milestones, and schedules will need to be realigned. “We aim to serve; now help us re-prioritize.”

THE EVOLUTION OF A PM WORLD

Let us move on now to a little history and answer the question of how we got here. Our discussion begins with a list of seven reasons offered by Clifford Gray and Erik Larson (2007) in their text *Project Management: The Managerial Process, 4th Edition* (Irwin/McGraw Hill). We have borrowed their section headings and then added our own thoughts on their application to non-profit higher education.

Compression of the Product Life Cycle

Everything moves faster all the time. Everyone expects everything more quickly, and often they want twice as much. In response, we disrupt the change management process already in place by breaking the work into pieces; we may not call the pieces projects, but they are. Definitions are important, and we need to take the work we have and break it into meaningful and deliverable units of effort so we can track and manage them at the pace that is expected. Our industry has become so much more competitive that we now have to react to market pressures as well as to boards, commissions, politicians, and taxpayers—often at a moment’s notice. The speed of expected outcomes keeps increasing. Moreover, our stakeholders hold us to high levels of accountability. We need to respond by tracking, managing, scheduling, and assessing, often with quantitative metrics at any given point in time, and especially once deliverables are completed and processes move forward. We must be efficient and productive and face the increasing competition head-on. As we sleep, someone across the globe—and/or via the Internet—is wooing our students. We have to be smarter, faster, and more efficient.
Global Competition
All sectors of the economy—including ours—need to be faster, stronger, and smarter. We need to inject some urgency into our work, and the mechanism that facilitates this is organization through project management. We can—and should—treat all new initiatives as projects and then carefully manage our way through them. Project management tools and techniques can make us faster even as they improve our results.

The Knowledge Explosion
At the upper limit, everyone knows everything, all the time, in close to real time. An economist would say that we are edging closer and closer to perfect competition in the higher education space where there is a free (or perfect) flow of information. What does that mean to us? Two things: First, with new (and so much) information bombarding us, how do we know when we are done planning? We try to keep it simple. We prepare a tight plan, add a quick cost benefit, investigate a few cases, then go. The costs associated with over-planning can be high. Second, we see so often that College XYZ just...[fill in the blank]. And we are immediately convinced that we need to do that, too—in addition to what we are doing already. Have you ever wished your colleagues would stop attending that annual conference? Well-intentioned though they may be, they always seem to bring back more work! Without project prioritization, workload management, and scheduling, we only pile the new on top of the old. It is impossible to do everything. It is an arms race: The winners will be the organizations that get organized and deliver a finite number of excellent and manageable services to students. Be the tortoise; be the organized tortoise, and you will begin finishing what you start.

Downsizing
As we downsize through retirements (early and otherwise) and, in some cases, layoffs, we end up with fewer people having to accomplish the same amount of work. There was a time when some could argue that our staffing levels were bloated, but that tends not to be the case anymore. Consider by way of example that toward the end (and the worst) of the recession, ISU lost approximately 15 percent of its workforce over a two-year period—and with little backfill. How does an institution compensate for that? On the academic side, we move toward increased use of adjuncts and temporary faculty or lecturers. (This has been occurring for years, but it is not the focus of this discussion.) On the staff side, we often outsource (e.g., painters, DBAs, data entry, bill collectors, diversity consultants, call center operation, carpenters, contractors, programmers, computer consultants, etc.) or automate (e.g., student service organization tools, software solutions, etc.). One result is that we must define and manage projects that involve external labor and resources. Thus, we have to write work plans that are concise, clearly and readily understood, and manageable and that specify schedules, milestones, billable hours, and cost. We have to become program managers—meaning that we have to manage multiple internal and external projects and/or contracts. We should not simply expect everyone to understand this. People do this full time for the Department of Energy, for Boeing, and for pretty much every construction company on the planet. And unless one has worked in construction or in one of the types of organizations just named, how is one to know how to manage these tasks? We pile this new kind of work on top of the old, saying, “Here are some contractors, now get it all done.” The short story is that managing contractors can be a full-time job. We need to consider how to manage external projects as well as internal projects. Everyone cannot be expected to wake up one day after downsizing and understand these complexities.

Increased Customer Focus
As higher education (like the economy as a whole) has become increasingly competitive, we have had to pay increased attention to each individual students’ wants, needs, and desires. How do we do this? Typically, with all types of technology, CRM solutions, one-stop centers, and self-service, all of which require new projects to be managed. The private sector refers to “mass customization,” or taking a limited number of inputs and producing custom outputs—in our case, thousands of custom outputs. The primary issue is that everyone wants to be treated as the only student/client/customer. How does one ensure that 10,000 (let alone 30,000) students feel “special” as a result of benefiting from customized meal plans, rec center plans, access to courseware, transcripts, spring break trips, academic offerings, and three-, five-, eight-, and fifteen-week semesters? The answer is multiple outputs from common
inputs and project management—often IT-based—which is driven by a whole host of new service and customer-driven projects.

Rapid Development of Third-World and Developed Economies

Again, this should be read as competition, competition, competition. While we have outsourced all kinds of inputs to manufacturing, engineering, call centers, etc., we increasingly see developed countries such as China, Russia, Brazil, and the Arab states developing first-class, western-style education systems that compete with us head to head. At a minimum, this build-out, coupled with the free flow of information, has increased the sophistication of all of our students. The United States still leads in education, but the rest of the world is rapidly catching up—and, at a minimum, making it harder to replace our decreasing demographics with foreign students. As a result, we have projects and services built for foreign student development. One service begets another, and the process continues. More and more projects are required to keep pace with the competition, to keep supplying the services demanded by more sophisticated buyers and users of education around the globe. (Note: We had better develop our Chinese language web pages so we can compete with local Chinese higher education institutions.) The rest of the world is catching up, requiring us to undertake new initiatives to stay in front. In short, we have entered an era of true global educational competition. For the project manager (or, better yet, for the employee who understands a few fundamentals of project management), this means increased job security.

Small Projects Represent Big Problems

We might call this the “sleeper” set of projects. Small projects can be dangerous, so managers, beware when taking on these types of initiatives. Often, those green to PM think they can relax and get their feet wet by taking on smaller efforts with only a few resources. The problem is that small projects—for which small amounts of money, labor, and time are budgeted—can easily double in size as the result of a single oversight. Like their larger counterparts, small projects need to be planned. They may present fewer opportunities for error, but they also present fewer places to “hide” if you run over. Imagine that you take on a small project, and at the weekly meeting, you have to report that you were 100 percent over budget. Even if that only means that your project costs increased from $500 to $1,000, it sounds like poor planning—or, worse, no planning. Nothing is worse than having four or five such small projects blow up at once—or even in rapid succession. Just one hiccup per small project can cause trouble and threaten your credibility. You may not sweat the small stuff, but don’t skip the PM.

There are many reasons the working world has become one long list of projects. We hope you are willing to use a few project management tools in your office. Scheduling, budgeting, work plan development, milestone and deliverable definitions, metric-based accountability, and creating a management plan can be of great use, and often, these tasks can be documented on just a few pages. We can learn to compete at the implementation stages of common best business practices. The organizations that execute, as at the end of the day, competition breeds equality (at least with respect to the free flow of information). We all must learn how to execute—and execute efficiently—with a tightly defined work plan. (In the next article in this series, we will focus particularly on work plan development.)

EIGHT TYPES OF PROJECT MANAGERS

For the balance of this article, we describe eight kinds of project manager. We are sure many others use many of the same terms, as we usually discover there is not a lot that truly is new. Again, the win comes in the execution. The reason we emphasize this is because as you, the lead manager, begins to think about how to use some project management in your office, you need to assess your pool of labor. All employees are not the same. That is a good thing, as not all projects are the same either. You will need to put the round pegs in the round holes, assigning tasks to your people in a fashion that mixes with their personalities and skill sets so that they may overachieve.

The Entrepreneur

We start by over-communicating what we think of this type of project manager; because, in our humble opinion, there are very few true entrepreneurs. Vincent Van Gogh and Jane Austen were entrepreneurs. Einstein and Gödel filled the bill along with Marie Curie. And of course Steve Jobs surely was. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw is an entrepreneur,
if not yet universally known for, her pioneering work in biotech and health care in India. Bill Gates has some reaching tendencies, but as we all know, he is more an extremely good businessman. And we can’t resist, Edison was not, Tesla was.

An entrepreneur starts in a vacuum, typically seeing the world as a problem, and begins the process of solving that problem. Jobs built products and then let people adapt (for example, he began producing USB 2.0 devices when approximately 70 percent of the world still had USB 1.0 chargers); in contrast, Gates’s empire builds products where there is already demand.

In our offices, the entrepreneur might not seem like a team player: she is always full of ideas that at first seem impractical; perhaps she is an idealist, or maybe she is not very happy and spends time trying to solve problems for which no one has time or to which no one pays attention (if only because we are too busy putting out fires). If you have a true entrepreneur in your office, present the current problem and ask her to prepare a plan to fix it—and then get out of the way. Some entrepreneurs simply “see” the solution and will need help from others to plan and implement it. If the entrepreneur in your office turns out to be powerful, then you may have found a resource who will continue to identify solutions for you in multiple areas. Some would say we do not have the resources to daydream; but do we have resources to waste on things that are broken? Experiment a little bit: Ask your entrepreneurial employee to draw up several solutions. Have her write some white papers and draft some work plans, and give her the opportunity to present her ideas at a staff meeting. (Just remember that as lead manager, you need to review any proposed work prior to allowing it to move forward.) Sometimes entrepreneurs have difficulty communicating their ideas in ways their colleagues can understand.

The solution, in some cases, is to assign a general project manager (see description, below) to translate the entrepreneur’s vision into work that can be understood by all. In the end, the work still may not be accomplishable, but all need to understand what the person is thinking in order to move toward a solution. Others can transform the ideas into actionable work that may result in a departmental solution.

Entrepreneurs are difficult to manage, difficult to keep focused, often idealistic, and often cranky (after all, they see the world as a series of problems—and often, no one listens to their solutions). Be sure that the person who manages the entrepreneur understands and appreciates research (researchers often are similar to—or actually are—entrepreneurs). Entrepreneurs can be a joy. (Personally, we like to have at least one on staff to help us address the issues that loom on the horizon.) Regrettably, they often are disregarded in the hectic, product-driven environments that constitute our offices.

The Builder
Builders, also called “start-up project managers,” may be confused with entrepreneurs; and although they may have many of the same qualities, they are not the same. Recall that entrepreneurs start in a vacuum and often do not care about costs or practicality. Builders do. Builders know that an action must add value. Builders can take a plan or idea and turn it into action and a definable set of deliverables. They can see the end and envision the objective. They can see the path that is necessary to progress from zero action to charting a course to a working product. ISU has adopted a goal of trying to digitize all documents; we also have moved to a functionality whereby students may obtain certified transcripts online. Neither of these processes constitutes rocket science, but it remains the case that many moving parts need to be aligned, assignments need to be made, interoffice cooperation must be sustained, etc.—and each of these requires start-up wisdom.

Managing people during start-up is critical, and having the ability to adapt and change course at a moment’s notice is imperative. The project manager also must be able to motivate others—often across functions—to add value. He must also be able to show others the path to completion and to manage others as the project morphs. Most people do not like change—let alone changing course “inside of” change. Yet this happens often in start-ups, and when it does, it must be managed carefully. Find someone in your unit who builds things at home—ships in a bottle, racecars, or landscapes—and who enjoys charting unknown paths. The builder is a change agent who must like people, have considerable energy, and understand that “no” means “different” and not necessarily “no.”

The Designer, Planner, and Scheduler
The designer, planner, and scheduler have “visioning” capabilities similar to those of the entrepreneur and the
builder; in small organizations, these often are the same person. In larger organizations, these individuals fulfill a valuable role as they create documentation, make Gantt charts, estimate costs, and use the skills and tools necessary to schedule activities. In their pure form, designers, schedulers, and planners typically are introverts who sit in a back room and make elaborate plans for the builder or start-up project manager to implement. Sometimes we assign this task to a junior project manager so he has to think through an entire project from start to finish. It may be painful, but it can be a good exercise—particularly if it makes the person a better builder. Understand that this individual should not work alone: he needs access to the employees who actually do the work (rather than just those who plan the work) so he can develop plans and schedules that are as feasible and as practical as possible.

The Doctor

“Doctors” come into an organization—often from the outside—and get a project, a group, or even an entire facility back on track again. Simply stated, they are fixers. They typically work with mature and troubled organizations or projects. And while they need to be somewhat visionary, it is even more important that they be able to put Humpty Dumpty together again. These individuals must like puzzles; they must enjoy helping folks get out of trouble; and they must like to help others get organized. They often have to move things backwards before they can move them forward again. Often, they also must regain folks’ trust before they can begin to take action. This can prove rewarding (in our experience, people really do want to do well, be validated, and have purpose; they simply do not know how to get where they need to be).

Projects become unglued for a variety of reasons. “Doctors” can make a significant difference, especially when everyone knows that the project is for the long term. You may have a doctor in your organization already. Sometimes the doctor is an internal consultant who floats from unit to unit. At other times—for example, when projects and processes are really a mess—the doctor may be someone from outside the organization or institution who brings fresh perspective to the problem. A high school friend made his living with a major organization by moving from factory to factory to improve their processes and procedures so they became productive again. His role was not for the weak; he did not make many friends. Nevertheless, his job was well-defined: he was “the fixer.”

Doctors are valuable; we all need them, whether for routine, chronic, or urgent care. Yet we rarely want the diagnoses they make. In today’s competitive environment, we cannot afford to have anything—be it a role or a unit, an individual or a process—falter.

The Everyday PM

The everyday PM is everyone. After all, we all have projects. “Everyday PMS” are those people who usually work in their area of expertise and who have been given a new project that has already been through the vetting process (with the result that initially, it has minimal political pushback). We all must learn how to write a work plan, estimate project costs, develop a schedule, build a team, specify who will manage what, and clearly define an approved set of deliverables (products). Project management is not necessarily easy, but it is easier when the related work plan is robust and transparent. In the modern age, all units are connected: We cannot work in isolation but instead must learn to work across functional boundaries to deliver final products on time and on budget. From the standpoint of building a career, it is good to learn these skills and to take the lead on projects. Visibility can be good. Taking on risk can be good. Getting out and around campus is good. But the reality is that we are people—and anytime two or more of us get together, politics come to the fore. One can reduce the risk to one’s career—and to the project at hand—by understanding these tools.

The Pure Project Manager

Pure project managers might also be called mercenaries. Without passion for the cause—or the deliverable—they instead, if they are good, have immense passion for the people. The pure PM sometimes is maligned, but the truth is that the world is full of dedicated and compassionate mercenaries. These are managers who can oversee any job, anywhere, with any level of content—from a biology lab focused on the study of cancer to a pencil factory—across cultural lines and geographic boundaries. These are the most seasoned and confident leaders. They surround themselves with content experts, have an extreme ability to understand processes and systems (a highly transferable skill), and have a passion for helping others succeed. They
may not share others’ passion for the product, but they acknowledge that passion in others. Their joy and purpose are in seeing others succeed. As a result, pure project managers often have extensive experience, having moved from unit to unit to help rebuild others’ areas. Their mantra is “any project, anywhere, anytime.” These people (at least, those who have had many successes) are simply good managers; typically, they are risk takers (in fact, many of them thrive on risk). The bigger the problem, the more enticing the challenge—and thus, payoff. They see the delta for improvement, and they want to help. Mercenaries typically start their careers as one of the types of project managers described in this article (excepting, perhaps, the entrepreneur). They are never unemployed and can add value in almost any organization. In every 1,000 people, it is good to have two to three of these types of managers on any given day. Former CEOs and executives often make great “pure project managers.”

The Closer—Type 1

Killing or shutting down projects is hard to do. As humans, we do not like to kill things; but at times, we must. We must kill the project that turned into an unsalvageable disaster. We have to close that unprofitable plant or risk bankrupting the whole company. And we must shift to alternative natural resources when the oil or ore is depleted. Death is a part of life, and the good project manager knows that some projects must die. Shutting projects down in a tactful and delicate manner is an art form. Closing plants or units is an art form. Passions run deep; people can be put out of work. In the worst cases, once-thriving communities become ghost towns. In a capitalistic economy, only the efficient survive. Fairness is not necessarily characteristic of a free market. Consider this example: We have a six-month lead time for developing project X. Three months in, we learn about Y. Y is better than X, but we do not kill X; instead, we start Y, and on and on, to the point that we have multiple overlapping and inefficient exercises involving many projects that should be done away with. Some technologies will survive, and some will die. Killing them will adversely affect the lives of certain people—people who have made a career of working with particular software, for example. We all must be able to “go deep” in our content knowledge and in our technical and project skills and “go broad.” We need to have multiple skills to offer to a constantly changing organization and world. Closers shut things down delicately, inducing a minimum of heartache in those in the field. They help others transition even as they help the competing project move forward; they extract everything that is useful from the dead project and then shift those resources to a new front.

The Closer—Type 2

This type of project closer—who also may be called the “finisher”—has a special talent as well. On smaller projects, this is often the same person who starts the job. Everyone must take her project from start to finish. But finishing means being judged. And sometimes, this is difficult, so people never seem to bring their projects to completion. A good finisher pays extreme attention to detail but is balanced in her understanding: she knows that “B+” is a fine grade and adopts the attitude that once a project is operational, time can be spent “moving it up to an ‘A’.” A hundred things may need to be examined before the project is finished. This closer, really a finisher, pays extreme attention to detail, knows when to “go live,” and does not fear the first day of operation.

The Maintenance PM

This may be a bit of a stretch from the point of view of project management, but we deemed it important to include those folks who go to work every day and who do the same thing without so much as a hiccup. These are the people who keep the ship running day in and day out. The first reason we include the maintenance PM is because some junior project managers, enjoying increased visibility and face time, believe they are more valuable than the person who has shown up for the past 20 years to make sure the most mundane tasks are accomplished. These junior project managers need to be reminded that their experimental projects are paid for by the people who manage the efficient operations of the unit. Sometimes the employees on the edge forget who is paying the bills, so we have to enlighten them. We should always talk about and appreciate the people who come to the office every day and complete work in an efficient and profitable (read “surplus-generating”) manner. Speak appreciatively about the people behind the scenes who keep your organization running fluidly. For without them, the hot shots would have no resources with which to experiment. Maintenance
is difficult. Getting folks to achieve day in and day out is a management skill that should be admired. It is not always visible. We forget, our egos get in the way, and we lose sight of who is running the sump pump. These people are invaluable and need to be treated as such. Thank the people who efficiently accomplish the mundane every day.

The second reason we include “maintenance PMs” is to foster agreement that the world has become one giant project. If we are not careful, we might just forget about the tasks that do not necessarily get the face time, visibility, or resources they need to continue to succeed. If we allow this to happen—or if we allow it to happen often enough—we just might find ourselves out of a job.

One organization we recently had the pleasure of helping had so many new projects that the maintenance items kept being deferred. Project work was consuming more than 50 percent of the organization’s labor resources while most of the staff also had daily work to accomplish. We converted the maintenance work into pseudo-projects, with resources consuming entities. This way, when they make a point estimate of costs, work, labor, and deliverables, they always have a complete picture of the organization. This helped make even more efficient the maintenance that already was being done well. It also brought the maintenance people to the PM table so they could share in, compete with, and enable one another’s success. It made for a better shop. And most important, each person understood everyone else’s role and was able to gain a healthy appreciation for the success of the whole.

SUMMARY

We in higher education are inherently good thinkers, designers, and planners. And often, that is where we get stuck. That said, there is no shortage of strategic plans in the private sector sitting on shelves. Failure to transition from plan to work is not unique to higher education; rather, it is an organizational problem. Like other organizations, higher education is an organization of people who do not like to change and who do not necessarily know how to convert a good plan into actionable, closeable, work.

Our next article will discuss how to begin. We will walk you through how to write a white paper / work plan. We argue that if we are going to get organized, we had better start with a very good definition of the action steps required to accomplish tasks. It all sounds quite simple—but it practice writing work plans can be arduous. They are not like writing strategic plans, but rather a step by step guide to justification, action, schedule, budget, and management and work level responsibilities. We explain how we build these work plans and tight “process- and system-oriented organizations” where we can prioritize and accomplish multiple objectives so as to remain competitive.

Project management is exciting! Every day is different, and no one should ever be bored. It can be fun, and there is plenty of room for success, but first we must get organized and become efficient. The faster the world moves, the fewer institutions will be out front; the result will be an open field in which to teach and serve students, undertake scholarship, and enjoy all the academy has to offer. Higher education can be as good as it always has been; we simply need learn to work more effectively in the “new economy.”

About the Authors

MICHAEL B. SNYDER is the Program Manager for Strategic Initiatives at Indiana State University and a certified PMP. He has been a Project Manager for more than twelve years, actively working in higher education for the past four. Prior to his current position he worked for many years in the private sector. Currently, Mike reports to both the CIO and the Chief Strategy Officer managing multiple projects that impact various specific areas on campus as well as others impacting the entire university. Most recently he is managing a very robust co-curricular data collection effort culminating in a student Co-Curricular Record. In addition, he is ramping up a Business Intelligence Unit and student success “War Room” helping the CSO initiate campus wide Strategic Enrollment Management practices. Mike earned his bachelor’s degree in computer science, specializing in business systems from Pacific Lutheran University in Washington State and is currently working on his M.B.A. at Indiana State.

KARL E. BURGHER, PH.D., P.E. is Chief Strategy Officer and Professor at Indiana State University. He has been with ISU since January of 2010 managing the implementation of ISU’s five-year strategic plan. He oversees 45 teams, more than 250 people, and well over 300 specifically defined projects in a PM-like matrix fashion. Karl learned PM techniques “on the street” working in the construction industry for ten years as an explosives engineer early in his career. He then moved on to manage many federal research and education contracts as a Center Director and then as a Vice President of Research and Contracts. Prior to arriving at ISU, he taught management and project management at his Missouri alma mater. Karl earned a B.S. and a M.S. in Mining Engineering from Michigan Technological University, and a B.S. in Economics and a Ph.D. in Mining Engineering from the former University of Missouri-Rolla (now Missouri University of Science and Technology.) Karl is just finishing his 27th year in the academy.
The AACRAO Electronic Database for Global Education (AACRAO EDGE) is in its 8th year and is now widely used in the United States by major universities and university systems, State Boards, professional organizations, agencies of the U.S. government, immigration attorneys, medical and nursing boards, and many others. Part of what we do is field questions and suggestions from the field and conduct research to both answer the questions posed and to incorporate what we find into the database, which is now at 5,000 plus pages. What follows is one of those responses. In coming issues, more of these responses will be published. It is our hope that this information will inform readers about what kind of information can be found in EDGE and how it can be of use to them.

QUESTION
I have some comments about your Australia profile, and I hope to get some feedback from you. I’m not a registered user of the Educational Database for Global Education (EDGE), but I’ve contacted education evaluators who use EDGE; based on their input, I believe the Australian profile should be changed. In particular, would you consider altering your profile for graphic design diplomas and certificates through Technical and Further Education (TAFE) in Australia? EDGE evaluators state that TAFE certificates are equivalent to high school–level education and that TAFE diplomas are equivalent to one year of postsecondary education. But this is clearly contradictory to the assessment of TAFE graphic design certificates and diplomas by the Design Institute of Australia, the largest professional organization accrediting graphic designers in Australia.

DIA has a point system for membership (see www.dia.org.au/media/pointsystemquickguide.pdf). To be a fully recognized professional member, an applicant must score the equivalent of at least 21 points. According to DIA’s point system, a TAFE certificate is equivalent to one year of postsecondary education (for which the holder earns 3 points) and a TAFE diploma is equivalent to two years of postsecondary education (for which the holder earns 6 points). Thus, a person with both a certificate and a diploma has the same number of points (9) toward membership as a person with a three-year degree (9 points). In other words, DIA affirms that a certificate and a diploma are equivalent to three years of postsecondary education.

Could you please let me know what resources you used to profile TAFE qualifications? While I recognize that DIA membership would constitute only one criterion, I believe that the opinion—and practice—of DIA should carry significant weight. Thank you.
ANSWER

Thank you for directing your query to the EDGE Admin Group. You raise a number of points that I shall address as part of my effort to explain what EDGE is and the principles upon which it is based. First, you describe how TAFE certificates and diplomas in graphic design in Australia are classified in EDGE. You also ask about the resources on which the EDGE entry is based. Finally, you articulate concerns about the methodology used by EDGE.

EDGE is designed to provide basic key information sought by practitioners in the field of international credential evaluation regarding educational placement in the United States. These practitioners may be based at higher education institutions, at professional licensing jurisdictions, or at private credential evaluation agencies. One of the most significant users of EDGE is the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

EDGE enables admissions officers at U.S. colleges and universities to properly place accepted students whose prior education was at non-U.S. institutions. For example, should the student be placed at the secondary or at the postsecondary level? Has she met the educational qualifications required for graduate study? Has the individual earned a credential comparable to a first-professional degree in the field in the United States? EDGE attempts to answer these questions.

As EDGE users became more numerous and diverse, more information was required, and new credentials had to be added. Simple educational benchmarks were not enough: what was needed was recommended equivalencies for a variety of credentials that database users might encounter. Even as technical, vocational, and professional credentials have been added to the various EDGE profiles, the formatting and presentation of those credentials have remained consistent. Placement advice is predicated on entry-level qualifications, on the duration and nature of the program under review, and on what the credential qualifies its bearer for “in country.” For example, the three-year Ontario bachelor’s degree does not lead to admission to Ontario master’s programs, so it is not considered comparable to a U.S. bachelor’s degree. These are the kinds of issues we seek to address and resolve in EDGE.

When considering vocational and technical qualifications, we are interested in the amount of formal education required for entry into that particular qualification. When the credential is awarded at age sixteen (and therefore assumed to represent the end of compulsory education) in a particular country, it is not considered comparable to completion of postsecondary education in the United States because it does not require completion of the upper secondary program (U.S. grades 11 and 12). Consequently, TAFE qualifications (currently referred to as Vocational Education and Training—or VET—qualifications, with TAFE representing only government-sponsored VET programs) that do not require completion of year twelve in Australia cannot, by our definition, be posited at the postsecondary level or be considered worthy of the awarding of credit for a postsecondary degree. Postsecondary means educational training at a level beyond the secondary level because one is expected to have completed secondary education (represented by the appropriate upper secondary-level leaving credential) before entering such a program.

Our sources for the Australia entry were educational guides put out by the International Association of Universities (IAU), the NOOSR Guides from Australia (which correlate non-Australian credentials with those awarded in Australia), and Australia: Education and Training (2004), an AACRAO publication by Ed Devlin.

If USCIS needs to determine whether a diploma awarded abroad is comparable to a U.S. bachelor’s degree for the purpose of visa adjudication, then the information available to it in EDGE needs to verify:

- the entry level required for that credential;
- the typical time required to complete the credential (i.e., time to degree);
- the definition of the credential; and
- what the credential leads to.

On the basis of this information, EDGE must establish and approve a placement recommendation—that is, how the credential should be evaluated.

Your questions about TAFE qualifications pertain to the levels at which they are offered in Australia (grades 11 and 12); what the award of the credentials leads to in Australia; and the qualifications for entering the TAFE program. In short, the entry levels for TAFE certificates and diplomas are not the same as those for Australian universities; neither do they align with the requirements to begin university study in the United States. These facts clearly influenced the placement recommendation we developed and approved.
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We appreciate your bringing your concerns to our attention. Again, thank you for your query, your thoughts, and your perusal of the Australian profile in EDGE.

About the Author

ROBERT WATKINS is Assistant Director of Admissions at the University of Texas at Austin and serves on the EDGE Admin Group. Watkins also serves on AACRAO’s Board of Directors as Vice President for International Education.

The Electronic Database for Global Education (EDGE) is an AACRAO project designed to provide contemporary and ongoing information and standards for the evaluation of foreign credentials for applicants seeking to be admitted to educational institutions in the United States. EDGE is also an effective tool in the evaluation and placement for individuals presenting foreign credentials for visa screening, professional licensure, and immigration attorneys.
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