

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 13, 2017

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Effort to Scale Comprehensive Learner Records, The College System of Tennessee to Implement Competency Based Program

Lumina Foundation awards \$1.2M to further Comprehensive Learner Record model

Washington, DC - Lumina Foundation has awarded a \$1.2 million grant to the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) and NASPA: Association of Student Affairs Professionals, to continue their work on the development and adoption of comprehensive student records (CSRs) in American higher education. The grant, which spans approximately 18 months, builds upon a prior grant that developed models for these new types of student records.

“Interest in documenting learning in new ways has grown rapidly in the short time AACRAO and NASPA have partnered with Lumina on this work,” said AACRAO Executive Director Mike Reilly. “The new grant allows us to take what we learned in our initial phase and further accelerate the adoption of Comprehensive Learner Records across a broader range of institutions.”

This next round of work will focus on the development and implementation of a single learner record concept across a broad representation of American colleges and universities. Utilizing new technology and data standards, institutions can now create a digital record that is accessible not just to the institution, but also to the student, in real time. CLR’s move beyond the traditional transcript by providing information on the learning outcomes or competencies gained by the learner. These new records also provide a fuller picture of what the student knows and can do by documenting all learning, regardless of where it occurred. By validating learning from activities outside the classroom, students are able to demonstrate their ability to apply their knowledge and skills in real world settings.

“There is significant evidence that creating connections between a student’s learning in broad collegiate experiences and the classroom is a critical component to preparing students for a meaningful and successful career,” said Kevin Kruger, president of NASPA. “This grant will make important progress in scaling innovations in the Comprehensive Learner Record across a wide range of institutions.”

AACRAO and NASPA will assist as many as 150 institutions to develop these new records and will target work with systems and networks of institutions. Resources will also become available for any campus that wishes to create a Comprehensive Learner Record through the development of a toolkit, which includes a readiness audit, and will be made available through regional workshops as well as association meetings.

The College System of Tennessee will work with AACRAO and NASPA to implement CLRs across all their colleges and to work on the articulation of competencies and learning outcomes between their institutions and with state universities as students seek to transfer.

“The TBR System is excited to be selected to participate in the next phase of the Comprehensive Student Record project with AACRAO and NASPA,” said Heidi Leming, interim vice chancellor for Student Success at the Tennessee Board of Regents. “This project builds upon Tennessee’s existing high impact practices by examining how we articulate the competencies students gain in curricular and co-curricular activities to transfer institutions as well as employers. As a System, we will engage the 40 TBR institutions and public postsecondary universities in this collaborative project.”

Additionally, the Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN) will partner with AACRAO and NASPA to facilitate one of their annual Collaboratory projects. The goal of C-BEN Collaboratory projects are to resolve issues facing the growth of competency-based education and publish guidance to the field. Further networks will be identified and will target institutions that are engaged in student learning initiatives that focus on eliminating equity gaps in completion, such as community colleges working on guided pathways, minority-serving institutions (MSIs), institutions serving active military and veterans, and adult learners.

Increasingly, students are asked to demonstrate that they have skills that include an array of problem-solving, communication, leadership, and group dynamics skills that are critical to success in employment settings. “Lumina Foundation is excited to support this initiative that validates all learning, regardless of where it occurred,” said Amber Garrison Duncan from Lumina Foundation. “By creating a comprehensive record, there is a more accurate reflection of a learner’s achievements and skill level as they prepare to use their credentials to gain employment or further education.”

To learn more about previous work done on Comprehensive Learner Records, visit:

<https://www.luminafoundation.org/csr2025>

<http://www.aacrao.org/resources/record>

AACRAO is a non-profit, voluntary, professional association of more than 11,000 higher education professionals representing approximately 2,600 institutions in more than 40 countries. Its commitment to the professional development of its members includes best practice guidance on admissions strategies to meet institutional diversity objectives, delivery of academic programs in innovative ways to meet the needs of a changing student body, and exemplary approaches to student retention and completion.

NASPA is the leading association for the advancement, health, and sustainability of the student affairs profession. Our work provides high-quality professional development, advocacy, and research for 15,000 members in all 50 states, 25 countries, and 8 U.S. territories.

Lumina Foundation is an independent, private foundation in Indianapolis that is committed to making opportunities for learning beyond high school available to all. Lumina envisions a system that is easy to navigate, delivers fair results, and meets the nation's need for talent through a broad range of credentials. The Foundation's goal is to prepare people for informed citizenship and for success in a global economy.

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