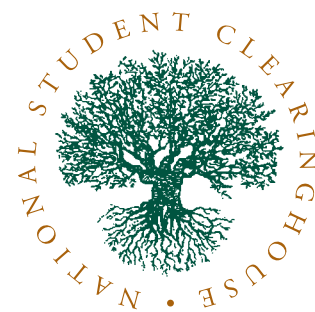


THE CLEARINGHOUSE RECORD

SPRING 2004

www.studentclearinghouse.org

703.742.7791



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Write for *The Record*

If you or a colleague is interested in submitting an article for publication in *The Record*, contact Kathleen Dugan at 703-742-4208.

Transcript Ordering Pilot a Success

Pilot Participants Help Shape New Online Service

Each year, institutions fulfill millions of transcript requests. Unfortunately, at many schools this is still a largely manual process, an unpleasant surprise for Web savvy students and alumni who have grown used to 24/7 convenience. Developing or upgrading online transcript systems is simply not an option for institutions dealing with serious budget and resource constraints.

Now they don't have to. The pilot test of our newest service, Transcript Ordering, has been successfully completed. The service is now available to all our institutional members at no cost. Through Transcript Ordering, you can enable your students and alumni to order official transcripts via our secure Web site.

Logical Extension of Existing Services

The suggestion that the Clearinghouse offer transcript ordering originated in the Clearinghouse Advisory Committee (CAC). The committee provides the Clearinghouse with guidance on our service offerings, including new areas where we should focus our resources. In late 2002, the CAC recommended that we explore offering online transcript ordering since our Web-based verification services already use many of the required components.

The Clearinghouse worked with our CAC to define requirements and created a prototype, which was revised based on committee input. As development progressed, we invited institutions widely recognized as technology and business process innovators to participate in a pilot. This gave us real world feedback on all facets of the service, including implementation, design, usability, data exchange and more. Pilot participants included the University of Iowa, the University of South Carolina and Bradley University, among others.

Resolves Existing Ordering Inefficiencies

The University of Iowa (UI) already allows its students to order transcripts online through its Iowa Student Information Services (ISIS) site, but its capabilities are limited. Orders can only be billed to a university account, credit card



UI and USC process 50,000 transcripts each year; Bradley processes 15,000. Transcript Ordering scales to each institution's needs.

purchases are not allowed. Subsequently, the registrar's office had planned to upgrade the application. The project was postponed, however, when UI moved forward with plans to replace its 35-year-old legacy system. The offer to participate in the pilot came at an opportune time. "With Transcript Ordering, we saw an opportunity to do something we already wanted to do without investing a lot of time and money," said Thomas Thrums, UI's associate registrar for systems.

Similarly, students at the University of South Carolina (USC) who order transcripts online through its Visual Information Processing (VIP) system face limitations with its service. Transcripts can only be sent to the student or a list of preapproved in-state schools and only one recipient can be entered per order. If a student wants to send transcripts to multiple recipients, he or she must create multiple orders. Each order is charged to the student's credit card separately. "We're limited in our ability to service our students, who don't know why we only allow them to order transcripts online for in-state schools," said Gail Stephens, senior associate registrar at USC, "We simply don't have the tools or person power to develop the application further."

Both UI and USC, which have enrollments of more than 29,000 and 38,000 respectively, process 50,000 transcript requests each year. Automating transcript ordering will enable both

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Services You Need. People You Trust.

“With Transcript Ordering, we saw an opportunity to do something we already wanted to do without investing a lot of time and money.”
– Thomas Thrams, Assoc. Registrar for Systems, Univ. of Iowa

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schools to improve service and stretch already thin staff resources. Said Thrams, “Like a lot of other universities, our staff is getting smaller, but our responsibilities are getting bigger.”

Greater service and efficiency is also a concern for smaller institutions. Another pilot participant, Bradley University, a private institution in Peoria, Illinois, has over 6,000 students. It processes nearly 15,000 transcripts annually, using an internally-developed tracking application to log and sort requests. Orders, however, can only be placed in person or by mail. “Our most outstanding objective ... is providing better service to our students and former students, especially those who have gone on to attend other schools,” said registrar Kathie Beaty, “If those schools also participate in Transcript Ordering, it will provide an easy way for these students to obtain transcripts from a number of schools at once.”

Designed from the Institution’s Perspective

During the pilot, the Clearinghouse worked with participants to refine the service. “As with our other services,” said Jeff Tanner, the Clearinghouse vice president of Higher Education Development, “we designed Transcript Ordering from the institution’s perspective. It helps that many of our employees are former registrars. In addition, we relied on our pilot participants to suggest enhancements that would benefit all our institutional members.”

One enhancement developed as a result of school feedback was exception handling, such as financial holds. The Clearinghouse developed ways to proactively address exceptions and lessen the likelihood that users would require customer service. For example, when an institution places a financial hold on a transcript order, Transcript Ordering immediately notifies the user via email. The email provides the contact information for the appropriate department so the user can settle his or her account. Once the hold is removed and the order is fulfilled, Transcript Ordering emails a confirmation and charges the user’s credit card. “We appreciated the opportunity to influence the design and future offerings of the product,” said Thrams.

Leveraging Technology Standards

Transcript Ordering utilizes industry standards, such as EDI and PESC XML, to simplify its seamless integration into the institution’s student information system. Transmissions between the institution and the Clearinghouse are encrypted, providing a secure environment for data exchanges. Orders can be fed directly into an institution’s SIS transcript module, which eliminates the need for data entry and reduces errors.

USC, for example, has three data specialists who input transcript requests into its database. According to associate registrar Jennifer Burr, who oversees transcript processing and fulfillment, USC

expects Transcript Ordering to “eliminate data entry processing and fee collection. It will provide more self-service functionality, which everyone wants, and make students and alumni more responsible for their own orders. This will free us up to work with problem situations and to serve our students more effectively.”

For the hundreds of institutions already using EDI, adding the interfaces needed to support Transcript Ordering requires significantly less IT support than building the interface from scratch. In addition, electronic signatures are supported enabling institutions to offer paperless transcript ordering. USC was the first institution in the nation to integrate Transcript Ordering using SPEEDE and is now able to receive requests and send transcripts electronically.

Transcript Order for Hometown University

Remove	Recipient	Add	Processing Option	Transcript Type	Delivery Method	Quantity	Total Fee
<input type="checkbox"/>	Harvard University		Now	Undergraduate - \$0	Mail - \$0	2 copies - \$8	\$ 8.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stanford University		Now	Graduate - \$5	Hold for Pickup - \$0	4 copies - \$14	\$ 19.00
Total Fees for This Order:							\$ 27.00

Buttons: Cancel Order, Recalculate, Next

Order Status

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
 Order #: 42008
 Order Date: 03/04/2004 2:51 PM ET

Recipient	Status	Order History
Me	Pending Written Release Form, Download Release Form	Order Placed 03/04/2004 2:50 PM ET

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
 Order #: 42009
 Order Date: 03/04/2004 2:53 PM ET

Recipient	Status	Order History
Hold for pickup	Transcript sent via Hold for Pickup on 03/05/2004 10:21 am ET	Release Form Rec'd 03/04/2004 3:14 pm ET Order Sent to School 03/04/2004 11:02 pm ET Transcript Sent 03/05/2004 10:21 am ET

(above) Users can order as many transcripts as they want for multiple recipients and schools in a single order.

(right) Order status can be tracked online.

State-of-the-Art Web Design

Transcript Ordering’s modern design provides features that Web users have come to expect in e-commerce sites. “Users like the real-time stamp on their requests, getting order status emails and being able to track their orders online,” noted Tanner.

In addition, the Clearinghouse can automatically generate each institution’s customized Web screens based on a short interview process, resulting in very fast startup times. “We’ve had institutions go from demo to acceptance testing in as little as two days,” reported Kathleen Wimbrough, the Clearinghouse customer service supervisor who coordinates Transcript Ordering implementation.

Free to Participating Institutions

According to Tanner, “Transcript Ordering is a great example of how the Clearinghouse works with its advisory committee and member institutions to identify, define and deliver services that colleges and universities need.” Its development and deployment is considered a model for future Clearinghouse services.

To arrange a demo or learn more, contact your regional director or **703-742-7791** (or email service@studentclearinghouse.org).

Clearinghouse 101 Hits the Road

Live Learning Sessions Help Institutions Maximize Benefits of Clearinghouse Services

Although many colleges and universities are long-time Clearinghouse participants, they may not be fully utilizing the many benefits and services we provide.

Attrition and turnover can cause institutions to lose experienced personnel, who are familiar with the Clearinghouse. New staffers often have difficulty understanding how and why their institutions report to the Clearinghouse. In addition, it can be difficult for busy college administrators to stay current with our latest services, like DegreeVerify and Transcript Ordering, which can help reduce their office's workload.

Sound familiar? If so, don't worry, help is on the way! The Clearinghouse is launching a series of informational roundtables, called Clearinghouse 101, to help meet our member schools' need for more training and support.

Why You Should Attend

Clearinghouse 101 offers the chance for staff members from your school's records and registration, financial aid, institutional research, TRIO program and other offices to learn how to save time and improve efficiency using our services. It's also an excellent opportunity to network and exchange insights with your peers.

Each session starts with a brief review of our enrollment reporting process. We then turn the meeting over to attendees, giving you an opportunity to ask questions and share best practices. All topics are fair game, including our SSCR and deferment form process, the Clearinghouse secure Web site, our institutional research tools, and much more.

Our half-day event, which includes a working lunch, is designed to be both informative and fun. Best of all, Clearinghouse 101 is offered free of charge to our college and university participants.

First 101 Session Debuts

The first Clearinghouse 101 was recently held in Baltimore, and was attended by staff from several area institutions, including the University of Baltimore, Baltimore City Community College, Johns Hopkins University and Bowie State. "Most participants, even those who work regularly with the Clearinghouse, were unaware of how many of our services their institution used," said Darrell Pierre, the Clearinghouse manager responsible for the 101 workshops, "or the full scope of what we offer and how we can help make their daily jobs easier, saving them time and reducing problems with students."

One thing that attendees learned, for instance, was that the Clearinghouse can process all of their deferment forms. Other topics covered were student loan reporting, federal reporting requirements, scheduling and security. "We covered all the topics attendees were interested in," added Pierre, "Everyone's questions were answered, even questions they didn't have when they came in." The workshop was "extremely informative," said Yvonne Gobble, transcript records coordinator at Johns Hopkins University, "My work load will be reduced because of this seminar."

When is Clearinghouse 101 Coming to My Area?

We plan to hold Clearinghouse 101 sessions throughout the country. Local institutions will receive invitations in advance for upcoming Clearinghouse 101 sessions in their area. You, your supervisors and other members of your staff are encouraged to attend. We expect demand to be high, so be sure to R.S.V.P. as soon as possible.

If you would like to make your area the next stop for Clearinghouse 101, email service@studentclearinghouse.org.



Work for the Clearinghouse

The Clearinghouse is always looking for people who have college administration experience. If you are moving to the metropolitan Washington area and are interested in a position with the Clearinghouse, drop us an email at jobs@studentclearinghouse.org.

Clearinghouse Board Adds Three Members

The Clearinghouse welcomed three new members to its board of directors last fall: David Yeh, Doris Grose and Elise Nowikowski.

David Yeh has been the assistant vice president of Academic Support Services at Cornell University since 1987. He is responsible for developing the University's comprehensive academic support services organization.

Doris Grose is senior vice president of Wachovia Corporation and president of its student lending division, Educaid. Educaid is one of the nation's top 10 student loan providers.

Elise Nowikowski is Director of Policy at NelNet. Nelnet is one of the top three education finance companies in the US.

Clearinghouse Launches “Successful Outcomes”

New Program Helps High Schools Measure The College Success of Their Graduates

More high school graduates than ever are enrolling in college. Unfortunately, many of these students are ill-prepared to begin post-secondary education. In fact, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), over half of all students entering college take one or more remedial courses, and those who do are less likely to graduate. These kinds of statistics have increased the pressure on high schools to provide educational programs that lead to college enrollment and success.

For the first time, through the Clearinghouse’s new Successful Outcomes program, high school districts can learn if their graduates have gone on to college and whether or not they graduated. This enables them to accurately measure the college success of their students and use the information to improve their graduates’ transition to college.

According to the NCES, over half of all students entering college take remedial courses.

Successful Outcomes combines two of the Clearinghouse’s most popular services: EnrollmentSearch, our educational research service, and DiplomaVerify, a variation of our online college verification service, DegreeVerify.

How Successful Outcomes Works

Each year, participating high school districts submit an electronic file containing information on their diploma recipients. The Clearinghouse matches the district’s information against its nationwide database and returns detailed records of their graduates’ post-secondary enrollment. School officials can link these records to the district’s student information system, enabling them to analyze their graduates by GPA, class rank, SAT/ACT scores, demographics or any other relevant variable. Once their data has been integrated into the Clearinghouse’s secure Web site, the district can begin referring organizations seeking verification of their former students’ diplomas to the Clearinghouse Web site.



A Successful Outcomes pilot is underway. The full release is scheduled for fall 2004.

Pilot Underway

Several high school districts are participating in a Successful Outcomes pilot, including Chesterfield County Schools, VA; Jordan School District, UT; Knox County Schools, TN; and St. Paul Public Schools, MN. A full release is scheduled for fall 2004. Said Kent Pekel, executive director, Strategic Planning & Implementation for St. Paul Public Schools, “For the first time, through Successful Outcomes, we have the real world information we need to determine how well our high schools are preparing students in our district for college.”

More information about Successful Outcomes is available at www.studentclearinghouse.org/highschools. If you have colleagues at your local high school districts who you believe would be interested in participating in Successful Outcomes, please contact the Clearinghouse at **703-742-7791** or **service@studentclearinghouse.org**.

The Clearinghouse Advisory Committee

Current Members

Richard Backes, Sr., Associate Registrar, Washington State University

Anita Cotter, Associate Registrar, University of California, Los Angeles

Joseph DeCristoforo, AVP and University Registrar, University of Texas-San Antonio

Suzanne Dmytrenko, Registrar, San Francisco State University

Peter Fong, Dean of Admissions & Records, Fullerton College

Kathryn Forbes, Associate Registrar, University of New Hampshire

William R. Haid, Executive Director Enrollment Services, Colorado State University

Ron Pennington, Director of Institutional Research, St. Charles County Community College

Patrick Perry, Dean of Information Systems, California Community College System

Brenda Selman, Registrar, University of Missouri-Columbia

Gail Stephens, Senior Associate Registrar, University of South Carolina-Columbia

J. James Wager, Asst. Vice Provost & Registrar, Pennsylvania State University

W. W. “Tim” Washburn, AVP of Enrollment Services, University of Washington

David S. Yeh (Chairman), AVP & University Registrar, Cornell University

Past Members

Robert Dunning, former Registrar, Sam Houston State University

Gary Gibson, Registrar, Vanderbilt University

David Guzman, Registrar, Washington State University

Carolyn Parham, Registrar, University of South Alabama

Jeff Tanner, former Assoc. Dean of Admissions & Records, Brigham Young University

Jan Williamson, Registrar, Indiana University Southeast

Richard L. Yount, Registrar, University of North Carolina-Charlotte

Student Self-Service Cuts Office Visits By 20% or More

Survey Affirms Service's Time-Saving Benefits

According to our recent survey of registrars at Student Self-Service schools, helping students help themselves has paid off. Most of those surveyed (58%) said Student Self-Service had reduced the number of student visits to their office. Eighty percent of those who noted a decrease said that student office visits had been reduced by at least 20%. (You can see the breakdown in reported reductions in the graph on the right).

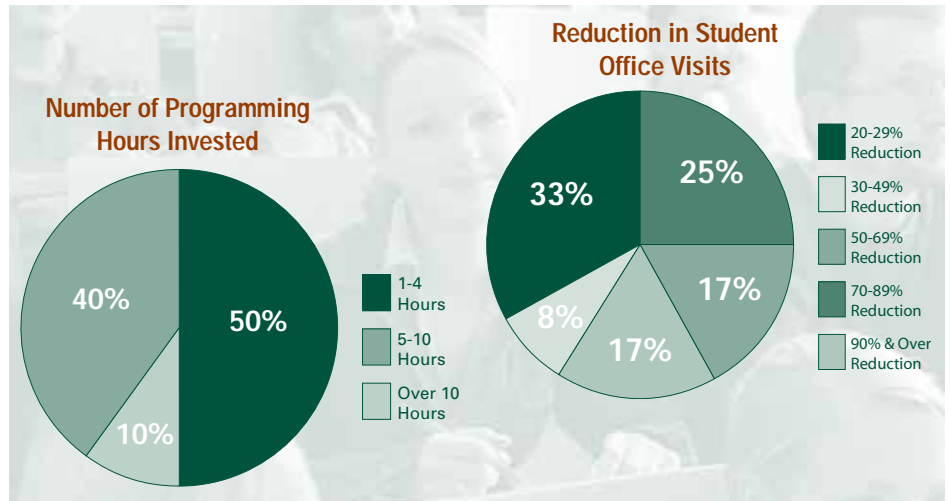
Student Self-Service is a free service provided to DegreeVerify institutions that use the Clearinghouse as their sole verification agent, and refer all verification requests to us (i.e., degree, enrollment, ...). It enables students to print enrollment certificates, view their enrollment histories, check the deferments and enrollment verifications submitted on their behalf, and link to real-time information on their student loans — all at no charge.

Student Promotion Works

The survey showed that communicating the availability of Student Self-Service to students was a key factor in maximizing its time-saving benefits. The most popular method (88%) was telling students about Student Self-Service when they visited the registrar office. Most schools also put a message of their Web site, either on the registrar page (61%), secure student area (58%), or both (35%).

Other ways that schools publicize the service include:

- Emailing students, faculty and staff
- Including it in student orientation
- Promoting it in class schedules and the student newspaper
- Adding a message to the registrar voice-mail
- Distributing printed information, such as brochures or pamphlets



For most respondents, Student Self-Service's minimal programming requirements yielded major times savings.

Easy to Implement

Student Self-Service was designed for easy integration with a school's existing student web portal, and requires relatively little programming time to implement. Of those who responded, 50% said that programming took four hours or less; 90% completed programming in 10 hours or less. Schools can opt to pass the student's Social Security number to us, which requires more programming, or simply link to our self-service site and require students to login. Two-thirds (67%) of those who responded opted to pass the SSN; 33% chose not to pass the SSN, allowing them to implement Student Self-Service in five hours or less.

96% of respondents would recommend Student Self-Service.

We also asked schools if the certification forms produced by Student Self-Service were ever disputed by the entity requesting the verification. More than two-thirds (68%) of those who responded told us that the forms are not disputed very often; 32% said they were sometimes disputed. Most schools resolve the dispute with a phone call or letter to the requestor.

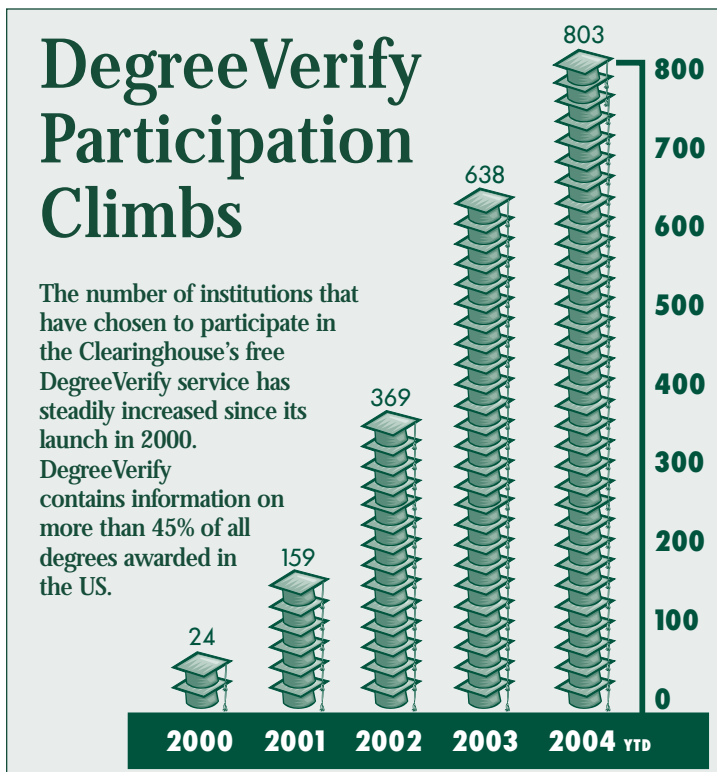
Popular With Students

According to the schools we surveyed, students appreciate the convenience of the service and its ease-of-use. One respondent told us that their students "are really surprised at how easy and quick the process is." Another reported that their students "love it."

Student Self-Service's popularity is reflected in the growth of its usage. In January 2004, the site received nearly 76,000 hits, more than twice the volume as at the same time just one year ago. It's no surprise that virtually all respondents (96%) said that they would recommend Student Self-Service to other institutions. Among the comments we received were:

- "Excellent self-service tool for the students!!!"
- "Another great service to offer our students."
- "Great time saver for companies, students and our office."

To learn how your institution can benefit from free Student Self-Service, contact the Clearinghouse at **703-742-7791** or service@studentclearinghouse.org.



Educational Systems Turning to Clearinghouse

As budgets tighten and enrollment numbers rise, state and other educational systems are employing multiple Clearinghouse services system wide. This enables them to maximize the time- and cost-saving benefits of our services.

The first statewide educational system to utilize all of the Clearinghouse's services was the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN). UCCSN, Nevada's only system of higher education, educates 93,000 students a year through its eight institutions. As part of its multi-service agreement with the Clearinghouse, each UCCSN institution is automatically entitled to participate in DegreeVerify, EnrollmentVerify and EnrollmentSearch.

The Connecticut Community College System (CCC) and the Oregon University System (OUS) have also opted to partici-

pate in DegreeVerify, EnrollmentVerify and EnrollmentSearch. Over 45,000 students attend CCC's 12 two-year colleges; OUS has 78,000 enrolled students across its seven institutions. The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education subscribes to EnrollmentSearch for its 29 public institutions, including the University of Massachusetts.

More educational systems are deploying Clearinghouse services system wide.

According to Marc Herzog, chancellor at CCC, "Participating in the Clearinghouse as a system allows us to maintain the service quality we provide for our students while also saving time and cost for our colleges."

In addition to statewide systems, the

Clearinghouse is at work at other types of educational systems. The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD), for example, uses DegreeVerify at its nine campuses. The annual enrollment at LACCD exceeds 130,000 students, making it one of the nation's largest community college districts. "Millions of students have graduated from Los Angeles Community College District campuses, requiring substantial administrative resources to fulfill degree verifications," said John Clerx, associate vice chancellor of Instructional and Student Support Services, "Participating in DegreeVerify enables us to streamline our verification process and better serve our alumni."

If you would like to learn how the Clearinghouse can help your educational system, contact us at **703-742-7791** or **service@studentclearinghouse.org**.

**See You at
AACRAO 2004!**

Make time to visit the Clearinghouse booth #221. We can answer all your questions on how you can save time and money with the Clearinghouse's free services, including our new online Transcript Ordering. (Don't forget to register to win a portable DVD!)

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