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Tip of the Week

TG publishes a weekly e-newsletter, *AIEmail*, through its public service Web site, *Adventures In Education*. *AIEmail* is a great source for information on events, news, advice, deadline reminders, and more related to higher education and financial aid. Offer it as part of your outreach efforts to prospective students and parents. They can subscribe to it at www.aie.org/AIEmail/index.cfm.

Federal updates

Closed school corner

The following table provides a list of newly reported school closures and error corrections from the Postsecondary Educational Participants System (PEPS) and from the March 2008 *Closed School Monthly Report* supplied by the Department of Education.

Newly reported closures

OPE School ID	School Name and Address	Unofficial Closure Date	ED's Official Closure Date
02188600	Austin Business College 2101 S. IH-35, Ste. 300, Austin, TX 78741-3854	N/A	12/28/2007

ED announces forthcoming increase in Stafford aggregate for health professions students

Some of our readers may remember that we alluded to a possible increase in Stafford aggregate loan limits for certain students in *Shoptalk Online* edition [438](#). Just this week, ED sent a letter to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), stating that it plans to increase the aggregate Stafford loan limit for health professional students. The current limit of \$189,125 — which has been unchanged for over a decade — will be increased to \$224,000.

More information

ED is expected to issue formal, detailed guidance in a *Dear Colleague Letter* in the near future. *Shoptalk Online* will keep readers informed.

Third loan issues Neg Reg session concludes, fourth session planned

After making considerable progress toward reaching agreement on agenda items, the student loan issues team wrapped up its third negotiated rulemaking (a.k.a. Neg Reg) session on March 6. However, citing several outstanding issues that have not yet been fully explored, ED announced that a fourth session will be held on April 14-15. Those outstanding issues include the definition of a not-for-profit holder, various definitions relevant to the new public service loan forgiveness program, and some unresolved topics regarding the new income based repayment (IBR) plan.

The following developments during the third session are of particular interest:

- ED announced that it plans to eliminate the current debt burden test for the economic hardship deferment effective July 1, 2009, to coincide with the implementation of IBR. The debt burden test was removed by the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA), but ED has reserved the right to retain it in regulations temporarily, to provide assistance to borrowers who will likely qualify for IBR.
- Direct Grad PLUS loans will be added to the types of eligible loans (along with Direct Stafford and Direct Consolidation loans) for the public service loan forgiveness program.

- A National Guard member called to active state or national duty will be eligible for a mandatory forbearance for the period between the end of his or her grace period (or in-school deferment) and the beginning of his or her eligibility for a military deferment.

More information

Following the fourth Neg Reg meeting, ED will publish proposed regulations in the *Federal Register* with a request for public review and comment. *Shoptalk Online* will keep you informed as more information becomes available.

Latest volume of the 2008-09 FSA Handbook now online

ED has released volume 6, Managing Campus-Based Programs, of the new 2008-09 *Federal Student Aid Handbook* (FSA Handbook). In total, five volumes of the latest FSA Handbook have been released, including:

- The Application and Verification Guide
- Volume 1: Student Eligibility
- Volume 2: School Eligibility and Operations
- Volume 5: Overawards, Overpayments, & Withdrawal Calculations
- Volume 6: Managing Campus-Based Programs

The current volumes are available on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/resources/fsa_handbook.cfm. Other volumes will be posted as they are released. Once all the volumes of the 2008-09 FSA Handbook have been released, TG will provide a single downloadable file encompassing all of the volumes. Watch future editions of *Shoptalk Online* for details.

TG updates

Focus on success: TG's system integration with Weatherford College

When a school or lender begins using TG's products, TG devotes a team of technology and training specialists to help them. Their job is to make the best fit between systems, train staff on using the software, and maintain close communication so that questions get a fast response. This team makes it their priority to provide effective service so that schools get the best performance from TG's products. Just one example is TG's recent system integration with Weatherford College.

Weatherford College is a two-year public college, located about 30 miles west of Fort Worth in Weatherford, Texas. The school has an enrollment of about 5,000 students, and, last year, decided to begin offering student loans through the FFELP.

“We felt that the federal guaranteed student loan option was in the best interest of the student, so we pursued a return to the program,” said Terri Thompson, student loan officer in the financial aid office at Weatherford College.

TG account executive, June Perry, helped Terri and Weatherford as the college made the transition, answering questions about eligibility and offering general information on the FFELP. June was also a key communication point when Weatherford chose to use TG to guarantee its FFELP loans.

One-on-one consulting

As Weatherford laid the foundation for its FFELP loan processing operations, June provided insight on various loan issues; however, she didn’t work alone. June enlisted the help of Sean Goggin, a member of TG’s business integration team. The business integration team provides services for software implementation, training, and contract support for TG’s products.

Sean and June visited Weatherford to gather some of the fundamentals of Weatherford’s loan processing needs and to create a plan to meet those needs.

“Our meetings with Sean and June gave us confidence that we could really do this whole thing,” said Terri. “I am so grateful that June had great ideas.”

Sean and June focused on Weatherford’s technology requirements and loan services, and introduced Terri to TG’s extensive suite of application and loan management tools, including AdvanTG Web™, TG Loans By Web™, PLUS Credit Connection™, and TG’s EFT process.

The integration plan worked well, according to Terri. “We were up and running by August,” said Terri. “We really had a very smooth ride for the fall semester.”

A focus on preparation and follow-through

To introduce a school to using TG’s products, TG follows a well-organized process built around three general practices. First, preparation is key. TG holds extensive dialogue with customers so that no technical detail is missed and that systems work together as seamlessly as possible. Secondly, testing prior to moving a system into production is essential. TG devotes a team of testers to the task — specialists who make sure that systems perform well and that electronic processing meets industry standards such as CommonLine.

Finally, TG trains a school’s staff in using its systems and then follows up with the customer to make sure the product meets expectations. After this initial “warranty” phase, TG’s product support team takes over, providing answers by phone or e-mail when customers need help.

For Terri, the experience has been a positive one, marked by a careful attention to Weatherford’s needs as a new school in the FFELP. “From the training in policy to my on-site trainer, June, to Sean, who made sure my system and I got along —

every person at TG was pleasant, available and so helpful through the entire process, and they continue to be so even now," said Terri.

As for whether TG's products have been useful and worked well, Terri is clear. "AdvanTG Web is so easy to use that I almost never have a huge backlog of work unless I have been gone! The ease of the electronic system has allowed me to pursue what we at Weatherford consider an important, integral part of our strategy to succeed — that is, in-person entrance counseling with all students prior to allowing participation in the program, and then, on the back-end, in-person exit interviews," said Terri.

Learn more

If you'd like to learn more about TG's products and services, contact your TG account executive at (800) 252-9743, or send an e-mail message to relationship.management@tgslc.org.

With TG support, Schreiner University's Student Retention and Success Program targets 'first-time, full-time' students



Like many small liberal arts colleges, Schreiner University has seen its student population shift over the last several decades as more 'first-time, full-time' students go to college. Located in the Hill Country of Central Texas, about 62 miles northwest of San Antonio, Schreiner has a diverse student body drawn mainly from its rural setting, with over 40 percent first-generation and almost 40 percent Pell-eligible. The school estimates that its retention figure for first-generation students is 12 percent below the national average. Administrators were concerned enough to establish an Office of Student Retention and Student Success in 2005.

The Office's mandate is simple — Help first-generation students maintain a good GPA and persist through to their degree. Schreiner's approach, however, is varied, offering scholarships to deserving students and organizing a tutoring program centered on a set of core classes, including English, history, and college algebra. TG provides direct support for both initiatives with a grant from its Public Benefit Grant Program.

Minimizing debt and making the grade

Schreiner identifies at-risk students based on factors such as family income and ethnicity. These students then become the focus of a two-part strategy for keeping them on track to a diploma. To maintain good academic performance, the university offers an incentive in the form of scholarships. At-risk students who maintain a certain GPA from freshman to sophomore to junior year are eligible. The

scholarship is a great help in defraying educational expenses, especially for those students with limited financial resources.

According to Gordon Findlay, retention coordinator for the program, Schreiner also invites students to take advantage of Supplemental Instruction, or tutoring, in the core classes for the Student Retention and Student Success program.

"Sessions are held twice weekly in the evenings in a classroom setting," said Gordon. "Leaders for each session help students to think about the lectures they hear and the books they read, and then put it all together into some kind of perspective so they can learn the material more efficiently."

Tutoring leaders provide double-duty in furthering the goals of the program: They work one-on-one with students during a tutoring session. And they promote the program by attending core classes at least once a week to work with the instructor and class. "Faculty have been very supportive and without exception recommend tutoring to their students during class," said Gordon.

Spreading the word

The Office of Student Retention and Student Success serves as the hub of Schreiner's intervention efforts for at-risk students. The Office also communicates that program and its priorities to new or prospective students. Promotion like this generates interest and helps contribute to the program's long-term success.

"We developed a student distribution list by course and section," said Gordon. "We send information on the benefits of Supplemental Instruction to students through periodic e-mails. We also have produced bookmarks for core class textbooks, presentations to multiple groups, a parent's newsletter, a commuter's newsletter, and various flyers and posters."

Schreiner uses advertising in other ways. Gordon and his colleagues recruit tutors for the program by placing ads in the local newspaper or by picking from an applicant pool supplied by the university's human resources office. "We've also found tutors through some informal networking and by word of mouth," he said.

About TG's Public Benefit Award Program

To receive funds, organizations are required to submit proposals that address the issue of access to postsecondary education for low- to moderate-income students.

To learn more

If you'd like to learn more about TG's Public Benefit Grant Program, you'll find a description of its purpose and process on *TG Online* at www.tgslc.org/publicbenefit/index.cfm.

Meet Cal Abbott, TG risk manager and volunteer for *Mapping Your Future*™



At first glance, racing cars, managing investments, and enjoying grandchildren are interests that don't seem to have much in common.

Certainly most people would not guess Cal Abbott's hobby when they first meet him. As TG's investment manager and pension committee chairman, and *Mapping Your Future's* treasurer, Cal seems like the type to play golf in his spare time. But don't look for Cal on the golf course; look for him at a race track.

"Being born and raised in Detroit, I have always had a strong interest in automobiles and speed," said Cal. "Building hot rods is my current passion. My latest project is taking a 2005 Corvette involved in a rollover accident that damaged every body panel, repairing the frame, and installing a 1956 Corvette body on it. It is termed a modern classic because it will look old on the outside but have all current technology under the skin. Kind of like an automotive extreme makeover."

Design satisfaction

Cal's hobby and work life have two things in common: They show his attention to detail and taste for well-planned design. He currently manages investments at TG, provides financial analysis, and serves as the chairman of TG's pension committee. His job is to maintain the right balance between investment return and risk, whether for the corporate reserve or the employees' retirement portfolio.

"Other than helping people solve financial problems, I get the most satisfaction from designing new processes, models, or systems that allow the corporation to achieve financial success," said Cal.

Long history with TG and with *Mapping Your Future*

Cal joined TG as controller over 25 years ago from a private CPA firm. Through the years, he has filled numerous positions, including vice president of business development.

Cal began working closely with *Mapping Your Future* early in the development of the organization, providing financial advice, and serving as the organization's treasurer. His business and financial expertise has been very important to the success and financial stability of *Mapping Your Future* and to TG. In addition to serving as treasurer, Cal led the development of *Mapping Your Future's* balanced scorecard, establishing a system of tracking and measuring strategic priorities.

"I have always wanted to help *Mapping Your Future* because I believe in their cause," said Cal. He adds that the involvement also gives him an industry and national perspective when dealing with issues at the corporate or local level.

Outside of his hobby and work, Cal spends his spare time with his family and plans to share his love of cars with his two young grandchildren.

For more information

To learn more about *Mapping Your Future's* services for students, families, and schools, visit the Web site at www.mapping-your-future.org.

Tech Report

TG makes changes in the Lender Manifest submittal cut-off time

Because of recent system changes, TG's data reporting team has amended its 2008 schedule for reports to the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). The daily process for incoming Lender Manifest and Common Account Maintenance (CAM) files will begin at **3 a.m.** Return files will now be sent the same day.

The associated submittal dates have not changed. Therefore, in order for updates to be included in the submittal schedule (provided below), input files must be received by 3 a.m. This is a change to the previously published 10 a.m. deadline.

2008 NSLDS Submittal Schedule, amended

Lender Manifest or CAM data received by 3 a.m.	Data viewable on NSLDS
3/21/2008	3/24/2008
4/11/2008	4/14/2008
4/25/2008	4/28/2008
5/9/2008	5/12/2008
5/23/2008	5/27/2008*
6/13/2008	6/16/2008
6/27/2008	6/30/2008
7/11/2008	7/14/2008
7/25/2008	7/28/2008
8/8/2008	8/11/2008
8/22/2008	8/25/2008
9/12/2008	9/15/2008
9/26/2008	9/29/2008
10/10/2008	10/13/2008
10/24/2008	10/27/2008
11/7/2008	11/10/2008
11/21/2008	11/24/2008

Lender Manifest or CAM data received by 3 a.m.	Data viewable on NSLDS
12/12/2008	12/15/2008
12/24/2008**	12/29/2008

*Note that, due to the holiday, the data will be viewable on Tuesday instead of Monday.

**Keep in mind that, due to the holiday, lenders must have their updates in on Wednesday.

More information

For more information on TG's submittal schedule, contact TG's data reporting team at good.data@tgslc.org.

Trends and issues

Question of the week

Q.: After reading the Question of the Week in *Shoptalk Online* edition [445](#), I understand that the limit for paying minor, prior year charges with current year Title IV funds will be no more than \$200 under the new regulations. Does "prior year" mean semester, award year, or academic year; or can it be any of these?

A.: The new regulations [34 CFR 668.164(d)(2)] specify "prior award year charges" as the applicable period of time. Incidentally, "current charges" are defined on page 4-27 of the 2007-08 *Federal Student Aid Handbook* as "[c]harges assessed by the school for the current award year or the loan period for which the school certified or originated an FFEL or Direct Loan."

Do you have a question?

If you have a question that needs an answer, feel free to *Ask TG™*. *Ask TG* is TG's online query tool for borrowers, schools, and lenders. It includes a database of frequently asked questions about financial aid, student loan processing, and TG's products and services. To submit a question to *Ask TG*, visit tgslc.custhelp.com.

This, that, and the other

Many state universities seek a diverse student body, one that contributes to the school's reputation for attracting the best and brightest. More state universities are looking at ways to attract such students, even reducing the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition in order to bring good students in from across the country.

According to a *New York Times* article, schools are motivated partly by a desire to raise more money as states reduce support for their higher education programs. Some universities even target specific parts of the country — for example, neighboring states or adjacent communities across a state border. The University of Nebraska at Omaha will discount out-of-state tuition this fall to students from nearby Iowa counties. The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga last year began allowing most college juniors and seniors from Alabama and Georgia to pay in-state tuition plus just 25 percent of the higher, nonresident rate.

In several states, including Arkansas, Kentucky, and Missouri, public universities have tried to attract nonresidents by charging them lower tuition if they meet minimum scores on tests like the SAT or ACT.

Read the complete article on the topic at

www.nytimes.com/2008/03/08/education/08states.html?_r=1&st=cse&sq=colleges+reduce+out-of-state+tuition&scp=1&oref=slogin.



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To ask questions about *Shoptalk Online*, please contact Communications at (800) 252-9743, ext. 4732, or send an e-mail message to communications@tgsic.org.

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