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## Tip<sup>of</sup> the Week

If your May and June grads have problems making payments, they may need to consider deferment. TG offers a complete description of deferment, including a listing of eligibility criteria online at [www.tgslc.org/borrowers/deferment/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/borrowers/deferment/index.cfm).

## TG updates

### TG launches new lender survey product — List Assist<sup>SM</sup>

Students and parents face a maze of decisions when it comes to borrowing for higher education. A recommended or suggested lender list can be a valuable resource that helps them navigate at least one turn of that maze: choosing a lender.

Many schools and lenders recognize the value of a lender list, and more are looking for an easier way of sharing information to create a list. TG offers help with a new lender survey tool, List Assist<sup>SM</sup>.

List Assist provides an automated, online process for creating and managing surveys, or Requests For Information (RFI). Among other things, List Assist lets schools query lenders and compare information electronically; tailor surveys to focus on the needs of students; tabulate scores; and even print reports to evaluate lender responses. For lenders, it provides a convenient way for responding to RFIs and — for lenders registered with TG — serves as a tool for tracking and managing survey requests from multiple schools.

According to TG product manager Teresa Bobadilla, List Assist was designed to help streamline the lender selection process for both schools and lenders.

“When we began developing List Assist, several guides were available in the industry, documenting best practices for creating a list,” said Bobadilla. “But each school implemented its own methodology. Many schools felt at a loss as to where to start, especially if they did not have dedicated technical support staff to help.”

TG presented the idea of a Web-based RFI process to a variety of school groups. Their response was enthusiastic, according to Bobadilla. They liked a product that could potentially add efficiency to the survey process and cut work time, too.

TG’s List Assist was designed to be a flexible survey–creation tool, one that draws upon best practices shared at conferences or documented in guides. The product also comes with ready content, which schools can use or modify.

“List Assist jump-starts the process for creating a survey by providing a wide assortment of pre-set questions,” said Bobadilla. “This allows schools to focus on designing a survey that can gather information important to their students and families.”

### **Building an effective survey tool**

In this regard, Bobadilla and the List Assist project team had a little guidance from others in the financial aid industry. The team created an inventory list of lender survey questions and then requested feedback from industry colleagues on national school and lender focus groups, the Texas Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (TASFAA), and TG’s own Lender and School Advisory Committees.

The resulting library of assessment questions covers a wide variety of topics, including borrower benefits, electronic processing considerations, and default prevention services.

The project team also considered how a survey tool could help standardize questions so that lenders could more easily respond to multiple school surveys. As one example, TG’s research and analytical services team tested the wording of proposed questions for clarity and measurability. They worked to minimize possible confusion and made it easier for lenders to respond. Lenders that use List Assist can also download their responses for re-use with another survey.

According to Bobadilla, the resulting product helps to simplify the survey process. “List Assist provides an efficient tool for both schools and lenders as they communicate information and track surveys in progress.”

### **Product webinar**

TG will offer a webinar on List Assist on Wednesday, November 5, from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., CST. The webinar will profile the product’s features and highlight its key benefits for schools, lenders, and borrowers.

To register for this List Assist webinar, visit *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/training/webinars/webinars0811.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/training/webinars/webinars0811.cfm).

## More about List Assist

To view an online demo of List Assist, visit *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/products/index.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/products/index.cfm) and click "TG List Assist Demo" in the right column.

## TG and Council offer training tools to help financial aid professionals with entrance and exit counseling

Keeping up with regulatory changes can be a challenge. Take as an example loan counseling requirements, which have been modified several times over the last year, most recently with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). New regulations now permit lenders, servicers, and guarantors to perform in-person, school-required loan counseling sessions, but only under certain conditions: Schools must be in control of the session, and lenders are prohibited from promoting their products and/or services.

Schools are also responsible for ensuring that every borrower completes the required entrance and exit counseling sessions. This kind of responsibility means that financial aid administrators must be trained to meet all statutory and regulatory requirements.

In collaboration with the Council for the Management of Educational Finance, TG offers a suite of training materials that can be used to help you perform entrance and exit counseling sessions for students at your campus.

These training materials include:

- A training module that provides the regulatory requirements for conducting effective counseling sessions;
- Slide presentations that can be used to deliver counseling sessions; and
- Student exams that can be used to evaluate a student's understanding of borrower responsibilities.

### Get access

To learn more about these training materials offered by TG and the Council, visit *TG Online* at [www.tgslc.org/council/training/mod4/resources.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/council/training/mod4/resources.cfm).

### About the Council

The Council works to minimize student loan defaults by providing the higher education community with innovative leadership, activities and services that improve the understanding and management of personal and education finance by students and families. For over 10 years, the Council and TG have worked together to address some of the most important issues affecting students' ability to successfully repay their student loans.

## Questions

For more information about the Council for the Management of Educational Finance, send an e-mail message to Maria Luna-Torres, director, education finance initiatives, at [maria.luna-torres@tgslc.org](mailto:maria.luna-torres@tgslc.org).

## TG closed on Veterans Day

TG will be closed next Tuesday, November 11, in observance of Veterans Day. TG will resume normal business hours on Wednesday, November 12.

## *Common Manual*

### *Common Manual* updates

On October 16, 2008, guarantor representatives who serve on the *Common Manual* Governing Board approved several changes to the *Common Manual*. Details on these changes and a newly updated Integrated *Common Manual* incorporating the changes are available online at [www.tgslc.org/policy/integrated\\_online\\_manual.cfm](http://www.tgslc.org/policy/integrated_online_manual.cfm).

### Identity Theft

The *Common Manual* has been revised to include identity theft in the list of circumstances under which a lender may be eligible for claim payment in the FFELP overview in Chapter 2. The *Common Manual* has also been revised to state that a borrower who has defaulted on his or her loan is eligible for a new FFELP loan if the defaulted loan has been discharged because the borrower is determined to be the victim of the crime of identity theft. In addition, the definition of the term “discharge” has been updated to include the crime of identity theft.

<b>Affected Sections:</b>	2.2.C Repayment 5.2.D NSLDS Data Match Appendix G
<b>Effective Date:</b>	False certification as a result of identity theft loan discharge claims processed by the lender on or after September 8, 2006.
<b>Basis:</b>	§682.402(e)(14).
<b>Policy Information:</b>	1060/Batch 152
<b>Guarantor Comments:</b>	None.

## Academic Competitiveness and National SMART Grant Definitions

The *Common Manual* has been updated to include glossary definitions for the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) and National Science and Mathematics Access to Retain Talent (National SMART) Grant Programs.

The ACG is a federal need- and merit-based grant that is intended to encourage a student to complete a rigorous secondary school program of study. The National SMART Grant is also a federal need- and merit-based grant that is intended to encourage a student to major in one of the physical, life, or computer sciences; engineering; technology; mathematics; or a critical foreign language.

A cross-reference to the FSA Handbook was included in the new glossary definitions for the ACG and National SMART Grant Programs, and was added to the existing "Pell Grant" glossary definition.

<b>Affected Sections:</b>	Appendix G
<b>Effective Date:</b>	July 1, 2006.
<b>Basis:</b>	Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-171); HEA §401A; 2008-09 FSA Handbook, Vol. 1, Chapter 6, p. 1-63.
<b>Policy Information:</b>	1061/Batch 152
<b>Guarantor Comments:</b>	None.

## Common Review Initiative Update

The *Common Manual* has been updated by removing information about the Common Review Initiative from Appendix F and placing the information in Chapter 17, Program Review.

<b>Affected Sections:</b>	Chapter 17 Program Review Appendix F Common Review Initiative
<b>Effective Date:</b>	January 1, 2008.
<b>Basis:</b>	None.
<b>Policy Information:</b>	1062/Batch 152
<b>Guarantor Comments:</b>	None.

## This, that, and the other

According to a recent survey conducted by The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), college graduates in 2008-09 are likely to have fewer job opportunities available to them. Considering the economic times that we are facing, NACE indicates that it is important for students to exhaust all career resources and services offered by their college campus as they seek employment.

Expand your students' career development tools with the wide array of resources available through TG's *Adventures In Education* (AIE™). AIE is a free public service that provides a wealth of information to students on college and career services. You'll find it at [www.aie.org/College/Careers/index.cfm](http://www.aie.org/College/Careers/index.cfm).



P.O. Box 83100  
Round Rock, TX 78683-3100  
(800) 252-9743  
(512) 219-5700  
(512) 219-4560 TDD

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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@tgslc.org](mailto:communications@tgslc.org).

**Contributors to this edition:** Rob Davenport, David Garza, Cindy Marrs, and Art Martinez. Edited by TG Communications and Policy and Regulatory Affairs. Designed by TG Communications.

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