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Smart Solutions

Do your graduates understand their repayment options? Make sure they do with the help of [TG’s online comparison of repayment plans](#) and a complete description of deferment and forbearance.

Industry Update

ED clarifies effective date of new R2T4 regulations

In an [electronic announcement](#) published on May 6, 2011, ED provided critical information in a question and answer format about the July 1, 2011, effective date for the new return of Title IV funds (R2T4) rules.

ED indicated that the new R2T4 requirements are applicable to students who withdraw from payment periods or periods of enrollment that begin on or after July 1, 2011. It further noted that the new rules do not apply to students who withdraw from a 2011 crossover payment period even if the student receives funds from the 2011-12 award year for the crossover payment period.

This additional guidance will help schools as they prepare to implement new R2T4 rules. These rules cover programs offered in modules and expand the definition of schools that are considered to be “required to take attendance” for R2T4 purposes.

Learn more

For more information on the Program Integrity final rules, visit TG's [Program Integrity Final Rules Web page](#). For questions, please contact TG's Customer Assistance team at (800) 845-6267, or send an email message to cust.assist@tgsic.org.

Gainful employment focus: Reporting and disclosure guidance

Shoptalk edition [602](#) provided expanded coverage on ED's *Dear Colleague Letter* (DCL) GEN-11-10, which provides guidance on the gainful employment (GE) final rules that are effective July 1, 2011. An article in this edition focused on the three types of schools eligible to participate in the Title IV programs, and the basis for determining which educational programs offered by participating schools are subject to the GE rules. Today's article focuses on the remaining topics covered in the DCL, including reporting and disclosure requirements and the addition of new GE programs.

GE program data and reporting for prior award years

As noted in *Shoptalk* edition [583](#), the first GE program data reports are to be submitted to ED no later than October 1, 2011, for the 2006-07, 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10 award years. The DCL explains that if a school is unable to submit any of the requested information, the school must provide an explanation as to why the information is not available.

To help schools better understand the types of GE data to be reported, ED includes an attachment with the DCL entitled "Draft Data Elements List." ED states that the list is a "preliminary list," intended to outline generally the types of student-specific information that schools will report. In addition, the DCL announces that schools will use the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) enrollment reporting process to submit GE data. ED expects to provide additional information about the GE reporting process once it is finalized.

Finally, while a school must report information to ED about any student enrolled in a GE program, regardless of whether the student receives Title IV aid for the program, ED clarifies in the DCL that a school should not report data on a student for whom the school has no Social Security Number (SSN).

GE information subject to disclosure

Under the final rules, schools are required to disclose certain information to prospective students for GE programs no later than July 1, 2011. In the preamble to the final rules, ED outlined its plans to develop a standardized form to be used by schools to disclose the required GE information. However, because ED's form will not be available by the July 1 effective date of the new rules, the DCL states that schools must develop their own form to disclose the required data until ED releases its form. Additional details are provided in the DCL.

A school is required to disclose to prospective students the following information for each GE program:

- Name and Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code of the occupations the program prepares students to enter, along with links to the applicable occupational profiles on the Occupational Information Network (O*NET) website
- Total amount of tuition and fees charged to students for completing the program within the "normal time" (defined in current rules at §668.41(a) as "the amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree or certificate according to the institution's catalog")
- Typical costs for books and supplies for the program (unless included in the tuition and fees), and the cost of room and board, if applicable
- Other costs, such as transportation and living expenses, at the school's option, and a required Web link or access to the program cost information the school discloses under current regulatory requirements at §668.43(a)
- Job placement rate for students who completed the program
- On-time graduation rate for students who completed the program

- Median loan debt incurred by students who completed the program, reported in two separate categories: Title IV loans, and private loans and institutional financing plan debts
- Any other information provided by ED about the program

To support the determination of median loan debt, ED is finalizing a process for schools to report private loan and institutional financing plan data for students to ED to compute the median loan debt amount. In the meantime, the DCL requires a school to compute the median loan debt amount until ED is ready to do so. The median loan debt disclosed by the school for each GE program should be consistent with the information reported by the school to ED.

New GE programs

The DCL reminds schools about the notification requirement connected to adding a new GE program. Schools are required to notify ED at least 90 days before the scheduled first day of class and include specified information. ED also clarifies that a school must submit the required ED notice by July 1, 2011, for a new program with a scheduled first day of class on or after July 1, 2011, but before October 1, 2011. For a new program that is scheduled to begin on or after October 1, 2011, a school must provide the notice at least 90 days prior to the first day of class.

ED also states in the DCL that if a school is on provisional certification to participate in the Title IV programs, the school must receive ED's approval before offering any new educational programs (as described in current regulations at §668.13(c)(4)). These final rules do not alter that requirement.

For more information about the new program notification requirements, refer to *Shoptalk* edition 583, which includes an article about the GE requirements for new programs.

ED to provide GE training

In a recent [electronic announcement](#) (ANN-11-11), ED notified schools that it plans to provide training on these GE program requirements via a webinar to be offered on May 25, 2011, at 12:30 p.m. Central Time, and May 26, 2011, at 10 a.m. Central Time. The training will cover:

- Definition and identification of a program subject to GE rules
- GE reporting requirements and the process to provide GE data to ED
- Disclosure requirements for GE programs

Advance registration is required for the GE webinar, and is available on a first-come, first-served basis. [Register for the webinar online.](#)

Learn more

For more information on the Program Integrity final rules and to obtain these and other DCLs, visit [TG's Program Integrity Final Rules Web page](#). For questions, please contact TG's Customer Assistance team at (800) 845-6267, or send an email message to cust.assist@tgslc.org.

TG Report

Show what you know during TG's policy sessions at EASFAA conference

At this year's Eastern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (EASFAA) Annual Conference, to be held May 15-18 in Philadelphia, TG presenters will lead a variety of sessions that test the regulatory know-how of attendees. TG sessions will address some of the more complicated and critical issues in student aid today, including cohort default rates and graduate and professional financial aid administration.

Three of TG's four sessions follow a distinctive game-show format popular with participants. During these "Show what you know" presentations, attendees use a remote device to click, i.e., select, answers to various questions flashed on a screen. At the end, players receive a handout of questions and answers, along with the applicable federal basis to share with campus colleagues after the conference. "Show what you know" sessions place a premium on teaching valuable, practical information in an entertaining way.

Preview TG's sessions, including one on Income-Based Repayment (IBR), by reading these short session descriptions below.

- **Show what you know — The CDR edition** — Learn more about the principles and processes related to cohort default rates (CDR). This session considers a range of CDR questions, from the CDR calculation to the rules for challenging and appealing a rate.
- **Show what you know — Graduate/professional edition** — Explore recent changes in federal student aid policy and regulations that affect graduate and professional financial aid administration.
- **Show what you know — The policy game** — Discuss some of the most recent changes in federal student aid policy, regulations, and law.
- **IBR: A tool to help students manage repayment** — Find out details of the newest repayment plan available to FFELP and FDLP borrowers. IBR can benefit eligible borrowers by minimizing monthly payments and providing loan forgiveness in some cases. Educating borrowers about this newest repayment

plan and its benefits — whether through the loan counseling process or other communication — is key to realizing IBR's potential to help in a tough economy. This session presents a high-level introduction to the IBR plan, including how borrowers qualify, benefits the plan provides, and ideas for educating borrowers about IBR.

To learn more

TG offers free industry training and professional development through its [Speakers Bureau](#). Review the online catalog to find out about specific topics and sessions. TG can adapt a particular training session to meet the needs of your financial aid office. To find out how, contact your account executive at (800) 252-9743, or send an email message to relationship.management@tgsllc.org.

Upcoming TG webinar offers a primer on the fundamentals of loan repayment

Let's face it: when students borrow federal student loans, repayment may be the last thing on their mind. Oftentimes, these borrowers are busy planning their academic coursework, keeping up with class assignments, and generally preparing for a career. Once they graduate, however, the story changes and repayment becomes Priority One. Right? Yes, but only if students understand their options and feel prepared to begin repayment.

An upcoming TG webinar explains the basics of repayment, offering answers to some of the most persistent questions that students have, and stressing the benefits of making regular, on-time payments, such as good credit and continued eligibility for federal student aid and loan benefits.

Among other things, the "Ins and Outs of Student Loan Repayment" describes the repayment options available to students as they get ready to enter the workforce. Topics include:

- Helping students take inventory of their student loans;
- Understanding the available repayment plans (including IBR) and the advantages of each;
- Reviewing the details of consolidation; and
- Learning about deferment, forbearance, forgiveness, and cancellation options.

Registration information

To accommodate the schedules of TG's coast-to-coast customers, the one-hour webinar is scheduled for Thursday, May 19, at 10 a.m. Central Time, with a repeat of the webinar the same day at 3 p.m. Central Time. [Registration is available](#)

[online](#). If you are unable to attend the scheduled broadcast, a recording will be available for viewing shortly after the event through [TG's archived webinars](#).

Keeping it real: TG module teaches students how to keep spending in line with expenses

Financial literacy experts agree that a spending plan can help consumers avoid overspending, minimize debt accumulation, and meet their long-term financial goals. But if a plan isn't adjusted as circumstances change — a job loss or a new child, for example — it's not going to be much help. The TG Financial Literacy Program offers a module — *Monitoring Spending: Keeping It Real* — that provides an overview of how spending plans can be better managed to stay in step with financial realities.

Presented as a highly interactive presentation, the *Monitoring Spending* session explores several approaches to managing spending. For example, personal finance software saves time and offers flexibility. The session also highlights the principal benefits of managing a spending plan, including avoiding costly mistakes, such as late fees and returned checks.

About the TG Financial Literacy Program

The TG Financial Literacy Program consists of ten 15-minute presentations with accompanying activities, workbooks, and speaker's scripts. These modules cover a range of topics, such as solving debt problems and understanding employee benefits. Illustrations, content, and format for each module are tailored to appeal to students from high school through college. The entire TG Financial Literacy Program places a special emphasis on teaching by interaction, the better to gain and keep attention on such important topics as budgeting and saving. Modules and activities can be mixed and matched to suit need. Session participants will receive workbooks that contain glossaries, FAQs, suggested resources for further study, and information on key concepts.

To learn more

Browse a list of [TG Financial Literacy Program modules](#) to learn more about TG's program or to request a "Train-the-Trainer" session for your staff who can then train students on a given topic.

The “no excuses” university: Promoting a college-going culture among underrepresented students

Research indicates that the earlier in life students establish college as a goal, the more likely they are to enroll and earn a degree. As this principle continues to be better understood, schools and community-based organizations are working to help more students think of themselves as college-bound.

A session during the TG Annual Training Conference held April 26-29 spotlighted a Texas outreach program that works to build and nurture a college-going culture early on in the lives of first-generation, minority, and low-income students in Amarillo. During the session, representatives from the No Excuses University Network of Schools shared their experiences and detailed results of their latest efforts.

Transforming the student mindset

Doug Curry, principal of San Jacinto Elementary School based Amarillo, outlined the transformation that has taken place in his school since becoming part of the No Excuses University Network of Schools. The program, founded by Damon Lopez and detailed in *Turnaround Schools — Creating Cultures of Universal Achievement*, is founded on the idea that every child has the right to go to college. To protect that right is critical, Curry said. “It’s the responsibility of the adults in the school to create an exceptional system to make that possible.”

Ensuring that promise for San Jacinto’s students is no small challenge, according to Curry. In a school of 790 students, 95 percent are on the free or reduced lunch program. The neighborhood surrounding San Jacinto Elementary has the highest concentration of rental property in the city, which reflects the transient nature of the neighborhood’s population. The school also has a high mobility rate — a third of San Jacinto’s student body changes from year to year.

Despite these challenges, the No Excuses University model has produced dramatic changes at the school in a very short period — and it has done so almost entirely by transforming the mindset of the school’s students and parents, says Curry.

“Students are told from the time they enter the school in the fall that they are going to college and that there are no excuses for failing or even doing poorly,” he said.

To emphasize the point, each homeroom in the school is decorated with paraphernalia from a different university. Information from Texas schools is prominent, but so is material from schools from around the country.

San Jacinto has partnered with Amarillo College to offer parents the chance to earn a GED on the campus of the elementary school itself. Doing so, Curry notes, helps earn parental buy-in.

Within a year of instituting the No Excuses University plan, student academic performance rose dramatically, and continues to rise. According to Curry, the results are entirely due to a change in perspective on the part of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. “We didn’t change a thing in one year except what was between their ears,” he said. “That’s how powerful this program is.”

To learn more

Visit *TG Online* if you'd like to [view presentation materials for this year's TG Annual Training Conference](#). Slides for many presentations are available. If you have questions about particular TG conference sessions, contact TG event planning coordinator Judith Cunningham at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2905, or send an email message to judith.cunningham@tgsdc.org.

Didn't make it to the TG conference? Access recordings of some sessions online

If you couldn't make it to the TG Annual Training Conference held April 26-29, you can now do the next best thing: Review online recordings of particular sessions and download slide presentations for given workshops.

This year's training agenda focused squarely on such vital issues as default prevention and educating students to be financially literate. TG simulcast two default prevention-related sessions that could be especially valuable to schools — one on a recent Institute of Higher Education Policy (IHEP) study titled, "Delinquency: The Untold Story of Student Loan Borrowing"; and another on behavioral finance in financial counseling. Recordings of these sessions are now available to access and view online.

View the recordings

Visit *TG Online* if you'd like to [access recordings for these two sessions and to review and download other materials for this year's TG conference](#). If you have questions about particular TG conference sessions, contact TG event planning coordinator Judith Cunningham at (800) 252-9743, ext. 2905, or send an email message to judith.cunningham@tgsdc.org.

News Briefs

Despite the lingering effects of a recession, college graduates have a reason to be optimistic. The U.S. Labor Department reports that private firms hired aggressively in April — a sign that the economy may be on the upswing. Graduating students, including those contemplating their next move after college, might also be interested in news regarding some of the fast-growing jobs in the country. The [Bureau of Labor Statistics offers an online list of 30 careers](#) expected to expand rapidly over the next decade. Biomedical engineer tops the list, along with network systems analyst, home health aide, and financial examiner. The list offers a percentage increase, required education, and income bracket for each position.



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