NATIONAL POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION COOPERATIVE

Prospective and current students, parents, researchers, and policymakers rely heavily on the Internet to obtain information about higher education institutions. However, the information that institutions are required to disclose by the HEA may be difficult to find, compare, and use.

One problem faced by consumers is the inaccessibility of information provided by institutions under the HEA. Institutions may have multiple offices responsible for collecting and distributing information. Decentralized information management means that even within a single institution, processes and standards for information collection, formatting, and dissemination may be varied. In addition, the unit responsible for the information at one institution may be different than the unit responsible for the same information at another institution. For example, graduation rate information is provided by the Registrarôs office at some institutions and by the institutional research office at others.

This problem can be compounded by the inconsistency in how the information required under the HEA is provided to consumers by institutions. Some institutions mix the HEA-required disclosures with other information in varying combinations. Other institutions maintain a ñportalò web page that provides a single entry point from which HEA-required disclosure information can be obtained through hyperlinked lists. Although these portals help students and others find relevant information, consumers need to know that such a website exists in order to find it.

To compare disclosed information across institutions, users also face a high degree of variation in both the content and structure of institutionsô websites. For example, a review of existing consumer information portal pages for postsecondary institutions found a variety of titles, including the following:

- Consumer Information
- Student Consumer Information
- Public Disclosure
- University Disclosure Statements
- Your Right to Know
- Student Right to Know
- Statements, Disclosures
- Federal Compliance
- Federal Disclosure Notices

shows subheadings that appear on the consumer information websites for four randomly selected institutions:[1]

Institutional Information	General Institution Information	Academic Programs	Institutional Information
Financial Assistance	Financial Assistance Information	Financial Aid and Scholarship Information	Financial Aid Return of Funds Information
Equity in Athletics			

The suggestions in this paper were developed on the principle of promoting access to information that will allow consumers to make informed decisions about postsecondary education. These consumers include students, parents, counselors, researchers, and legislators, all of whom will benefit from more accessible, comparable information. The suggestions were also developed with attention to the burden that less-resourced institutions may face in meeting common disclosure standards.

The five suggestions on the following pages are offered as advice regarding the best methods for increasing consistency of access to HEA disclosure information across institutions, while preserving institutionsô capacity to demonstrate their diversity and their ability to manage their own information.

Institutions should be aware that posting information on a website is sufficient for meeting those HEA requirements that institutions make certain information ñavailableò to the public or others. A number of the HEA disclosure provisions require that institutions deliver information directly to specified individuals, or that it be provided directly upon request. In those cases, posting information on the institutionôs website is **not** sufficient. An institution may choose to post all of the appropriate HEA disclosure information on its website for information management purposes, but it still must ensure that certain information is also provided directly to the specified individuals. (See appendix B for more information.)

Institutions should also ensure that the information disclosed is accurate. The Department of Education may initiate a fine, or a limitation, suspension, or termination of Title IV HEA eligibility for any substantial misrepresentation made by an institution regarding the nature of its educational program, its financial charges, or the employability of its graduates. (Under HEA Sec. 485(f)(13), this provision also specifically applies to misrepresentation of the number, location, or nature of crimes included in campus crime reports.) For more information, see chapter 6 of volume 2 of the Federal Student Aid Handbook at http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/0910FSAHbkVol2Ch6Information.pdf.

Institutions should provide information to broaden consumersô understanding of more technical information and/or less commonly used terms. We suggest that portal pages embed pop-up or hover-over boxes that spell out commonly used acronyms, provide definitions for terms, and offer one or two sentences of explanatory information. Information should always be clearly labeled with the timeframe for the information (e.g., the calendar years for the security report or the beginning and end dates for graduation rate calculations).

Institutions should label disclosures by content, rather than the source of the information (e.g., ñRefund Policyò rather than ñBusiness Officeò). Institutions also should adopt a simple, yet common, set of content titles for the purpose of providing links to information on their HEA disclosures portal page. This will help consumers find and compare information across institutions. We suggest the titles on page 8 (as applicable).

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U.S. Code: Title 20, Education, Chapter 28 ī Higher Education Resources and Student Assistance (http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/usc.cgi?ACTION=BROWSE&TITLE=20USCC28&PDFS=YES)

U.S. Code: Title 20, Education, Chapter 31 ī General Provisions Concerning Education (http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/usc.cgi?ACTION=BROWSE&TITLE=20USCC31&PDFS=YES)

Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-315) (http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ315.110.pdf)

Higher Education Technical Corrections (2009) (Public Law 111-39) (http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ039.111.pdf)

The Department of Education provides guidance for compliance with the HEA disclosure requirements in three primary ways.

1. **Regulations**

   Current Regulations. Most of the current regulations implementing the HEA disclosure requirements are found in Chapter VI of Title 34 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/e/ecfr/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfrv3_02.tpl.

   Title 34, Parts 86 and 99 are found at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?sid=bb5dfea4b7a09d0ebbf8dada1a800751&c=ecfr&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title34/34cfrv1_02.tpl.

   Rulemaking Process. For general information about the Department of Educationôs rulemaking process for the HEA amendments in the HEOA, see the information at http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html.

   Proposed New Regulations.
   Proposed new regulations for the new or revised disclosures required under the HEOA amendments to the HEA were published in the July 28, 2009 for the

loan-related disclosures, and in the August 21, 2009 for the non-loan-related disclosures.

Final Regulations

Final regulations for the revised or new loan-related disclosures required under the HEOA amendments to Title I and Title IV of the HEA were published in the October 28, 2009 Institutions and Lender Requirements Relating to Education Loans, Student Assistance General Provisions, Federal Perkins Loan Program, Federal Family Education Loan Program, and William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program; Final Rule (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-25073.pdf).

Final Regulations for the revised or new non-loan-related disclosures required under the HEOA amendments to Title IV of the HEA were published in the October 29, 2009 General and Non-Loan Programmatic Issues; Final Rule (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-25373.pdf).

Note: Regulations for the HEOA amendments to the Truth in Lending Act (TILA) were issued August 14, 2009, by the Federal Reserve (http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-18548.pdf). The effective date for the TILA regulations is September 14, 2009. Compliance is optional until February 14, 2010.

2. **Dear Colleague Letters** at http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byYear.jsp?type=dpcletters. The DCL GEN-08-12 published December 2008 provides information about the HEOA (http://ifap.ed.gov/dpcletters/GEN0812FP0810.html).

3. **The *Federal Student Aid Handbook*** at http://ifap.ed.gov/ifap/byAwardYear.jsp?type=fsahandbook&awardyear=2009-2010.

   HEA disclosure requirements are covered in chapters 3 and 6 of volume 2 of the Handbook, School Eligibility and Operations (http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/0910FSAHbkVol2Ch3GenRequirements.pdf) and (http://ifap.ed.gov/fsahandbook/attachments/0910FSAHbkVol2Ch6Information.pdf).

The Office of Postsecondary Education (or OPE) administers the data collection and the Department of Education reporting for

- Campus Security
- Equity in Athletics (intercollegiate athletic program participation rates and financial support data)
- Title II, HEA Teacher Preparation Program Reports

Information for each of these reporting requirements is available under Data Collection and Reporting at http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/policy.html.

NCES conducts IPEDS. Complete information about the IPEDS surveys and the College Navigator website is available at http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds.

Listed below are links to websites that postsecondary institutions might review for ideas to help improve their public dissemination of information.

This web page offers information on higher education legal issues, including the HEA.
Website: http://counsel.cua.edu/

The CDS initiative is a collaborative effort among data providers in the higher education community and publishers as represented by the College Board, Petersonôs, and . Through the development of clear, standard data items and definitions, this collaboration aims to improve the quality and accuracy of information provided to all involved in a studentôs transition into higher education and to reduce the reporting burden on data providers. : The CDS is a set of standards and definitions of data items rather than a survey instrument or set of data represented in a database.
Website: http://www.commondataset.org/

U-CAN is a consumer-information initiative designed by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities to give, in a common format, prospective students and their families concise, web-based, consumer-friendly information on the nationôs private, nonprofit colleges and universities.
Website: http://www.ucan-network.org/

The VSA program is a voluntary initiative by public 4-year colleges and universities to supply basic, comparable information on the undergraduate student experience to prospective students, their families, and other stakeholders through a common web report ð the College Portrait. The VSA is sponsored by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.
Websites: http://www.collegeportraits.org and http://www.voluntarysystem.org

Introduction to Summary of HEA Disclosure Requirements A-3

I. Non-Loan Related Disclosure Requirements

A. Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information

(1) Notice of Availability of Institutional and Financial Aid Information A-5
(2) Contact Information for Assistance in Obtaining Institutional or Financial Aid Information A-5

B. Student Financial Assistance

(3) Student Financial Aid Information* A-5
(4) Notice of Federal Student Financial Aid Penalties for Drug Law Violations* A-6

C. General Institutional Information

(5) Privacy of Student Records ï Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) A-7
(6) Consumer Information on College Navigator Website* A-7
(7) Facilities and Services Available to Students with Disabilities* A-8
(8) Student Body Diversity* A-8
(9) Price of Attendance A-9
(10) Net Price Calculator* A-9
(11) Refund Policy, Requirements for Withdrawal and for the Return of Title IV, HEA Financial Aid A-9
(12) Textbook Information* A-9
(13) Academic Program (Educational Programs, Instructional Facilities, and Faculty)* A-10
(14) Transfer of Credit Policies and Articulation Agreements* A-11
(15) Institutional and Program Accreditation, Approval, or Licensure A-11
(16) Copyright Infringement Policies and Sanctions (Including Computer Use and File Sharing)* A-12

D. Teacher Preparation Program

(17) Teacher Preparation A-12

F. Student Outcomes

(24) Retention Rate* A-23
(25) Completion/Graduation and Transfer-out Rates (Including Disaggregated Completion/Graduation Rates)* A-23
(26) Completion/Graduation and Transfer-out Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Including Disaggregated Completion/Graduation Rates)* A-25
(27) Placement in Employment* A-26
(28) Job Placement Rates A-26
(29) Types of Graduate and Professional Education In Which the Institution's Graduates Enroll* A-27

G. Intercollegiate Athletic Program

(30) Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data é é é . A-27

H. Voter Registration

(31) Voter Registration Forms* A-29

II. Disclosure Requirements Relating to Education Loans

(L-1) State Grant Assistance A-29
(L-2) Student Loan Information Published by Dept of Education* A-30
(L-3) National Student Loan Data System* A-30
(L-4) Entrance Counseling for Student Borrowers* A-30
(L-5) Exit Counseling for Student Borrowers* A-31
(L-6) Private Education Loan Disclosures (Including Self-Certification Form)* A-32
(L-7) Code of Conduct for Education Loans* A-33
(L-8) Preferred Lender Lists* A-33
(L-9) Preferred Lender Arrangements* A-34

*****New or revised disclosure requirement/s in the HEOA and/or the final regulations

The summary provides information about the institutional disclosure requirements in the General Provisions (Title I), Teacher Preparation Program Reports (Title II), and the General Provisions for Title IV (Part G) of the Higher Education Act. It includes the requirements in the HEA prior to the enactment of the HEOA, and the revisions and additions to the disclosure requirements included in the amendments to the HEA in the HEOA and in the Higher Education Technical Corrections Act of 2009. It does not include HEA program-specific requirements.

The disclosures include the information that institutions are required to provide to the general public,

The information provided for each required disclosure includes:

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
	jDPLO\			

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			IRUDWH[WERRNRUVXSOHPHQWDOPDWHULDOWKHLQWLWXWLRQKDOOXHWKH ¥HWHWUPLQG´	
			Note http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_reports&docid=f:hr803.110.pdf	*see above*

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			see subject # 22	

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			see subject # 23 for related requirement; *see subject # 21 for more information*	
			±	
			±	
			±	
			±	
			±	
			±	
			The emergency response and evacuation information must be included in the institution's annual security report beginning October 1, 2010.	
			±	

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			may	
			: The provisions in 34 CFR 668.45 ( ) regarding transfer-out disclosures; determining cohorts; defining completion, graduation, and transfer-out; exclusions; and disaggregation of completion/graduation rates apply also to the requirements for disclosing completion/graduation and transfer-out information for students receiving athletically related student aid.	

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			See also subject # L-5 requirements for exit counseling for student loan borrowers.	
			Note: The final regulations include the entrance counseling requirements separately for each loan program. See the program regulations for complete information.	

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			Note: The final regulations include the exit counseling requirements separately for each loan program. See the program regulations for complete information.	
		L-2)		*see subject #*

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed
			see subject # L-9	

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

Reference Number	Subject Area	Requirement Applies to	Requirement	How Disclosed

(15) Institutional and Program Accreditation, Approval, or Licensure
(16) Copyright Infringement Policies and Sanctions (Including Computer Use and File Sharing)
(19) Vaccinations Policies
(24) Retention Rate
(25) Completion/Graduation and Transfer-out Rates (Including Disaggregated Completion/Graduation Rates)
(27) Placement in Employment
(29) Types of Graduate and Professional Education in Which the Institutionôs

(20) - (21) Notice of Security Report
(22) Notice of Fire Safety Report
(30) Notice of Intercollegiate Athletic Program Participation Rates and Financial Support Data

(20) - (21) Notice of Security Report
(22) Notice of Fire Safety Report

(26) Completion/Graduation and Transfer-out Rates for Students Receiving Athletically Related Student Aid (Including Disaggregated Completion/Graduation Rates)

(12) Textbook Information

(L-1) State Grant Assistance
(L-2) Student Loan Information Published by Department of Education
(L-3) National Student Loan Data System
(L-4) Entrance Counseling for Student Borrowers
(L-5) Exit Counseling for Student Borrowers
(L-6) Private Education Loan Disclosures (Including Self-Certification Form)

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