

MACRAO news

February 2004 Vol. 2 Issue 1

Fax Transcripts...It's working!

Lenord McGownd
SMSU

Picture it if you will....a busy chaotic Records office in Missouri. You are the frazzled Records clerk sitting at the front desk. You look up and see a student heading your way. You think to yourself, "Oh no! I recognize that student....he has requested his transcript to be sent to XYZ College four times already. He can't be coming here..." Sure enough, the student stops at the window and says those words you dread: "XYZ College says they have never received a copy of my transcript! What have you people done with it?!?!" You say, "One moment please, let me pull your record." Sure enough you have sent it out 3 times already...the last time being 2 days ago! You think to yourself, "I wish there was a way I could get this to XYZ and not rely on the postal system..."

Well, there is now!! FAX IT!!

At the fall 2003 conference, the Association adopted guidelines to ease the method of faxing transcripts and knowing that they are official. Institutions wishing to send and receive transcripts faxed as official have joined an Association sponsored website to make the sending of transcripts easy and official. This website is temporarily located at SMSU and may be moving to the MACRAO website in the future. Presently the address is http://www.smsu.edu/admissions/development/MACRAO_fax.htm. Already we have 17 institutions participating in this pro-

gram and looking for the number to grow this year!

Institutions participating in the website are:

Aquinas Institute of Technology
Conception Seminary College
Cotley College
Culver-Stockton College
Drury University
East Central College
Evangel University
Harris-Stowe College
Jefferson College
Missouri Southern State University
Missouri Valley College
Ozarks Technical Community College
Saint Charles County Community College
Saint Louis Christian College
SMSU
SMSU--West Plains
Stephens College

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A Letter From the President

Greetings MACRAOians,

Where has the time gone? I know many of us have said these very same words. All of us seem to be trying to find more time to get things done, or just to be able to take a breather from the constant rush we find ourselves.

Much has happened since we met in October, seems so long ago. Many of us are using the protocol to fax transcripts and the number of institutions participating continues to grow. In this time of tight budgets, this may provide some savings. Our MACRAO Website was completed by AACRAO and we tested it and plans were made to move information to the website and use it for conference registration. This is on hold as AACRAO is in the process of changing the web servers.

I have completed all the MACRAO Committee assignments and it was an enjoyable experience. Those who were asked to serve expressed an enthusiasm for working on their committee. I was encouraged by them knowing that we all face challenges in our institutions, yet our members are willing to take time to help make our association stronger.

Some of the challenges MACRAO faces involve membership. We have over 300 members this year. We have over 60 institutions represented by the membership. We need to reach out to our colleagues and encourage their participation in MACRAO.

Attendance at our conference has dropped off in the last few years. How can we increase participation in our annual conference? Is there a better place to hold our conference? These and many other questions the Site Selection Committee will be discussing in the coming months as we begin the site selection process.

At this year's conference I was surprised and encouraged at the number of institutions that were in the process of either looking for new administrative software or who had begun an implementation process. I know we all have horror stories that we can tell, but we also have insight of how we made it through the selection or implementation. We tend to think that we are totally unique, however, new administrative software lets us see how we are all going to be made



the same. We all have "been there, done that!" and that experience can help others, if the questions are asked. This is where the list-serve can be a tremendous benefit to those with questions as well as those providing answers. I have found that trying to explain how a problem was solved to someone else enables me to see the solution in different ways and possibly make changes. We need ask the questions so we can share our experience and expertise.

As I look ahead in 2004 I see another year of challenges and experiences that will make MACRAO and even better and stronger association.

John-Herbert Jaffry
President 2003-2004



Fax Transcripts (continued from page 1)

To participate in the website you need to:

1. Agree that documents received via fax would be considered official for all purposes. No "follow up" transcript would be needed.
2. Have your fax machines in a secure environment not open to public use.
3. Contact the Chair of MACRAO's Data Systems Committee to have your institution's name and fax numbers appear in the directory of institutions participating in this policy.

The guidelines for the site are:

1. Institutions participating in this policy agree that transcripts and other documents sent via fax may be considered **official** by the receiving institution.
2. Fax transmission may occur 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
3. You may send single or multiple documents (i.e. you may fax 5 transcripts at a time if needed).
4. If transmission was interrupted while sending, you should re-send all pages of the document(s). If the receiving institution does not receive all pages of the documents(s), then they should contact the sending institution.
5. We recommend that you maintain a log of faxed documents to be used for verification at a later date if needed.
6. If the receiving institution should question the authenticity of a fax transmittal, it should immediately contact the sending institution for verification.
7. If at all possible, do not use safety paper (paper that when copied prints a hidden word such as COPY) to print official documents on that are to be faxed. Safety paper is expensive, slows transmittal time and **may hinder the readability of the document(s)**.

To utilize the site, you simply fill in the appropriate fields, print it off and fax it and the document to the school in question. Receiving institutions will be accustomed to seeing the cover page and know that the transcript or other document is official. It is easy to verify that the fax is official because of the Cover Page website address being listed on the cover page and the institution's fax number listed in the banner matching what is listed on the cover letter.

In the future, the Association needs to examine Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) where transcripts and other documents can be sent via e-mail or other means. These methods are even quicker modes of transferring the data and in some cases can be directly loaded into your system without any human intervention! Woo hoo!

If you would like to join the website like so many before you or if you have further questions, presently the Chair of the Data Systems Committee is Lenord McGownd at SMSU. Feel free to contact him at ldm742t@smsu.edu or by phone at 800-492-7900.



MACRAO Fast Facts

Number of Higher Ed. Institutions in Missouri: 165*
 Number of MACRAO Member Institutions: 75
 Number of Individual MACRAO Members: 345
 Number of Fall 2003 Conference Registrants: 95

*Missouri Department of Higher Education website:
<http://www.cbhe.state.mo.us/taboutus.htm>

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(*An additional charge for the Data Systems Committee is to serve as an ad hoc **Task Force on Fax Policy and Electronic Data Interchange**, as approved by the MACRAO membership in October 2002.)

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New Course Numbering System Coming for MU

*Brenda V. S. Selman
University of Missouri Columbia*

Effective with the Fall 2004 semester, the University of Missouri-Columbia will move from a three-digit course numbering system to a four-digit system.

There were several reasons for the change, according to Brenda Selman, University Registrar-MU. "As we were seeking ways to streamline information and make it easier for students to understand and follow the curricula at MU, it became apparent that it was time to change one of our fundamental course management tools; the numbering system."

One reason for the change is that the current system does not present a logical progression of courses for most curriculums. For instance, Math 5 is considered remedial, but History 3 and 4 are not (considered remedial).

It became apparent as MU prepared for its review by the Higher Learning Commission (formerly North Central Regional Accrediting Agency) that a change seemed to be called for (needed). One of the requirements of accreditation is for institutions to clearly distinguish between undergraduate and graduate course work. Since both graduate and undergraduates could take 300-level courses, the line was not as clear as may be required by the agency.

Some departments have found that the current system no longer had enough new numbers available when new courses were to be added. As a result, some colleges and schools began to use prefix letters. Over time the names of the depart-

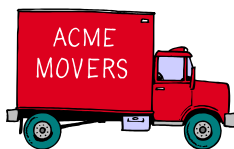
ments that the prefix letters referred to were changed. The result is that there no longer is an obvious connection between the number and the sequence or the department.

There were other factors as well, such as the time and effort spent explaining to outside constituencies and new students the intricacies of the current system, etc. Together these factors culminated in a need to change.

A crosswalk will be available on the University Registrar's web site later this spring. A table explaining the new scheme accompanies this article. A notation of the meaning of the new numbers will be listed on the back of all official transcripts.

As a natural result of the review for renumbering, many departments made changes to titles, course descriptions and even to curricula. A new Undergraduate Catalog will be printed this spring that will include all the new information. It will also be available on-line. (The newest edition of the undergraduate catalog including all the newest information will be available this spring. It will be available both in paper and on-line versions.)

A parallel development is the preparation of program guides to be posted to the web for every degree and major. The information for these was collected along with information for the revised catalog. The staff is in process of reviewing the information and beginning to prepare it to be posted to the web. Hopefully all the undergraduate programs will be posted (no later than) by the end of 2004, if not before.



Colleagues on the Move...

A Warm Welcome to a New Colleague!

Jennifer Comer joined Northwest Missouri State University in December as the Associate Director of Admissions for Operations, replacing Deborah Powers. Deb left the University for employment in the private sector.

A southwest Iowa native, Jennifer earned a bachelor's degree in public service administration from Iowa State University in 1995. She has worked in Omaha, Nebraska, for the past eight years as a customer service manager, corporate trainer, and technical and educational documentation developer in the telecommunications and software industry. She was married in August and is enjoying life on the farm in southwest Iowa.

Jennifer recently announced she has given up her Iowa Cyclones license cover and has a new Bearcat-green vehicle!



Have you hired someone new in your office recently? Have you changed positions or institutions? Use this space to offer Kudos to an up-and-coming colleague, or to help us keep in touch with you. Keep us informed of the exciting changes in your career!

Email Melanie at gottlieb@webster.edu

For Information or to contribute, contact:
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In the next Issue:

Look for these new items in the next issue:

- Member Spotlight
- Winner (s) of the Can You Top This? Contest
- Notes from the June Board Meeting
- Website Update
- And Much More!

Contest: Can you top this?

We know you have one of those stories...the unbelievable request from a faculty member, the puzzled and ridiculous antics of the student, the outrageous conversation with a parent...Share it!

Laughter is the best medicine for that stress we all feel. Share your humorous experiences with your colleagues and help us decompress! The best submission each issue will be published (anonymously, of course) and will receive a fabulous prize donated by one of our member schools.

Send your submissions for the June newsletter to:
 gottlieb@webster.edu with "contest" as the subject line.
 Good Luck!



Are there any other dates your colleagues should know about? Let us know!



**Mark Your Calendars!
 Important Dates for MACRAO-ians:**



<i>Deadline for Baden-Württemberg Seminar Application</i>	<i>March 19th 2004</i>
<i>90th AACRAO Annual Meeting (Las Vegas)</i>	<i>April 19-22nd 2004</i>
<i>Deadline for Summer Newsletter</i>	<i>June 1st 2004</i>
<i>AACRAO Management Dynamics Online</i>	<i>June 2nd-July 14th</i>
<i>MACRAO Board Meeting</i>	<i>June 5-6th 2004</i>
<i>Baden-Württemberg Seminar (Tübingen, Germany)</i>	<i>Sept. 22-30th 2004</i>
<i>Deadline for Fall Newsletter</i>	<i>October 1st 2004</i>
<i>AACRAO Technology Conference (Newport Beach, CA)</i>	<i>October 3-5th 2004</i>
<i>MACRAO Regional Conference (Branson, MO)</i>	<i>October 24-26, 2004</i>



<i>91st AACRAO Annual Meeting (New York)</i>	<i>March 28-31st 2005</i>
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<i>92nd AACRAO Annual Meeting (San Diego)</i>	<i>April 17-20th 2006</i>
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