Questions from Tracking and Data Reporting Webinar – February 2021

1. **Could the presenters let us know which enterprise system their institutions use?**

   Mount Saint Mary's University uses Ellucian's Colleague as our SIS and Ellucian's Student Planning for our registration system.

   Embry Riddle Aeronautical University uses Campus Solutions, powered by Oracle.

   University of Kentucky uses SAP- IRIS System.

2. **Can you please share your policy document?**

   MSMU's Physical Location Policy can be viewed at this link: https://www.msmu.edu/media/website/content-assets/msmuedu/home/academics/provost/documents/Physical-Location-Policy---for-catalog-10.29.19.pdf

3. **Does anyone have an "update physical location" screen that works in Banner?**

   Sorry, MSMU does not use Banner. I suggest you reach out to Banner and tell them that knowing where your students are located is a Federal requirement. Ask them how other Banner institutions are handling this.

4. **For Mount St. Mary's team, thank you for this great presentation! What is your advice for communicating the importance of staying in compliance (states/ disclosures/ international) during a time when institutions are attempting to increasing enrollment and are looking to develop even more online models in various modalities?**

   Our advice is to utilize frequent communications/reminders and make it easy to find out more information (one-stop webpage or one-drive. We created a Compliance Team that involves the person in charge of our external websites, the person in charge of our Catalog, staff from Admissions, representatives from pertinent programs, and our VP of Enrollment Management. This helps ensure that everyone is hearing the same thing and all are on the lookout for possible non-compliance. For example, our Registrar representative noticed that a program was updating their Catalog description and the description made it sound like the program led to a professional license, when it didn't. I was able to step in and talk about it with the program so that the language was in compliance.

   We also worked with our VP of Enrollment Management to use language on our website that communicates to prospective students that we will help them navigate the potential issues. We ask prospective students to reach out to an admissions counselor for more information. That way we can have a conversation about possible alternatives or solutions. Also, during the online application process, if an applicant enters a location for which we are not allowed to offer distance education, a pop-up will alert the student of this fact, but it also allows the applicant to continue the application process. This way we are not assuming that the applicant will be permanently in the identified location. We also are able to collect that person's contact information in case anything changes on our end.

5. **How do institutions track Change of Location for students in their SIS?**

   Once a student completes the Update Physical Location screen in Student Planning, the information is automatically sent to our SIS and the information is then pulled for an automatic weekly report using Ellucian's Informer. The Physical Location process has a custom file and fields that go along with them. Our IT

department created it. They also created a front end screen in Colleague WebUI for the Registrar's Office to use.

6. **Since CA is not a part of SARA - if we have a student in a state where we have authorization at the time of enrollment and student moves to another state during the enrolled term where we do not have authorization will we be required to obtain authorization or exemption for that student since they are now in another state despite the fact that they were in an authorized state at enrollment?**

    We advise you to consult with your legal counsel on this, but in general, I believe that you can teach out the student, but you will need to ensure they do not continue to register or take courses after that semester if they remain in the unapproved location. You may also decide that getting the necessary approval is the best route for you, depending the cost and complexity of the application process. A written policy you can point to is helpful in situations like this.   It helps if you have a process in place where you know students are seeing the disclosure or policy.

    We had one situation where an applicant was not currently living in an authorized state, but she promised she would be moving soon to an authorized state. We had her sign a letter which gave a date by which she would have to provide evidence she had moved or we would drop her from her courses and she would not receive a refund beyond what is allowed by our usual refund policy. She signed the letter, so we accepted her.

7. **This is for all three institutions. How much of a financial investment, in software/technology, has been invested in your tracking process? Are there monthly costs associated with the tracking process (i.e., software licensing fees, etc.)?**

    MSMU - We utilize systems that the university already uses for other purposes (Colleague, Student Planning, Informer), so there is no extra cost for this tracking. In the beginning we did need to hire a programmer to create the screen and linkages to our SIS that we needed. This came out of the IT budget. We also went to our institutional contacts at Ellucian and told them this was a Federal regulation, so they agreed to help us figure out a solution to tracking our students.

    ERAU - Thus far, our institution has not invested in additional financial resources in this process. It did require a significant amount of manpower hours from various department to develop and implement, but we accomplished it using existing technology. One recommendation I have made to our institution and would make to others is to invest in an address verification software if you don't already have one in place. This eliminates a lot of manual work going over spreadsheets to identify and following up with students who enter incomplete or inaccurate addresses.

    UK - Aside from costs associated with our LexisNexis subscription, we didn't invest any funds toward software/technology for the tracking process. The software/technology we use was either already available and supported centrally at the University or was custom developed in the portal and SAP by our SLCM team. Most of our cost is tied to staff time involved to build and maintain the verification tag, to pull that data, and to research authorization statuses and work with colleges to oversee this process.

8. **For Embry Riddle, it sounds like you have brick and mortar sites in some places and then you also offer online courses and programs. Do you allow students enrolled online to also take in-seat courses, in essence mixing SARA and a State approval?**

    We allow our students to take any modality of course that suits their needs. But for reporting and jurisdictional purposes, we have different classifications for students in order to ensure that we are meeting state and NC-SARA standards. Prior to the enrollment, we verify various information, such as validating that the student's program is approved at the campus that they wish to take an in-person class at. When a student takes an in-

person class, that enrollment will fall under state jurisdiction to include for areas like reporting and refund policies.

9. **How do institutions track Change of Location for students in their SIS?**

   Our institution requires that students validate their physical location in our system prior to enrolling in courses in August and January. Campus Solutions places a hold on the student's account, preventing them from enrolling until they validate their address, so we ensure that at least twice a year, every student validates or updates their address.

10. **Does this registration question about location that is required (resulting in holds or prevention of registration) create a barrier to registration?**

    Our registrar initially made this argument when we suggested it, but agreed to add the question once we made it part of the address update requirement that already existed. Using dropdown questions instead of having students enter an additional address also decreases the time it takes to complete the question.

11. **How do institutions track Change of Location for students in their SIS?**

    Students can update their location at any time in the SIS system. However, the question is asked each term because students will often forget to update their information if they move. We also encourage programs and advisors to remind students that change of location can impact their ability to continue the program or qualify for state licensure upon graduation.

12. **Our registrar objects to requesting students' location as a requirement for registration. The reason is that classes fill fast and anything that slows students down (like filling out a location question) could make a difference as to whether a student is able to complete the degree on time. (Students are given specific time slots when they are eligible to register.) For the schools that have placed a location question in the registration process, did you face similar pushback; and, if so, how did you overcome it?**

    Yes, initially our team faced similar pushback. However, we overcame this by educating key stakeholders involved in this process (e.g. our institutional effectiveness office, IT department, admissions, etc.).

    First, it was important to create buy-in by ensuring these stakeholders understood how effortlessly this question could be integrated into the registration process. At our institution students were already asked questions about their address location, which was required to be answered or updated prior to enrollment. Thus, for our institution personally, including an additional question to clarify physical location during a particular semester was not a difficult task. Compliance personnel should check with the appropriate departments at their institutions to determine if there are already similar tools in place that would simplify the process of integrating this question.

    Second and most significantly, our team explained the implications of students completing education in an unauthorized location, both from a legal perspective and student perspective. We emphasized that offering unauthorized education could result in violations, fines, discontinued NC-SARA membership and or additional penalties. Likewise, having a student complete education while located permanently or temporarily in an authorized location may cause the student to become ineligible for professional licensure or certification upon graduation, which would be an extremely injurious and unfortunate consequence after spending countless time and money completing a program. In sum, we made these stakeholders understand that integrating this single question is in the best interest of students and the institution overall.

13. **Does KY have trouble getting students to do their Qualtrics survey? Is there some motivation for them to do this?**

    With regards to tracking out-of-state locations of student field placements, individual colleges, departments and programs complete the qualtrics survey - not students.

    As you are aware, pursuant to SARA, a placement is only reported when it occurs outside of state borders; AND is required for degree completion or professional licensure, or is offered for credit or a fee.

    Thus generally, most field placements are either coordinated by the college, department or program; or involve these entities tracking the placement. This is because even if a student coordinates the placement independently, they would have to pay a fee and or register for and ultimately receive credit. For these reasons, these entities would be in the best position to report placements due to their direct involvement with approval, coordination and or tracking.

    Likewise, relying on students to report this information might result in a logistical nightmare. More importantly, ensuring students accurately reported would require assurances, likely through training initiatives, to confirm that they truly understand when reporting applies. Considering that many faculty and staff are still working to understand these requirements and need periodic refreshers, if at all possible, directing the survey at the aforementioned entities might be most beneficial.

    To ensure completion of the survey, it is highly encouraged that compliance personnel educate their colleges, departments and programs about reporting requirements and the impacts that failure to report can have on the institution as a whole. Moreover, a top-down approach will be needed here. In other words, buy-in is very important because if institutional leaders do not recognize the importance of reporting and do not encourage it, the survey response rate and associated collaboration may suffer.

14. **Is there guidance you can point us to regarding delivery of education internationally? I haven't found much on my own. Thank you.**

    You may find resources here under International Compliance:
    https://wcetsan.wiche.edu/resources/compliance-requirements-non-sara

    Because each institution approaches the delivery of education internationally differently, compliance personnel should first contact their legal counsel regarding the exact approach to be taken. Whether an institution can offer such education will vary per each country/international location. Likewise, the type of program to be offered can also have an impact. For example, whether a program is a professional licensure program, in the health field, involves English as a Second Language (ESL), etc. It also should be noted that many times not only is the actual delivery of education to students outside the U.S. governed and regulated, but advertisement and recruitment of these students is equally governed and regulated. Therefore, before engaging in any of these activities, prior authorization/permission should be garnered, when appropriate.

    Some resources available which offer guidance and rules regarding these activities include the Ministry of Education for each country; the European Network of Information Centres in the European Region (ENIC-NARIC), which produces a directory of international ministries and offices that oversee the recognition of foriegn degrees and qualifications; and LexisNexis or other legal resources that, with a subscription, provide access to a country's laws and regulations.

Institutions should be aware of tax implications for the delivery of education internationally. EY Global produces [an annual tax guide on VAT and digital taxes](). Also, institutions may want to know whether there are any sanctions against a particular country before providing education. This information is available at the [U.S. Department of Treasury's website](). Finally, to guard against misrepresentation, compliance personnel should ensure they adequately disclose any additional pertinent information to students prior to enrollment. For example, information about potential technological concerns that could hinder consistency and quality of education, and disclaimers urging students to double-check whether their countries will recognize foreign or online education.

However, compliance personnel should not reinvent the wheel here. There are institutions that have already begun this research, such as The [University of Kentucky](). Although compliance personnel should ultimately be guided by their own legal counsel, reviewing information that is already available (while double-checking for accuracy and that it is up-to-date) is a great first step.

15. **Do SARA colleges have to have reciprocity agreements with foreign countries if students are completing online programs while located abroad in their own country?**

    Unlike in the states (and some U.S. territories), generally, reciprocity agreements between institutions and foreign countries are not automatically created solely as a benefit of an institution being a member of NC-SARA. However, individual institutions may work with their legal counsel to establish a reciprocity agreement, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), or other agreement with a foreign government entity or educational institution, enabling it to offer education. Of course, this varies depending on the institution.

    Educational activities (including mere online delivery) occurring internationally generally falls outside the purview of NC-SARA. Therefore, even SARA colleges must defer to the applicable government entity in the country/international location where they plan to deliver education. This requires conducting research per each location; and also obtaining approval, paying fees, completing applications, etc. per each location, when applicable.

    However, it is important to note that there is typically a different process for students from international locations (e.g. those that have citizenship outside the U.S.) who WILL come to campus, as well as for students who are located outside the U.S. during an Education Abroad experience.

    First, compliance personnel should discuss these differences with the appropriate contacts at their college. Next, compliance personnel should ensure any information or policy implemented clearly differentiates between these types of students to avoid confusion or recreating or contradicting previously enacted policy.

16. **If you are offering courses in conjunction with another school for distance education, do you need to make sure that your school is valid in the state and that the partner school is as well?**

    Your responsibility may be tied to who confers the credits and degree as well as who is accepting the tuition. States could vary as to their view but consider who has control over the student and to which institution would address the student's complaints.

17. **If an institution's policy is that physical location is that which is reported at time of admissions and we follow this throughout, is this acceptable? We are a two-year college.**

    Your institution will want to develop a process that is compliant with federal regulations. Federal regulations indicate that you must have a determination of the location of the student at time of enrollment and if there is a formal receipt of a change based upon the institution's processes. (34 600.9(c)(2)

18. **How do you track incoming residential students' location for licensure disclosures? At what point do you determine location (inquiry, acceptance, deposit, enrollment, etc.)? Who handles correspondence to students (academic departments or admissions/enrollment)?**

The federal regulation indicate that you must provide a direct disclosure to the prospective student where he/she is located PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT IN THE PROGRAM. Guidance from the from the Department of Education in the release of the regulation indicates that the intention is prior to a financial commitment. You will also want to have a process to track that residential student should they take a term in another state to participate in experiential learning or distance education.

As far as who handles it, the institutions vary as to who is the ultimate office responsible for compliance.

19. **Do students taking dual credit courses (taught by qualified high school instructor) engage in physical location?**

Federal regulations directing location of the student are in regard to Title IV HEA Programs. Dual Credit students do not participate in those programs and are not subject to SARA policy.

20. **We require students to verify home address but we did not ask if that is where they are physically located. We used that home state in our IPEDs reporting. It sounds like we did that incorrectly and should have asked for physical location and report on that. The reporting for IPEDs will now not be the same as my NC-SARA report in May. How do I correct this?**

You will want to have a conversation within your institution and specifically the registrar and institutional research offices. The issue of location of students for purposes of Federal regulation is found in 34 CFR 600.9(c).

21. **I see the value in knowing where our online students reside/are located, but my institution is only authorized to offer licensure in our state. We make that very clear to prospective students. We do offer to provide a custom consultation for any students who wishes to forgo licensure in our state for another. Are fully in compliance by simply defining a location process and then tracking students. We have no physical locations outside of our main campus.**

For purposes of Federal regulations, you may share no determination has been made. To participate in reciprocity to offer distance education in other states, SARA Manual 5.2 specifically requires that the institution must make "all reasonable efforts" prior to offering that no determination has been made.

22. **Will you be hosting any workshops specifically for community colleges? Many of our issues/concerns are specific to programming that's not typically offered at 4-year institutions**.

These regulations and requirements are applicable to community colleges as well for maintenance of processes to track students. Regardless of sector, institutions have the responsibility of knowing where their students are located when participating activities of the institution.

23. **What do SARA institutions have to do with CA students? Are we allowed to have CA students?**

Bottom line: Institutions are responsible for any approvals necessary to offer activities in another state. Institutions may obtain those state approvals either by seeking state-by-state approval or by participation in reciprocity through SARA for distance education activities covered by SARA policy and occurring in another SARA state. Currently all states except California are members of SARA. That means the institution is then responsible for determining if there are approvals necessary for the institution to offer activities in California. Currently,

California law does not include oversight of distance education offered to students located in California by an out-of-state institution that is a public or private non-profit institution.

24. **How are you tracking / notifying prospective students? At what point in the application process are students asked to disclose their physical location?**

Federal regulations for professional licensing notifications indicate knowing the location of the student prior to enrollment in the program which the Department has said is prior to a financial commitment. Otherwise, the Federal regulations indicate in 34 CFR 600.9(c)(2) as location at time of enrollment and upon a formal receipt of a change of location based upon the institution's processes and procedures.

25. **What "documentation" of the student tracking process is recommended?**

The Department will be looking to see that you have an internal document that indicates how you are determining location of your students to show regular and consistent practices.

26. **We have athletes who have returned home to CA during the pandemic. Do you know if CA has given any blanket exemption? Do you happen to know how institutions attempt to obtain authorization or an exemption for the state of California?**

There are no blanket exceptions for anything. If an institution has students located in California, the institution will need to determine if an approval is required. At this time, California law does not required oversight of distance education offered to students located in California by an out-of-state institution that is a public or private non-profit institution.

27. **What about having faculty that are teaching from another state? Do we need to get permission from those states?**

Bottom line: ANY activity of an institution may be subject to oversight by the state where the activity occurs. An institution may obtain approval for activities in another state either by seeking state-by-state approvals or by participating in reciprocity for activities subject to SARA policy. SARA oversight as explicitly provided in the SARA Manual, indicates that faculty teaching online from another state is covered by SARA. Therefore, if the institution participate in SARA it does not need to seek permission in other SARA member states. An institution that does not participate in SARA must determine if the other state requires approval, and if so, obtain that approval.

28. **How would you handle this issue if the student is in the middle of degree program and relocates? Do you discontinue them if they don't have any plans to relocate to another state? Thank you!**

If the student is continuing the program by distance education, the institution must determine if the state where the student is located requires approval. If the institution participate in reciprocity through SARA for state institutional approval and the student is located in a SARA members state, then no additional approval is needed. However, if the institution does not participate in SARA and the state requires approval, the institution may be able to contact the state higher education agency where the student is located to seek approval or short term ability to allow the student to complete the program.

29. **RE: question about reporting hybrid courses --- not sure how this is defined, but can you define what a distance learning course is? What is the ratio of face-to-face vs. online learning. Is it 100% online or some other formula?**

For purposes of Federal regulations these definitions will be part of the regulations to become effective on July 1, 2021. Here is some analysis: **Surprise! Newly Released Final Regulations** (Distance Ed Regs), WCET Frontiers; Aug 2020; Van Davis

30. **I'm new to this - who should be responsible for researching whether a program meets educational requirement in a state - compliance office or programs?**

    You ask a great question. It is handled differently at different institutions. Typically, we see a point person in the provost, legal counsel, or distance education office who is collaborating with the varied academic departments who are subject matter experts to address educational requirements.

31. **One more question on the 10 students per site. Would your home state be excluded from that rule? My assumption is your institution is approved by your home Dept. of Ed. and accreditor to physically operate in your home state?**

    Yes.

32. **A prior question referred to Spring 2020 and the impacts of the pandemic and whether it would be "appropriate to use home address on file as best available for reporting purposes." I gather that is in regard to OOSLP because enrollment is only based on fall. Would this same approach be acceptable for the fall enrollment reporting, however? Meaning, if an institution did not closely track where exclusively distance ed students were physically located due to the impacts of Covid?**

    Reporting OOSLP is for the entire calendar year (January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020). Given COVID-19, NC-SARA expects institutions to do their best to provide accurate data.

33. **Some of our degree programs allow students to do internships on our campus. How does that apply to the 10 students per site rule? Can we do this or is this a violation?**

    The NC-SARA "rule of 10" does not apply to the home state.

34. **The "10" student rule is only for programs leading to professional licensure?**

    The NC-SARA "rule of 10" refers to all field experiences (placements).

35. **If we have students taking our online courses at our institution as part of a consortium, do we have to report on these students or does the home institution?**

36. **Will the criteria for reporting 2020 OOSLP numbers be the same this year as previous years, regardless of the COVID impact?**

    Yes.

37. **We are a stand-alone law school. Many of our students take for-credit externships that involve out of state placements with law firms, courts, and other legal settings under the supervision of a licensed attorney. These are not required; they are electives. What do we need to do in terms of getting approvals and reporting? (sorry, I need clarity for our situation). -- we are a SARA member.**

As a SARA participating institution, you may send students across state lines to participate in field experiences (placements) as long as it meets SARA policy.

38. **Just to be clear.. Is there a NC-SARA report and a separate reporting to the "state"-SARA as well?**

Your home state authorizing agency may require certain data.

39. **If a student is doing experiential learning as part of a class that is not part of a licensure program, are these still tracked as outside placements? In our case, we have pastoral care classes in which the student works with their local church leadership to gain experience. However, there is no formal arrangement with the church.**

SARA participating institutions need to report out-of-state learning placements that meet the criteria. Please refer to the NC-SARA Data Reporting Handbook for Institutions for more details.

40. **If the limit for in-person instruction is 6 hours for semesters, what is the limit for schools on the quarter system?**

The 6 hour instruction is per term.

41. **If you have 20 nursing students on clinicals at the same hospital, all from the same program, and 10 are there half of the semester and 10 the other half-is that OK?**

No. The NC-SARA "rule of 10" is per program, per site, per term.

42. **If you have to report placement for learning all year, how do you handle 'duplicates'? If a student moves 3 times in the year, do they get counted three times? Do they count in 3 different states?**

If you have student who is located in two different states in two different terms – you would report both placements. Please refer to the NC-SARA Data Reporting Handbook for Institutions for more details

43. **For SARA Spring 2020 reporting, how would we handle international students that were on campus, then when COVID hit, may have stayed in states or could have returned to home country? At the time, we did not have system in place to track or follow up with them.**

Please report your distance education enrollments as you do for IPEDS. For out-of-state learning placements – please report all students who participated in placements in other states. If students went out of the country, you do not need to report them.