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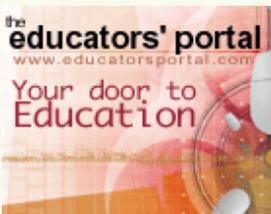
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### Update

#### In the News / [People Watch](#)

#### Trial by FIRE

#### Advocacy group picks unlikely free speech foe

Until late April, Shippensburg University (PA) was hardly on the radar of those who shape higher ed policy. That changed when a nonprofit group calling itself the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, or FIRE (<http://www.thefire.org/>), helped two students slap a lawsuit on the school claiming that the state university's speech code violates the right to free speech. Before any reader assumes that the lawsuit involves rioting anti-war students silenced by a conservative university president, consider the facts.

The plaintiffs are "Jane and John Doe," who say their conservative beliefs might put them in harm's way at the school. So fearful was Jane Doe of reprisals that she spoke with a National Public Radio interviewer on the condition of anonymity.

No one could be more shocked than the school officials. "We have no understanding of where this is coming from," says Peter Gigliotti, director of public relations at Shippensburg. In March, he says, the school established its second "free-speech zone," which gives students a defined campus area to rally or assemble. The first such zone was established 15 years ago, after outside demonstrators intimidated students with face-to-face confrontations.

Shippensburg plans to fight FIRE in court. Meanwhile, FIRE is also behind a lawsuit filed in mid-May by Christopher Stevens, 20, a student of California's Citrus Community College. He was told he could only hold a "pro-America" rally outside that school's free-speech area if he was part of a registered club. He is arguing for the right to rally anywhere on campus. FIRE already scored a victory at U of Miami earlier in the year when it won the right for ACT, the Advocates for Conservative Thought, to become an approved student group. FIRE has vowed similar actions in each of the nation's 12 appellate districts.

--Jean Marie Angelo

#### Testing the Waters For Tablet PCs

#### New study determines tablet PC viability

In a six-month study completed earlier this spring, researchers at Bentley College in Boston worked with 12 different corporate partners (including Microsoft, Acer, Toshiba, and NEC) to determine whether tablet PCs are a viable alternative to laptops and desktops in the higher education market. The report found that not only did tablet PCs have strong market potential in higher education (with projections for four to five million units sold), there are only minor barriers to entry. Coordinating data from academic affiliates across the U.S., researchers determined that:

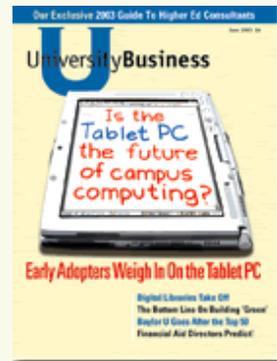
- 38 percent of all students were likely to use tablet PCs in the classroom.
- Both slates and convertibles were accepted form factors.
- 54 percent were willing to pay \$2,000 or more for a tablet PC
- Large-scale conversion from laptops to tablets will take place in the Fall of 2004

*While the study supported the potential growth of tablet PCs on college and university campuses, it also revealed some key issues that administrators and marketers must consider when planning such a program:*

- Dependability is a major concern (hinge reliability and stylus loss were oft-cited issues).
- Tablet PCs don't match student lifestyles outside of the classroom.
- The stylus was preferred by older users (keyboard by younger users).
- Word-of-mouth, on-campus placement programs are needed.

The next phase of the study, set to commence this summer, will look at attitude and usage among current tablet PC users. For more information, contact Bentley Professor Perry Lowe at [plowe@bentley.edu](mailto:plowe@bentley.edu). --Matt Villano

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Der Exclusive 2003 Guide To Higher Ed Consultants

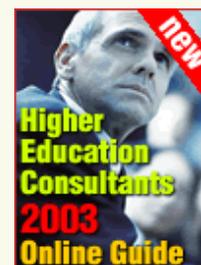
UniversityBusiness

Is the Tablet PC the future of campus computing?

Early Adopters Weigh In On the Tablet PC

Digital Librarians Take Off  
The Bottom Line: Re-Building "Green"  
Procter & Gamble After the Big 30  
Financial Aid Directors Predict

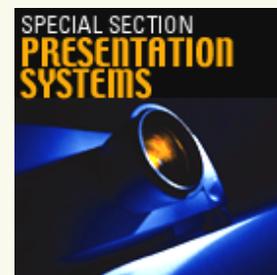
### Current Issue



Higher Education Consultants 2003 Online Guide



2002 e-Learning Guide



SPECIAL SECTION  
PRESENTATION SYSTEMS

**Danger in Discounting?**  
**Report outlines downside of tuition strategy**

A new report published by the Lumina Foundation suggests that the common practice of tuition discounting may have unintended negative effects for both the schools and the students it was designed to help. Key findings from the report, called "Unintended Consequences of Tuition Discounting," include:

- While tuition discounting works for some institutions, it does not always produce the desired effects.
- Tuition discounting has the potential of contributing to the financial distress of colleges.
- Tuition discounting frequently fails to increase net revenue for colleges.
- Tuition discounting does not always lead to improved student quality.
- Tuition discounting practices, when combined across all institutions, have restricted access for lower-income students.

The full report may be obtained from <http://www.luminafoundation.org/>. --Tim Goral

**Quiet: Studying for a Career!**  
**School aims to fill predicted librarian shortage**

Last year, we reported that some schools were working to relieve a nationwide shortage of pharmacists. Then it was a surge in forensic-studies students--fueled partly by the popular CSI television series--which made headlines. Now, experts say a hot career choice in coming years will be that of librarian. More than half the librarians serving elementary and secondary schools around the nation will retire in this decade, and those jobs will need to be filled.

Larry Nesbit, director of libraries at Mansfield University (PA), says his school is ready to meet the challenge. "It's just because school libraries expanded in the late 1960s," he says. "Now that group of librarians is ready to retire."

Mansfield's online library sciences courses, including Electronic Delivery Systems and Strategic Library Management, have become a popular draw, growing from just 30 students in 2000 to almost 160 students today. Nesbit predicts that number will double over the next two years. --TG

**Private College Tuition Stays Steady**  
**Survey finds sound business practices are key**

The economy may be going south, but private college tuition rates remained steady, according to a new survey from National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). The average tuition increase for 2003-2004 is 5.8 percent--identical to last year's rate. The survey was conducted this spring, with more than 300 private institutions participating.

What's more, although budgets are severely strained, private schools have kept net tuition increases under the rate of inflation over the last decade. NAICU President David L. Warren attributes that to sound business practices. "Private institutions are relying on innovative business management practices, flexible administration, enhanced cost control, and improved efficiency," said Warren. "These factors, along with significant investments in institutional grant aid, have kept a personal and high-quality private college education affordable to students from all backgrounds."

The study is available online at <http://www.naicu.edu/>. --TG

**Between the Lines**  
**Student Movements for Multiculturalism: Challenging the Curricular Color Line in Higher Education**

*By David Yamane;*  
The Johns Hopkins

University Press, 2001 (paperback 2002), 193 pp.; \$17.95

Curricular requirements emphasizing a multicultural perspective may seem commonplace, but, until recently, such requirements were a rarity, says author David Yamane. Student Movements for Multiculturalism is the story of efforts to add such courses to offerings at the University of Wisconsin at Madison and the University of California at Berkeley. Yamane says these efforts were spearheaded not by administrators pursuing a political agenda but by students seeking to amend deficiencies that they perceived in the curriculum. This account of recent higher education history is a study in the power of students to affect their education.

--Jennifer Patterson Lorenzetti

**Wesleyan to Offer Gender-blind housing in fall**

**Living arrangement believed to be a first**

Wesleyan University (CT) will offer "gender-blind" housing next fall to a number of students who classify themselves as transgender. The term applies to people born with ambiguous genitalia or to those who don't identify with their physical sex. Starting in September, one floor of a dormitory will be reserved for up to 15 such students.

Under Wesleyan's previous policy, roommates had to be of the same sex, but that policy was modified after student groups asked the school to do more to accommodate the living needs of transgender students.

Students who choose to live in the gender-blind area "will be assigned a roommate without the consideration of gender," according to the school.

University officials believe the new housing arrangement is the first of its kind in the nation.

--Tim Goral

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