



**INDIANA UNIVERSITY**

**OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST  
FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

Bloomington

# Enhanced Transcripts

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# Executive Summary & Overview

*After reviewing peer institution best practices, talking with stakeholders on the IU Bloomington campus and beyond, and weighing the pros and cons of an enhanced transcript program, **we would advise against prioritizing this initiative.** We found that **issues regarding feasibility, cost, and disadvantaging minority populations** significantly outweigh the benefits of an enhanced transcript. If the Office were to move forward with this initiative, we suggest that the Office consider limiting the scope of the enhanced transcript, identifying and proceeding with a test department/school, increasing capacity of the Office of the Registrar, and re-examining verification measures.*

1. Peer Institution Research
2. Stakeholder Perspectives
3. Recommendations



SECTION 1

# Peer Institution Research

# Peer Institution Research

## The Problem: Transcripts are becoming irrelevant for employers

- Fewer employers ask for transcripts
- “Record of everything the student has forgotten” – Thomas Black (Stanford University registrar)
- Enhanced transcripts could aid in curbing **grade inflation**
  - “Schedule-point average” alongside grade-point average
  - More contextualized information on each course (ie. grade distributions included)

## Several schools have begun experimenting, but no consensus on what should be included

- Stanford University, Elon University, UNC Chapel Hill, University of Aberdeen (UK), University of Birmingham (UK) all experimenting with ETs
- What’s included is primarily based on the purpose of the ET (combating inflation vs. improving the picture of students’ achievements)



# American Universities

## Elon University

- Elon Experiences Transcript (EET)
- Documents study abroad, service, leadership, internship, and research
- **Goal:** help students “map their experiences”
- Puts students “ahead of the pack when applying for employment”

## UNC – Chapel Hill

- Fall 2014: proposed contextual grading
- Backlash from students
- February 2017: postponed due to “prohibitive costs and technical challenges”
- **Goal:** combat grade inflation

## Stanford University

- “Experimenting” with ETs (Chronicle – 2015)
- **Goal:** likely similar to Elon – aid students in application process



# British Universities

**Universities in the United Kingdom have begun to experiment with Enhanced Transcripts in order to comply with new national initiatives and recommendations**

- Higher Education Achievement Report (HEAR)
  - Launched in 2008 by Higher Education Academy
  - Goal: “produce a more comprehensive record of student achievement”
  - 90 institutions currently implementing the HEAR
  - Meant to “complement” a CV/resume – supplement to degree
  - Standard template – includes personal information, degree conferred, level of qualification earned in context, mode of study, program requirements, grading scheme details, additional awards, activities, sports, prizes

**Enhanced Transcripts are being adopted as a precursor to full implementation of HEAR reports**



# Peer Institution Research - Key Takeaways

**Enhanced Transcripts have not been prioritized by American universities.**

There are two primary types of ETs:

- An ET that focuses on the **student**: complements the student's resume; meant to help consolidate information
- An ET that focuses on the **institution**: aims to curb grade inflation

**Feedback regarding ETs has been mixed, but primarily negative**

**Implementation has proven difficult for UNC-Chapel Hill**

**British universities have implemented ETs to comply with HEAR report requirements**



SECTION 2

# Stakeholder Perspectives

# Career Services and Advising

- ***Marnie Shapiro, Graduate Assistant Advisor, Advisor at Hutton Honors College***
  - “There’s a lot more to college than just grades.”
  - Concerns about tracking
- ***Robin Banks, Academic Advisor at Hutton Honors College***
  - Great to demonstrate learning outside of the classroom
  - Appealing for postgraduate opportunities
- ***Nicole Martins, Associate Professor, Director of the Honors Program for The Media School***
  - Put in the money and resources to make this work
- ***Kori Renn, Career Services Coach, Kelley School of Business***
  - Potential for imbalance - students might only seek out opportunities that are verified by the university, even if it's not in their best interest.
  - "You still have to compete with the marketplace - this isn't in lieu of a resume"



# Graduate Studies

- *Kathy Teige, Graduate Studies Administrative Associate in the Media School*
  - “**If it’s not an apples to apples comparison, it’s worse than useless.**”
  - Students, often female students, undersell themselves
- *Janet Hein, Director of Admissions, Maurer School of Law*
  - Prefers that applicants **write their own resume**; enhanced transcript **should not replace this** component
  - Context is always, helpful, but would likely not help IU undergraduate students stand out amongst other applicants



# Recruiters and Employers

## *Ashley Estoque, Core Assurance Manager, PwC*

- "We typically **do not review transcripts of students as a part of the process to decide who to interview** (this is where volunteering, clubs/organizations, internships/jobs, etc. comes into play). The transcript is **helpful to validate GPA and major requirements later** in the process, but at that point, I'm not sure we would look at the additional information the Enhanced Transcripts would provide when we have **all information available via resume.**"

## *Emily Shockley, Recruiter, Salesforce*

- "Recruiters **care more about what you did and the experience you had** rather than just the title ETs would provide"
- ETs are **skewed** - certain students can volunteer/travel abroad, which often consumes a lot of time and is expensive
  - May **disadvantage students from low socio-economic statuses** who can't afford to do all the items reported on the transcript
- ETs **are not standardized**: a different format may confuse recruiters that already don't spend a ton of time screening applications across different institutions



SECTION 3

# Recommendations

# Takeaway: would not recommend prioritizing

1. Diversity and inclusion: disadvantage nontraditional students
2. Extra cost/staff associated
3. Not likely to significantly benefit students
4. Funds would be better directed towards expanding career center, etc.



# Implementation - Administrative

- Hire additional staff in Office of the Registrar
  - Needed to process increased transcript development and verification requests
  - Con: raised cost of official transcripts
- Design and implement verification process
  - What counts as an activity?
  - How is it recorded or measured?
  - Who is responsible for confirming what students say they did?



# Implementation - beINvolved

- Used selectively by student organizations
  - Many don't actively use/maintain pages
- Could be revamped to help track involvement and hours
  - Would require verification
    - ex: students can say they are involved in multiple clubs on beINvolved, even if they don't actively attend events
    - Crimson Card swipes



# Implementation - Limited Scope

- Limit what is included on transcript
  - Option: limit to just IUB activities
- We recommend implementing a trial run with one department, and then scaling up to one school before implementing across campus
  - Would allow time to test feasibility
  - Allow cost-benefit evaluation
  - Easier to change if only affecting limited number of students





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