![PESC Best Practices logo]

"ELON EXPERIENCES TRANSCRIPT AND INTEGRATION TO THE ACADEMIC TRANSCRIPT" AWARDED 1ST PLACE IN PESC BEST PRACTICES COMPETITION

COLLABORATIVE SUBMISSION BY ELON UNIVERISITY & PARCHMENT WINS 16TH ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR 2014

Washington, D.C.   The Board of Directors of PESC is pleased to announce Elon University and Parchment as 1st Place Winners of PESC's 16th Annual Best Practices Competition. The collaborative submission prepared by Dr. Rodney Parks, Registrar and Assistant Professor at Elon University entitled, "Elon Experiences Transcript and Integration to the Academic Transcript," received high praise from the Board for its holistic approach to improving the student experience with innovative technology while simultaneously preparing for standardization.

"As registrars, many of us struggle constantly to maintain consistency in the face of faculty and student demands for a more comprehensive credential that documents the student academic experience in greater depth," Dr. Parks explains in the winning submission. "While historically student systems have limited our ability to provide experiential depth to the transcript, Parchment has enabled us to take the technology of producing comprehensive student records to a new level," Dr. Parks continues.

Given this pressure for more detailed documentation, some institutions have begun to develop ways to extend the traditional academic transcripts, including co-curricular, competency-based, and data-enabled eTranscripts. Matthew Pittinksy, Ph.D. CEO of Parchment and faculty member at Arizona State University notes, "Co-curricular and competency-based transcripts innovate at the level of content and substance, extending the academic transcript,"

"Elon University and Parchment exemplify how innovation and standardization can live side by side," states Michael D. Sessa, PESC President & CEO. "Innovation is not hampered, but enhanced by the strategic approach brought by standards; while existing standards must correspondingly ensure they remain current and usable," Mr. Sessa adds.

The award-winning submission made by Elon University and Parchment is posted on the PESC website with prior winners at http://www.pesc.org/interior.php?page_id=153. An Awards Ceremony

will be held during the General Sessions at PESC's Spring 2015 Data Summit being held April 28 - 30, 2015 in Washington DC at the Embassy Row Hotel.

Registration is still open for PESC's Spring 2015 Data Summit and all information including registration and program are posted online at www.PESC.org.

PESC's Education Record User Group is the permanent authority within PESC governing registrar and admissions PESC Approved Standards. For more information about PESC, the Annual Best Practices Competition and the Education Record User Group, please visit http://www.PESC.org. For questions or concerns about PESC and/or about PESC events and activities, please contact Jennifer Kim, PESC's Membership Services Director, at 202.261.6516 or jennifer.kim@pesc.org.

ABOUT PESC

Established in 1997 and located in Washington, D.C., PESC is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit, community-based, umbrella association of data, software and service providers; local, state and federal government agencies; schools, colleges and universities; college, university and state systems; professional, commercial and non-profit organizations; and, national and international non-profit associations and foundations. Through open and transparent community participation, PESC enables cost-effective connectivity between data systems to accelerate performance and service, to simplify data access and research, and to improve data quality along the education lifecycle.

PESC envisions global interoperability within the Education domain, supported by a trustworthy, inter-connected network called *EdUnify* built by and between communities of interest (systems, states, districts, etc.) in which data flows seamlessly from one system to another and throughout the entire eco-system when and where needed without compatibility barriers but in a safe, secure, reliable, and efficient manner. To achieve its mission and vision, PESC organizes committees, activities and events to: accelerate performance and service, reduce cost, lead collaborative development, set and maintain common data standards, promote best practices, link public and private sectors, and serve as data experts.

While PESC promotes the implementation and usage of data exchange standards, PESC does not set (create or establish) policies related to privacy and security. Organizations and entities using PESC Approved Standards and services should ensure they comply with FERPA and all local, state, federal and international rules on privacy and security as applicable. For more information, see www.PESC.org.

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The Elon Experiences Transcript and integration to the academic transcript

Elon University & Parchment submission to the PESC Best Practices Competition

Prepared by Dr. Rodney Parks, Registrar and Assistant Professor, Elon University

Executive Summary

For many years, registrars have been asked, and often pressured, by faculty and students to document more information on the official academic transcript, presenting a challenge for those of us responsible for maintaining the integrity of the data. One common request is to identify course attributes, such as service learning, diversity-themed, online, hybrid, and study abroad courses, among others. As registrars, many of us struggle constantly to maintain consistency in the face of faculty and student demands for a more comprehensive credential that documents the student academic experience in greater depth. While historically student systems have limited our ability to provide experiential depth to the transcript, Parchment has enabled us to take the technology of producing compressive student records to a new level.

Given this pressure for more detailed documentation, some institutions have begun to develop ways to extend the traditional academic transcripts, including co-curricular, competency-based, and data-enabled eTranscripts. Matthew Pittinksy, Ph.D. CEO of Parchment and faculty member at Arizona State University notes, "Co-curricular and competency-based transcripts innovate at the level of content and substance, extending the academic transcript," Today's society is increasingly credential focused and innovations are paving the way to address the growing need to thoroughly document the student experience; whether as supplements to, or overtime the successor to the traditional transcript.

These transcript extensions are having a direct impact on how employers and graduate schools view our students. David Blake, the Chief Human Resources officer at Oregon State University, has argued, "an employer needs to see the 'experiences' gained by a potential job candidate and not just a random list of courses taken." Furthermore, he observes, "traditional student transcripts tell us what kind of classroom learning has taken place, but they don't capture all the different ways in which a student gains knowledge, skills, and abilities. In today's work world, experiential learning is just as important as academics" (CUPA-HR, 2014).

The Elon Experiences Transcript

Institutions have adopted many different approaches in determining the categories for programming the co-curricular transcript. Created in 1994, the Elon Experiences Co-Curricular Transcript (CCT) seeks to enhance documentation of the student experience by recording participation in five key program areas: leadership, service, internship, global engagement, and undergraduate research. These areas incorporate extensive experiential learning and collectively reflect values that deepen the student experience.

Experiential education at Elon University is managed by the Elon Experiences Advisory Council (EEAC). Over the past two decades, Elon has seen considerable growth in student participation in experiential education, in contrast to the national trend Kuh (2008) has identified. While Elon has endeavored to expand experiential education, national participation in high-impact experiential practices has remained flat over the last few years, with only service-learning experiencing modest growth (Kuh, 2013, p. 5), as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Elon Student Participation in High-Impact Experiences

High-Impact Experiences	2008 Elon	2009 Elon	2010 Elon	2011 Elon	2012 Elon	2012 National Participation
Internships	79%	84%	84%	89%	87%	49%
Leadership	41%	41%	42%	45%	46%	--
Service Learning	89%	87%	83%	79%	82%	48%
Study Abroad	71%	71%	70%	69%	72%	14%
Undergraduate Research	14%	17%	18%	18%	21%	20%

Embedding Experiential Learning into University Culture

At most universities, co-curricular programs are managed within offices responsible for student affairs, engagement, and leadership. Databases that compile student activity information often reside within these units and therefore record creation and maintenance is also housed in these units. However, a stronger connection between academic and student affairs offices may enhance the overall quality and facilitate the effective dissemination of this data.

Leadership is a central tenet of Elon's success. Each of the five key experiential program areas is coordinated by a professional staff member in collaboration with a faculty development fellow. Together these leaders recruit faculty and staff with the necessary expertise to staff, implement, and document the experience. For example, the study abroad area is led by the Dean for Global Education in conjunction with a senior faculty member who has extensive experience in study abroad course development. This model is replicated for four of the five experiential areas supported by the university. The fifth area, undergraduate research, is coordinated entirely by faculty and has a faculty director who serves as the unit head.

Experiential learning is further strengthened through the contributions of an Experiential

Education Advisory Council that includes the director of the core curriculum, an administrator of a scholarship program dedicated to funding experiential education, and members from the other offices responsible for administering experiential learning requirements. The Council is chaired by the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs.
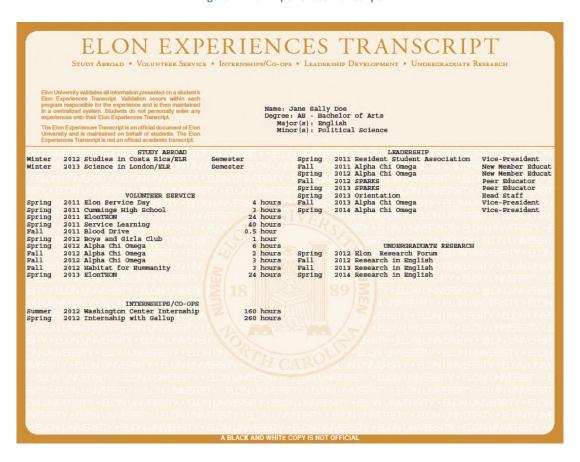
Integrating the CCT to the Academic Transcript

With today's technologies, students should not have to go multiple places to obtain documents that paint a full picture of their academic experiences, presenting a workflow that left the experiences transcript infrequently utilized. To address these concerns and encourage the exchange of experiential information, Elon partnered with Parchment to bridge the gap between the CCT and the academic transcript. Working with Parchment to modify the transcript ordering system allows students to "opt-in" to receive a copy of their CCT along with their traditional academic transcript. With the new ordering system in place, Elon saw orders for CCT transcripts increase from 3 to 727 in the first year the technology went online. Combining the two transcripts with different data is no small feat. Co-curricular transcripts have historically looked very different than the traditional academic transcript. For the documents to be released as one academic document, an agreement of what would be perceived as "best practices" in the field of academic credentials had to be followed. Data standardization that fit the limits of character length and description was followed throughout the document. While no standard unit of measurement exists for co-curricular transcripts, depth was captured using time (hours) and location (global experience and internship), and title (leadership and research). Additionally, while the look and feel of the new transcript was standardized to match the academic transcript, verbiage highlighting that Elon validates the information stored on the CCT was added to the front along with the statement that the, "Elon Experiences Transcript is not an official academic transcript."

To combine the documents into one certified PDF it was imperative to revise both transcripts to have a similar look and feel, with appropriate legends on the back of each transcript (second page of the PDF). Similarly, Elon needed to differentiate the two transcripts to provide clarity to receivers. To do this, we elected to use different colored transcript paper for each of the two transcripts, academic in maroon and experiences in gold.

ELON EXPERIENCES TRANSCRIPT

STUDY ABROAD • VOLUNTEER SERVICE • INTERNSHIPS/CO-OPS • LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT • UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Elon University validates all information presented on a student's Elon Experiences Transcript. Validation occurs within each program responsible for the experience and is then maintained in a centralized system. Students do not personally enter any experiences onto their Elon Experiences Transcript.

The Elon Experiences Transcript is an official document of Elon University and is maintained on behalf of students. The Elon Experiences Transcript is not an official academic transcript.

Name: Jane Sally Doe
Degree: AB - Bachelor of Arts
Major(s): English
Minor(s): Political Science

STUDY ABROAD

Winter	2012	Studies in Costa Rica/ELR	Semester
Winter	2013	Science in London/ELR	Semester

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Spring	2011	Elon Service Day	4 hours
Spring	2011	Cummings High School	3 hours
Spring	2011	ElonTHON	24 hours
Spring	2011	Service Learning	40 hours
Fall	2011	Blood Drive	0.5 hour
Spring	2012	Boys and Girls Club	1 hour
Spring	2012	Alpha Chi Omega	6 hours
Fall	2012	Alpha Chi Omega	2 hours
Fall	2012	Alpha Chi Omega	3 hours
Fall	2012	Habitat for Hummanity	3 hours
Spring	2013	ElonTHON	24 hours

INTERNSHIPS/CO-OPS

Summer	2012	Washington Center Internship	160 hours
Spring	2012	Internship with Gallup	260 hours

LEADERSHIP

Spring	2011	Resident Student Association	Vice-President
Fall	2011	Alpha Chi Omega	New Member Educat
Spring	2012	Alpha Chi Omega	New Member Educat
Fall	2012	SPARKS	Peer Educator
Spring	2013	SPARKS	Peer Educator
Spring	2013	Orientation	Head Staff
Fall	2013	Alpha Chi Omega	Vice-President
Spring	2014	Alpha Chi Omega	Vice-President

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Spring	2012	Elon Research Forum
Fall	2012	Research in English
Fall	2013	Research in English
Spring	2014	Research in English

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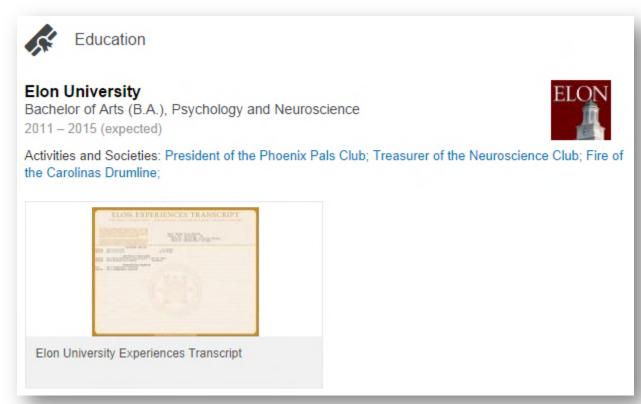
Educating the campus community was also a concern, as students and alumni began calling the Registrar's Office asking about the differences between the academic and experiential transcripts. It was crucial to disseminate information pertaining to the transcript types. Around the same time, students were given the ability to view an unofficial version of both transcripts online and encouraged to "build" their CCT the same way they would build their academic transcript. Brochures titled, "The Power of the Elon Experiences" were disseminated to students, faculty, and staff to highlight the importance and use of the CCT. Additional changes implemented by Parchment allowed students to order a CCT independently from the academic transcript and to use the CCT to market themselves on social media sites such as LinkedIn.

A Focus on Data Standards

Knowing the history associated with XML transcript exchange from the early 2000's, the re-write of the CCT to match the academic transcript focused on uniformity and synthesized data standards found on the academic transcript. While acknowledging we are a few years away from being able to transmit CCT's via XML, the data is formatted in a way that anticipates the exchange of standards-based experiential data, following the XML implementation guide used for transcripts. Because CCT's tend to follow institutional culture in design, a schema with flexible user defined extensions will be necessary to facilitate data transfer. Some standardization with unit of measurement and common experiences seems plausible. Using the academic transcript as a guide for character length and general layout of experiences should make the data easier to convert. As institutions work to standardize and define common data that make up core experiences electronic data transfer should occur naturally.

On the Horizon

During the Fall of 2014, Elon began to aggressively market the CCT to incoming first-year students through an introductory seminar (Elon 101). The Registrar's Office has worked with the Student Professional Development Center to educate students on how to market themselves effectively using the new experiential transcript on social media platforms. Deepening the descriptions of the data stored on the CCT is underway and students are being more proactive in having information recorded on the transcript through approved mechanisms.

One of the most difficult challenges is assessing the response to and value of the co-curricular transcripts for employers, alumni, and graduate and professional school admissions offices. Administrators often wonder to what extent students submit copies of the CCT to employers and what outcomes these new transcripts yield from hiring officials. In Fall 2014, the Registrar's Office began reaching out to corporate partners and other recipients of the CCT for feedback on the document. While results are in a fledgling status, initial responses have been generally positive.

As other institutions begin to consider combining the two transcripts, concern over the data standardization and data integrity will arise. Registrars have already expressed concern about relinquishing some control over what information is stored and released, how information gets entered into the student system, what data standards exist for those wanting to build a CCT and who has the authority to view and release the information. These are all significant questions that PESC is positioned to address in the near future. When it comes to a CCT, what works well for one institution may not be a panacea for all, but the movement to build and release a CCT electronically has clearly taken the nation by storm. We still have a number of questions worth considering, but in the end, we are long overdue to provide a meaningful credential to our students that accurately convey the depth and breadth of their entire student experience.

References

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