

NATIONAL STUDENT CLEARINGHOUSE®

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Growing Global Support of Groningen Declaration and Its Commitment to Student Data Portability at DSDDW 2013 in Beijing *Worldwide Digital Student Data Portability Conference Showcases National Student Clearinghouse® Initiatives: SPEEDE Server Expansion and U.S./Netherlands Data Exchange Pilot*

April 11, 2013, Herndon, Virginia – An additional five countries, including Australia, France, Mexico, Romania, and Italy, signed the [Groningen Declaration](#) at the second [Digital Student Data Depositories Worldwide \(DSDDW\)](#). The meeting, which just ended in Beijing, expanded international support for student data portability. To demonstrate the viability of secure and compliant global digital student data exchange, the meeting showcased several initiatives, including two from the [National Student Clearinghouse](#): the nationwide utilization of the University of Texas [SPEEDE server](#) and a pilot with [DUO, an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Education](#), to create the first non-U.S. online academic credentials verification service.

The growing popularity of students studying abroad, along with the increase in academic fraud, is driving the need for the worldwide adoption of digital data exchange to support student mobility. The number of international students attending U.S. institutions is at a record high 764,495, while the number of U.S. students studying abroad has climbed to 273,996, according to the [Institute of International Education](#). Meanwhile, academic fraud is now a \$1.5-2.5 billion dollar global industry, according to the [Illuminate Consulting Group](#), a strategic academic consulting firm.

During the first DSDDW seminar in April 2012, the Clearinghouse, along with seven countries and two European educational organizations, signed the Groningen Declaration, which called for “a more complete and far-reaching delivery of digital student data.” DSDDW 2013, hosted by DUO and the [China Higher Education Student Information and Career Center \(CHESICC\)](#), was co-sponsored by the Clearinghouse and the [American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers \(AACRAO\)](#), which has a worldwide membership of 11,000 higher education professionals.

During the DSDDW 2013 keynote address, Shelby Stanfield, vice provost and registrar at the [University of Texas at Austin](#), explained how the University of Texas Server (aka SPEEDE) has been developed in the U.S. as a shared exchange platform. UT-Austin started SPEEDE in 1995 and [recently chose the Clearinghouse to assume its operation](#). The SPEEDE platform will be used to create a national electronic education data exchange network offering free, open, and secure standards-based access to U.S. institutions and their service providers.

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Rick Torres, Clearinghouse president and CEO, and Jan Otten, policy advisor for International Affairs at DUO, reviewed the U.S./Netherlands data exchange pilot: the first online academic verification service created outside the United States. The pilot is based on a longtime service, DegreeVerifySM, provided by the Clearinghouse at no charge to more than 2,000 U.S. colleges and universities within the United States. Whether for Dutch students studying in the U.S. or American students studying in the Netherlands, degrees (along with enrollment for students attending U.S. institutions) will be able to be verified through this program. This service, expected to be implemented in the fall of 2013, will be free to all participating U.S. and Dutch institutions.

“Education has no boundaries and neither should the student records and documents that are needed to facilitate student mobility,” explained Mr. Torres. “On behalf of our thousands of participating institutions and their students, both international and domestic, the Clearinghouse will work with the world’s education community to streamline the international student admissions process and combat academic fraud using secure digital student data exchange while protecting rights to privacy.”

“Data portability has become an increasingly important issue for our worldwide membership as more and more students seek an education outside their own countries. The current paper-based application processes are costly, time consuming, and fraught with potential for fraud,” said Mike Reilly, executive director, AACRAO. “The Groningen Declaration and the opportunities it represents, like the initiatives spearheaded by the Clearinghouse and DUO, are exciting and welcome developments.”

Both SPEEDE and the DUO pilot, along with other DSDDW developments, will be discussed at the [annual AACRAO meeting](#) in San Francisco on April 15 by a panel of attendees of the Beijing seminar.

About The National Student Clearinghouse

The National Student Clearinghouse (a nonprofit formed in 1993) is the trusted source for and leading provider of higher education verifications and electronic education record exchanges, handling more than 700 million verification requests and 200 million education record exchanges annually. The Clearinghouse serves as a single point of contact for the collection and timely exchange of accurate and comprehensive enrollment, degree, and certificate records on behalf of its more than 3,300 participating higher education institutions, which represent 96 percent of all students in public and private U.S. institutions. The Clearinghouse also provides thousands of high schools and districts with continuing collegiate enrollment, progression, and completion statistics on their alumni.

Through its verification, electronic exchange, and reporting services, the Clearinghouse saves the education community cumulatively nearly four hundred million dollars annually. Most Clearinghouse services are provided to colleges and universities at little or no charge, including enhanced transcript and research services, enabling institutions to redistribute limited staff and budget resources to more important student service efforts. Clearinghouse services are designed to facilitate an institution’s compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, The Higher Education Act, and other applicable laws.

In addition, the Clearinghouse provides accurate, timely enrollment and degree verifications to student loan providers, employers, student credit issuers, the U.S. Department of Education, and others who access its registry more than half a billion times annually. For more information, visit www.studentclearinghouse.org.

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