COLLEGE BOYCOTT GIVES JOLT TO “WIRED” SURVEY

At least thirteen universities boycotted this year’s Yahoo! Internet Life’s survey of the “most wired” colleges and universities after the publication refused to disclose the criteria it uses to rank the schools. Yahoo! Internet Life (YIL) Editor Rob Bernstein says the boycott is a reflection of how important the Internet has become to universities. Harvard, Stanford, and Yale were among the schools that refused to participate in the survey this year. YIL’s “most wired” list this year was topped by Carnegie Mellon University, followed by the University of Delaware and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. (USA Today)

ONE COLLEGE LEADS THE WAY IN REQUIRING ONLINE APPLICATIONS

Wesleyan University is the first college to require undergraduate applications to be filled out and submitted online. Beyond the application requirement, the school provides laptop computers to all students and intends to have wireless Internet access available by fall. Supplemental application material, such as transcripts and teacher recommendations, will still be accepted on paper sent in the mail. Requiring online applications should not prevent anyone from applying, school officials say. Students will be given access to the laptops of admissions counselors visiting high schools, or they can use computers available in churches, public libraries, and schools. The application will take only about half an hour for most students to fill out and does not require essays. Still, some are concerned that disabled individuals will be excluded. The college’s president said alternatives would be found for students unable to apply online due to disabilities. (New York Times)

UNIVERSITIES SEE WEB AS TOOL TO SELL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Hoping to supplement waning federal research funds, universities are selling intellectual property online. Using traditional means, universities have been largely unsuccessful in their efforts to sell their research; in 1998, just three cents of revenue was generated from every dollar spent on research initiatives. Universities attribute this poor return to inexperience in the market and an emphasis on department interests rather than market requirements when performing research. A new online intellectual marketplace, called UVentures.com, aims to improve this situation by allowing universities to sell their research online. The new marketplace, called UVentures.com, allows universities to sell their research online. The portal’s mission is to provide a clearinghouse for university-generated intellectual property, aiming to connect innovators with potential buyers. Universities are encouraged to list their inventions, and the marketplace promotes them to a network of potential investors. The UVentures platform provides a secure and transparent environment for transactions, ensuring that intellectual property rights and agreements are clearly defined. This approach is expected to facilitate the commercialization of university research, benefiting both creators and investors. (Chronicle of Higher Education)

Science Foundation has awarded high-performance computing grants to a total of 177 institutions. (Chronicle of Higher Education Online)

E-COMMERCE MAY HELP COLLEGES CUT COSTS AND PAPERWORK

Many colleges and universities are now building online purchasing systems in an effort to cut costs and streamline procurement. The University of Pennsylvania, for example, is developing a purchasing system to encourage staff to take advantage of volume discounts by buying within the system rather than ordering from their favorite retailers. Penn’s system will search vendors’ supply catalogs, approve orders online, and automatically send orders to suppliers. California State University at Fullerton and the University of California at Los Angeles also are building online purchasing systems. The systems promise to eliminate much of the paperwork involved in purchasing, thereby lowering costs significantly. The Fullerton campus estimates that e-commerce systems will lower costs from about $150 per transaction to about $10 to $15 per transaction by eliminating the workers and paper required in the traditional method. However, e-commerce systems are difficult to implement, since schools must integrate customized financial systems with Web-based purchasing systems. (Chronicle of Higher Education)

PEOPLE SOFT

4/C 7
A sampler of items from Edupage, EDUCAUSE's three-times-a-week electronic digest of information technology news. To subscribe to Edupage, send a message to listserv@listserv.educause.edu and in the body of the message type “SUBSCRIBE Edupage YourFirstName YourLastName.”

EDUCAUSE 2000
Nashville, Tennessee
October 10–13, 2000

General Session Speakers

Dave Barry
One of America’s most widely read syndicated newspaper columnists, Dave Barry is the author of numerous books of humor, including Dave Barry in Cyberspace, Dave Barry Slept Here: A Sort of History of the United States, Dave Barry’s Balls, and Dave Barry Is From Mars AND Venus, and Dave Barry’s Book of Bad Songs. He received the Pulitzer Prize for his commentary in 1988.

Judy Estrin
Technology visionary Judy Estrin, chief executive officer of Packet Design, Inc., a company focused on technology to scale the Internet; until recently was chief technology officer and senior vice president for Cisco Systems. She co-founded Bridge Communications Systems, a pioneer in internetwork routers, bridges, and communications servers, which merged with 3Com in 1997.

David Halberstam
Through his trilogy on power in America, David Halberstam, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of The Best and the Brightest, The Powers That Be, and The Reckoning, has helped shape our understanding of the latter half of the 20th century more than any other contemporary author. www.educause.edu

A handful of universities are now using e-mail to notify prospective students that their applications for admission were successful. Northwestern University says it sent about 4,000 e-mails to successful applicants, with the messages arriving before the admission information packets arrived via regular mail. Applicants like the e-mail notification process because they often find out sooner whether their applications have been accepted. Admission officers say the use of e-mail is a natural extension of the online admissions process. As part of its e-mail message, Northwestern also included an ID number for students to use when logging into the university’s Web site. Prospective students whose applications were denied were notified via regular mail. (All Street Journal)

Abstracts/Copyright © 2000 Information, Inc., Bethesda, Maryland

Tech Watch

You’ve Got Mail: Admissions Letters Have Gone Online

A handful of universities are now using e-mail to notify prospective students that their applications for admission were successful. Northwestern University says it sent about 4,000 e-mails to successful applicants, with the messages arriving before the admission information packets arrived via regular mail. Applicants like the e-mail notification process because they often find out sooner whether their applications have been accepted. Admission officers say the use of e-mail is a natural extension of the online admissions process. As part of its e-mail message, Northwestern also included an ID number for students to use when logging into the university’s Web site. Prospective students whose applications were denied were notified via regular mail. (All Street Journal)

Education Reassessed in Worker Shortage Debate

The high-tech industry, complaining of a severe labor shortage, is reconsidering the importance of a four-year college degree for certain types of IT workers. Four-year universities are often unable to keep up with rapidly changing technology. As a result, lobbyists and recruiters are turning to community colleges and for-profit schools, which seem to be more flexible and less expensive than traditional schools, says Harris Miller, president of the Information Technology Association of America. Industry observers say some technicians and support staff do not need the same level of education as software developers, for example. (EE Times Online)

University of Pittsburgh Sets Pace on Digital Certificates

The University of Pittsburgh is taking the lead in employing digital certificates to secure e-commerce transactions. The university has already given out roughly 2,000 digital certificates to students and staff so that they can purchase goods at the school’s online store, and in the near future the university expects to conduct its legal business and transfer electronic funds using digital certificates. Digital certificates contain small amounts of code that prove the identity of a person, as well as a public and private cryptographic key. The university plans to expand the use of digital certificates to online transactions conducted in the confines of the university network. This fall the school will unveil a new automated system that contains a centralized database of student and employee computer accounts, linked to the university’s enrollment and payment databases. The system will create and manage new computer accounts and digital certificates for employees and staff and will automatically delete accounts when the account holders are no longer at the university. The university also expects soon to begin providing smart-card IDs with digital certificates to students. (Chronicle of Higher Education)

EDUCAUSE 2000 delivers:
- top-rated speakers
- superb program sessions
- premier networking opportunities
- outstanding levels of corporate participation
- an outstanding venue in country music’s entertainment capital