



[ELISE MILLER:] I'm Elise Miller, program director for postsecondary institutional studies at the National Center for Education Statistics, and with me are Mohamad Sakr and Meihua Zhai, who are also involved in the net price project. First of all, many of you may have been in the earlier sessions, so you know this is my hometown, so welcome to Nashville. I'm very happy to have you guys here and happy that I got to spend some time with my parents and family. Slowly, the "y'all" and twang is coming back. People have been assuring me that with each session I start twanging a bit more, so hopefully that makes things sound even better, I think. I like a nice southern accent.

We're excited today because we really think that what you're going to find is that this template is going to be very useful to your institutions in meeting the requirement. I'm really quickly going to go through sort of the background to how we got where we are. Then Mohamad will take over and demo the actual applications that were developed, and then Meihua is going to talk about she's been talking to a lot of institutional representatives, both financial aid officers as well as institutional researchers, about what they're thinking about. What do I need to think about in order to meet this requirement within the two-year timeframe? And she will talk about some of the things that they brought up.

So, first of all, like most everything we've been hearing about, this came out of the Higher Education Opportunity Act. It was signed into law on August 14, 2008, as I'm sure you are all well aware. It includes many reporting and disclosure requirements, and this is considered a disclosure requirement. It's something that you have to disclose on your Web site by a given timeframe. So, the net price calculator does not involve reporting data to the Department. It involves doing something on your Web site to disclose information to students and parents. Now, the legislation read that we had one year from when it was passed to develop a template that institutions could use to meet this requirement. We didn't quite make the August 14th deadline, but we were able to get it out by October 29th, so that started the clock for institutions. That's a very long Web site for where it's available. We're going to talk to the IFAP people and see if we can't get a link on there as well. You can also find a link on the IPEDS web site, or if you could just go to the Department of Ed main page and type "HEOA" in the search criteria, it will bring you to the page where this is posted. So, as I mentioned, you have two years from that October 29th deadline to be able to get this up on your institution's Web site. There is no reason why you couldn't do it earlier, if you so choose, and you also have the option if you don't want to use our template to develop your own calculator. So, if you decide this doesn't meet the needs of your institution, you can develop one on your own or you can modify our version. You ask your coders to go in and modify it, and then you can customize it to your institution, as long as it at least does at the minimum of what our template does. Just so you see the legislative language around the purpose, it's basically to give students and parents a better idea of what they might pay in an institution. Now, it is not exact. This is not a financial aid packaging program; it is not there to tell them exactly what they're going to be paying the next year. As you know, that's a very difficult thing to do; however, it is to get beyond the sticker price. For many years the institutions have been telling the folks on the Hill, you know; you can't judge us by sticker price because sticker price--not many students pay that, and so the Hill is



asking to see something beyond the sticker price. What is that net price, then, if most students aren't paying the sticker?

The definition of net price comes directly out of the law. It's the institution's price of attendance for full-time first-time students. So, if you do not have first-time full-time students, guess what? You don't have to have a net price calculator. So, I'll pause if anyone wants to leave the room. We have had one person leave in all the sessions, so. That's probably the most common question we've gotten from graduate-only institutions, and they are off the hook for now because the definition involves full-time first-time only. Then it includes in the grant calculations you want to include both need and non-need, or merit-based grants. So, it's price of attendance basically minus both need and non-need grant aid given to students. Here is the Web site that I showed you had the link earlier. The link to the template is under the What's New section. I also want to point out something else we have on there. Right below there, there's a report we also recently issued on how institutions can best meet all the disclosure requirements, and there are some tips in there for how to do it, so I'm just going to put a plug in for that as well. I highly encourage you to check it out.

So, a little background on how we got to where we are. On January 27th and 28th we called a technical review panel together and it included 58 individuals from institutions, the government, all sorts to give us technical expertise on how we might be able to develop this template for institutions to use. We had both the financial aid people there and we had IR people there. It was decided upon in the group that the only way we were going to be able to do this so that it would work for the majority of institutions was to base this on past data; okay? So, again, we're not giving an exact future price for someone. You're just trying to show that most students like me, once a student goes through the calculator, didn't pay the sticker price. They indeed paid about this much. Okay? The other thing we want to take into consideration when discussing the template was that the idea had to work for all Title IV institutions, or at least at a very basic level work for them. And so, we have the very smallest cosmetology college to the very largest research institution and everything in between. So, developing one calculator that makes sense for all of them is no easy task. One of the things, you know, early on people thought we might have GPA test scores and things like that, which in some institutions consider for merit aid, but the majority of Title IV institutions don't even offer merit aid. They might be open admissions and some of them might not even college GPA necessarily, so if you put that in there and it doesn't apply to institutions, it could actually scare students off. So, things like that were not included. We also want to recognize that institutions actually do have an interest in customizing these to make them better as they are able. If, for instance, you do have a merit aid program where everyone that comes in with a 3.5 or above gets \$2000, you'd want to build that into a calculator, so it took account for that specifically and you're able to do that under the requirement. So, for the development of it, we had the contractor, Westat, and the subcontractor was Mohamad's company. They looked at the TRP suggestions and developed – also OPE was at the table for all this, the Office for Postsecondary Education, so David Bergeron and some of the folks you heard from earlier today were all at the table and helping us develop it. Once we had the application, we tested it with



several campus people, both financial aid people and IR people to get their perspective on it, and they generally had very positive feedback for it. They did give us some more input that we took into account, which didn't allow us to release this on October 29th.

There are actually two applications to the template. The first one allows you to build the calculator. It's the Institutions Application. Very important into this will be the Help Guide, and you can see the icon there. There's a Help Guide that walks you through exactly how to use it, including screen shots of each of the screens you'll be seeing. So, the first application is that; it helps you build an actual calculator into the data behind the calculator, and then the student application is what ends up on your Web site; okay? The opening screen, just to be very clear – the language in the law required that we have a caveat on there that said the Department of Ed, your institution, your state, no one is held to this price; okay? This is not a final determination of need or aid; it's just to give you some indication of what students like you paid in the previous year. Okay? So, before they can even use the calculator, they have to – well, at least click on I Agree. I can't guarantee they read what they're agreeing to, but they actually have to click on I Agree before they get to the student application. Once they're in, they'll ask a series of questions which you'll see in the demo, and then the Output Screen looks what's on the right-hand side, which is the price of attendance broken down by a few categories; the estimated total grant aid and then the estimated net price. Again, in red, a long caveat there saying the institution, the Department of Education, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah – are not held to this and it's not a final determination of need or aid, and the three blue boxes that I have on there are all places where the institution can provide their own explanations as well to give more context to the output. So, you'll be able to see how to enter those when Mohamad walks you through it, right now. Thank you.

[MOHAMAD SAKR:] Hello. Well, before I start showing you the application itself, I want to talk about what we were trying to do and what we wanted to accomplish over here. Basically, from the calculation point of view, we're not providing the student with all the questions that are on the FAFSA application, and all of you know that in order to determine the exact EFC, then you have to ask a lot of questions of the user. Questions about income, about dependents, about assets, about, you know. So, instead of going and asking all of those questions, what we did is that we asked simple questions and we looked at the database of the recent year of the FSA database. We took averages for each one of the income levels to tell us, really, you know after they said...okay, well. The family income is between \$70,000 and \$80,000. What was the average deduction? What is the average AID on that formula, the available income? So, what was the average for those; and we used this to build our calculation on it so that we don't ask a lot of questions. The same thing we did for independent students and dependent students and the income of the students, and so on. So, in a way we made the best approximation that we can without asking a lot of questions and, really, if you ask a lot of questions, then everybody expects that we will be precise, and this calculation is not meant to be precise. It's meant to give, as an example, it's meant to give the student a rough idea of what the cost is and we have so many disclaimers on it, or we're going to put so many disclaimers that this is not an exact amount, and if you want an exact amount, you have to go through the same process of filling the FAFSA and applying



and all that stuff, and for the merit part of the aid that you might get, then you have to go through the process of the institution and submit your GPA and what you did, and those advanced placement courses that you took, so in a way we're trying to make an approximation. This is the first consideration, which is the calculation. The other challenge was basically what I'm doing here is that I'm asking your institution on the institution application, we're asking questions to the institution and based on the answers that they give us we are generating code. We are generating real code that they can take and simply load it on their Web sites and it should work. Well, the challenge is, I don't know what Web site they have, what kind of platform they have, so we wanted to do something that is platform independent, so for those of you who are technical, basically, a lot of institutions are using Microsoft platform; some institutions use Apache as the Web server; some use IBM; you know. Basically, we wanted to do something, to give you something whatever your platform is, and it should work, and you shouldn't be able to – you know, it shouldn't be hard to just put it and make it work.

The other consideration is that if you want to do little tweaks after you get the code from us, then the code should be easy, clear, written in a clear way that you can, you know, your programmer can easily take that code and just modify it, tweak it a little bit to satisfy some of the needs that you have. So, I try to do that – (okay; so where do I get – let me go to this browser). From the IPEDS Web site, if you are in the IPEDS Web site, we have something called here IPEDS Resources, and in the Resources, we have Net Price Calculator template, and you can click on the name here and it will take you through to that one. Now, it goes through your exiting and stuff like that; that's okay or you can really type in just NPC.inovas.net for now, and that will give you the calculator. The first thing that you will see, and Elise showed part of it, is basically the guide over here, and it's in PDF and it's different whether your browser is IE or Firefox, so you can download the copy that fits your browser and then you can take it from there. You can see it from there.

So, we'll start with this, the first two questions that we ask; the first question is about the year of the data. Now, the law says that you have to use the most recent year available to you. In the TRP, it was decided that a lot of associations and institutions said that we might have 2008 or '09 by the time we want to put this, or we might not, so can we use the year before? And we said, well that's fine, but basically if you use the year before – as you know, the formulas of calculating the EFC, they change every year. So, in this system, we incorporated the formula that was applicable to that year; that you choose over here. So, let me choose this. Now, the second one is what's the predominant calendar system for your institution? And basically, what we're asking is whether you're academic reporter in IPEDS or program reporter, and this goes into how the acceptance and the involvement goes in your school. So, if the school is on a semester base, then they usually report the fall enrollment, and they go from there. For program reporters, we recommend that you use the largest program that you have as a typical amount that you are going to show the students. There was a person yesterday who asked me (he's still here, also) about whether they can put – they have 2 programs – but the one that they like to put as the typical program is not the larger, so can they put 2 calculations over there? I said, "That's your business. That's not ours." You know, that's what you



want to do. You go ahead and do it. As far as the requirements, what's required from the institution, all you need is to do it once and to do one calculator? If you want to put 2 or 3 and use the template to do this, that's your business; that's your choice. So, I'll choose academics because it's a bit easier for me, and then we first ask you questions about the institution. Basically, the net price in general, because the prices will vary also, but the net price depends on 2 variables that are very important to determine the net price. Basically, the living arrangements, which could be on campus, off campus with family, or off campus independent, and the second variable that the price depends on is the residency. Is the person paying in-state tuition, in-district tuition, or out-of-state tuition? That's irrelevant to private schools, but for public schools this is very relevant, what the person is paying in state tuition. Now, it's hard to imagine what's going to happen here, but you know, all those questions that you answer, the answers to those questions that I am giving you over here will determine the kind of calculator, what goes in the calculator that you will download from the site later on, when you finish. And that calculator will go on your Web site, so if you answer here that you have no housing, for example, then on the student calculator that we generate for you, you will not have a question about whether the student is going to live on campus or not. We don't ask the student, you know, if your institution does not have housing, then there's no need to ask your students if they want to live on campus because; you know.

So, I say yes for this question and then there's the next question, we have about 538, I think, institutions in IPEDS that require all first-year freshmen to live on campus, and some of them are big schools that require that from their freshmen. So, we asked that question. The reason why we asked that question, because if they require all freshmen to live on campus, then usually they don't know the exact number amount of what it costs to live off campus, because if you're asking all of your students – you're saying to your students you have to live on campus, then in the part where they apply there's no place. They're not going to say off campus and this is how much it costs, so the institution does not have any means of knowing what the cost is to live off campus. So, I'll also answer yes; actually, I'll answer no now, and then I'll answer yes later on. Okay. For the in-state, and this I'll answer yes, and you will see that the 2 options appear. If you are a 4-year school, most likely in-district and in-state are the same, so you don't have to check both of them, but if you are a community college, I know that a lot of community colleges, they charge differently for in-district and in-state, so I'll check both of them now and I'll go to the next page. See; because of the way I answered the questions, now I have basically a total of 9 columns to fill, which I don't like, so. Why, just in a demo you don't want to spend the whole day filling columns. Also I don't want people here to think – to look at the numbers that I enter and say, "Oh; those are not realistic numbers." See; I don't know realistic numbers. Okay. So, I answered the questions differently. Now, all I have is 2 columns, 2 nice columns to fill. So, I'll start putting some numbers and the reason why I have to put certain numbers that I put yesterday, because yesterday I ended up taking the calculator that was generated and I put it on another Web site so that I can show it to you, so I need to answer the same questions so that you can see the same thing. You can make a relation here, what we answered here and what we see over there. So, if I go with this... Okay. So, this is basically the cost. I'm filling in the published tuition and fees and living expenses for the



2 columns that I have. Then I go and fill the part related to the financial aid, and it says here that the financial aid is, you can base it on the FAFSA application, but you need to also factor in any merit-based scholarship that the students have obtained. So, what we recommend is that for each one of those EFC range, you go and do an average on your database of what students in this EFC range have paid last year for a median, or it depends what number they feel most comfortable with, I think. Because, for some people, you know I know that, and the numbers that I got from FSA when I did this, the calculations, I felt that the median was more to the point than the average, but I know that some people told me that the average might be better if there is not a lot of bias at the end. So, anyway. In this one, basically I talked to a lot of people here and they told me that, especially for small schools, they told me that well, you have all those EFC ranges and we really don't have all of those. We don't have that many students to know the numbers of all those EFC ranges, and the answer is that all I need from you is just 2 numbers in every column. So, not every EFC range. What I'm saying really is, if you give me here that this one is 20,000, for example, and this is 30, and then you go to this one and you say that this is 19 and this one is 29, and then you go to the non-EFC because this is non-FAFSA, is really the non-FAFSA are the people that did not apply for FAFSA and there is no need-based scholarship or grant that they received. All they received is merit-based scholarship. So, if you say that those on the average, the students in this group on the average got \$1000, that's all I need here, and if you just that's all you need to fill. If you fill just those numbers, then I'm fine. I will generate all the other numbers for you.

So, let me hit Continue, and I'll show you the numbers later on the next screen. There are a few questions – one question here that needs an answer, which is what percentage of first-time, first-year students receive any kind of financial aid? Let's say that's 40% did that. Then we give you some free spaces to put explanations that you want the student to see when they come to your calculator. So, let me just try something here. Well, unfortunately I don't know if I wrote anything in the calculator that I will show you later on, but let's assume that this is fine. Okay. Now, everything is done. Okay. You have answered all the questions. The system is ready to give you your own calculator to take it and put it on your Web site. Basically, this is the tuition that you entered. It shows you what you entered now, and those are the numbers that you didn't put anything in, and you see this. The system has filled everything up for you. All the missing numbers are now filled. So, at this stage if I hit Continue, then it comes and gives me a zip file that has everything I need for the student. The zip file is really not enough; all it has is one HTML document and a directory that has some images in it. That's all you need to put on your Web site. There's no more than that, and you can work. Basically, I took the same thing that I generated yesterday and I went and put it on one of my Web servers, and I called it FSA NPC, and this is what was generated. This is really when you put the contents of the zip file – when you put this on your Web server, this is what you're going to get. That's the same thing that you're going to get. It starts like Elise said, with the disclaimer and we require the student to say "I agree," and then we start asking the student some questions to determine what kind of aid they are qualified for. The first section is whether they want to apply for financial aid or not. Now, this question asks them if they want to fill the FAFSA, and if they say no to this question,



then we don't ask them anything else after that and we take them – if you remember the last row in the table that we filled before, this is what we show them, that somebody who did not apply, you know, did not fill the FAFSA application, ended up getting this much in merit aid, on the average, but we don't know in your case what you're going to get. So, I'll say yes to this and the age, I'll say 18, eligible for in-state tuition. Basically, in this case we got in the first day, on Tuesday, somebody said, "Well, a student, an 18-year-old student will not understand if he really qualifies for in-state or not." And we said, "Well, we don't know a common definition for that. States define that their own, who qualifies for in-state tuition and who does not qualify." So, what we decided to do is, to put on this when you generate it, we put some question marks and when they put their cursor on it, it will show something over there, explanation what does it mean to be eligible, but we will tell the institutions go ahead and modify that to fit your needs. Okay. So, I will choose the in-state tuition and then continue. Now, the next couple of questions are in addition to the age. The way we – I mean, you guys probably know that. The way FSA determines whether the student is dependent or independent is first, if the age is greater than 23 then he is independent. If the student is married, then he is independent. If he is not married, it doesn't matter, but has children, then he is independent. So, all those questions determine whether the student is dependent or independent. So, I'll say no here and I will say – because I want to show you something in this, and I'll say no here and then continue. Basically, this took me to the next screen and number of people in the family including the student. We have a box here that we are not checking if they put zero; we're accepting the zero. I think this is wrong. We're going to put something to not allow the zero because the student is included in this number, should be included in this number, so really the minimum for an independent student is really more than 1; it has to be 2. For independents it has to be 1; for dependent students the number in family cannot be 1; otherwise, he is dependent on who? Okay. And number in columns; let's say 2, and let me choose an income that will give me some useful EFC, and then I'll take that the – We ask for the student's income. We know that the EFC for dependent students depends on the family income and the student's income also, so we ask for both of them over here. So, let's assume that the is zero and we'll continue. So, gave me a summary of what I entered here and then another Continue and this will give the numbers. Since we said in-state tuition, said that the cost is \$26,000 and that this student qualifies for \$16,000 through financial aid, and then the net price will be \$9500.

Basically, that's all my demo. The idea is that it should be, well, from the people that have used this, that went to this template and they downloaded the file and they put it on their web site. They found it very, very easy just take it and put it on the web site to work by itself. All they need to do is, when we downloaded the zip file, the name of the HTML file was NPC calc. Now, some webmasters like to call this as the default document in the directory, and they would call it Index.html or defaultdoc.html, depending on their platform or what they have in their web site. But basically it's very easy to do. Now, also it's very easy to take this, and I'll show you here, but basically you can take this file into a text editor and, you know, any programmer can do modifications on it. So, if I [Inaudible] source a over here, that will give me the same thing exactly and, as you see, basically it's very simple code that anyone can...come on, guys. Okay.



I'll close this. I take that back, it's not [Inaudible] but you get the picture. Basically, you know, in another demo I was doing it from my laptop in some other conference, and I had the work server on my laptop, so I put them over there and then I showed that I can change something in the document; I put the logo from institution, and I put the name of the institution that I graduated from in Texas, but it was very easy. I mean, in seconds you can do that if somebody knows what they're doing.

[AUDIENCE:] [Inaudible]

[SAKR:] But it's easy. No. Seriously, what happens is that the FSA, some people from FSA went and did several versions of the calculator from zip files. They were planning to write programs to do a calculator and put it on the FSA with files similar to their requirements, so they went to this one and they downloaded the zip file, and they did it a couple of times with different options, and then, you know, within half an hour they had it on their Web site modified the way they want. So, they sent Elise an e-mail saying that "our program is not your program, so." That was really a compliment that those other programmers are saying that what we gave them, it was very easy for them to modify and put it on their Web sites. Okay.

[MEIHUA ZHAI:] Thank you, Mohamad. You made it so easy to see. Actually, I was involved with the TRP meeting and I was also involved with the testing, and anticipating how this one would look like, and when we first did the testing, you know, I thought it was so smart, so brilliant, and I really had a letdown because it is so simple. Let's talk about why an institution needs to pull the net price calculator on our web site, and Mohamad did a demonstration about how it works, and my job is to discuss with us what is next. What are the next steps for an institution to take in order to meet with this HEOA requirement? Let me first find my slides. As I was looking for the [Inaudible] he was looking for the right browser, and I said the [Inaudible] is everywhere. Okay. So, as with the success of any project, we know communication, communication, communication. So, the first thing we need to do is, we need to make sure relevant offices know about this requirement. What are the relevant offices? Your company's administrators; your president, your VP, your provost, they need to know about this requirement. Your IR office; they already know about it, but we need to start your conversation, and your IT office. You know, Mohamad is the IT person. That is simple language to him, so we need to have people speaking the same language. Okay; there is the IT department and also the admissions office because this calculator, as Elise talked about it, is for disclosure purposes, telling students the information. If you apply for financial aid, you won't pay a sticker price. That's the bottom line; you know, most likely you won't pay a sticker price. That's the bottom line message, but a lot of institutions are using price calculator or financial aid calculator for enrollment management purposes. You want to target a certain type of student you are trying to recruit. Those two are different functions; okay. For one function we need one type of data; for the other is not. So, we try to blend in the two. We need to come up with proper strategies, but we had to know this template, the one Mohamad demonstrated, is for disclosure. And then the conversation we can start to talk about is, are we going to use the Department template? As we just saw, the template is easy to use. We only ask the



student aid questions and then we can give them an estimate of the aid cost, the net price cost, so that is the strength of this template; it's easy. We want to encourage more students to use it. High school counselors can bring it to their students, telling them, you know, this is the benefit of filling out your FAFSA, encourages them to do that, and if your institution, you know, gives out a lot of need-based aid, this will serve you well. And if your institution is a small institution, you don't have a lot of supporting staff and supporting IT resources, and this is the way you know it will help you. That, you know, it meets with the HEOA requirements, so those are the questions we need to ask.

We need to discuss with different offices on campus, are we going to use this template, or, another question is are we going to use an outside template, not this one developed by other organizations such as VSA? Who knows what VSA stands for? Do we have any VSA institutions here? No; okay. No. VSA stands for Voluntary System Accountability; it is for land-grant and state universities, and they have a component cost calculator; it's College Portrait. You know, if your institution is also a VSA institution, probably you don't need to develop two, just go one. Okay. That's why we need to start campus dialogue, and a lot of institutions already have a kind of calculator. So, how many institutions do you already have financial aid calculator on your financial aid Web site? Okay. I think for the previous 2 sessions we had more offices having that. I went to several Web sites and looked at different types of calculators. I found out that most of the calculators people put out were financial aid calculators; it's not net price calculator. That's the key. This is the net price calculator. So, those are the options that we have for institutions. What are we going to do? If your institution is a private institution, you give more scholarships and financial aid. Then, most likely you will need a lot of information you use to determine the kind of package you give and you might find out this calculator is too simple to serve your needs if you want to use it for enrollment management purposes. When that's the case, you might say we will develop our own, or customize this one to make this fit your situation better. Those are the questions that we can discuss with different offices, and then outside institutions are very important. We need to find out what our peers are doing. Your peers are also your competitors. You might be trying to target the same type of students. And then, if you decided. You say, you know, my students are looking for aid; it is for next year. And this calculator gives us past information. You know, we want to give them future information. If you give out future information and your peers use this template and gives out previous year's information for 18-year-old students looking at the – comparing the price – even if you have in bold, you know big font, that's for last year, you think they're going to read it? Probably not; if they only compare with the prices, and they are comparing apples with oranges without knowing that – So, that is the information the IR people and our financial aid people, will need to sit down and together and talk about it. Okay. So, those are...

The next one is, we need to do, we suggest you might consider doing a preliminary analysis of the data using the template that Mohamad just demonstrated. There are several advantages of doing that. The number one is, if you do the IPEDS with a changed IPEDS, you know, student financial aid, when you do the report, you already have the data for this calculator. Go one step further; take that data and do the



preliminary analysis of this template, and then you try to identify cells with large variance. For example, with certain types of categories, the income, you might have a lot of students receiving a lot more aid than you have students receiving, you know, very little aid. Find out what was the reason for that. You know, because we have a range. With range, if you are on top of the range, you're on the bottom of the range and we are reporting with a template; we are using the median; that's the 50th percentile, and then if you have a lot of students meeting the top and the bottom, and then when you report the median, it won't fit too well. So, having a preliminary analysis, you will have the knowledge of that, so when somebody asks you the question you can explain, and this is why. Right? A lot of times, in IR people, when we are dealing with members, these people say what is right and what is wrong, and I often say the number is right as long as we can explain. If we have a number, we can now explain and that is the time less dangerous. So, we need to be able to say why. So, doing an analysis will give us the knowledge. We can tell why, and also we can identify factors that most affect the net price for your students. For example, scholarships. If your institution is giving a large number of athletic scholarships, you know, just now Mohamad was saying, using average, thanks to our financial aid people when we do the testing of this template, you know, some institutions did the testing putting in athletic scholarships and taking athletic scholarships out, and for certain ranges they found it really affects your average. So, in order to deal with that issue, you know we recommended using median. That way, when Bill Gates walks into this room our median salary won't change. Right? So, that's the other way to look at that.

So, doing a preliminary analysis, that will give us better knowledge about, you know, what are the factors in your institution affecting the variance of the financial aid we're giving? And also we can identify cells with small – you know, some of the brackets will only have 1 or 2 or 0; that gives you some knowledge. And after we have done analysis of the template, we pretty much have some idea about how well this template fits your institution or if you want to use it for enrollment management purposes, and after that we are ready to move on, you know, so we need to assign responsibilities for development and funding, especially if you're considering customizing this template. So, which office is responsible for what? You know, it's a Web server. Put in there how many of your institutions would allow you to access the institution Web site and allow you to put in there; probably you need special people to do that, and also we need to develop timeline and who does what. You know, the programming. This programming is not the HTML or the XML extraordinary magical language that I heard of this morning, it's not. This programming I'm talking about is really for us to generate the data needed for the template. Mohamad can make up numbers, put them in the template. Can we do that? No. We cannot. You know, we really have to get all the raw data, get the rules from the guide that we can get at the beginning of the page, and then develop the program to run it in order to aggregate the data we needed for the template, and that's the other reason we think if you do a preliminary analysis, you know, by the time you need to implement it you are ready. You are ready, so this has killed two birds with one stone, and then testing that. The testing [Inaudible] is one whether on the web site it is working. The other testing from IR perspective is really, consider yourself as a student, and then you go different, you know, age, different group, different income, different



location; you know, is it in-state, out-of-state? Do some marking data in that and see how this calculator generates the number. Is this number what you think? If it is off, how much is off? If it is not, you think, "Oh, this is good." So, those are the testing we need to do, and also update. You know, one thing good about a Web site is, if you don't update it, you are better not to have it; right? So, the value of the Web site is updating. This net price calculator will need an update each year. Who is going to do the update? The IR office, financial aid office, the IT office? You know, those responsibilities, and then if you have certain admission recruiting time and you want to do that, what is the date that you know, those are the decisions we need to make. And we need to make sure all relevant parties have signed off on the plan; whatever plan we are going to do, because this is not a one-office project. It's cross-campus and we need to have people all buy in, so that's why we start this one with conversation, with communication and agreement. And then, those are the next 3 bullets, was target to institutions who are thinking about customizing the calculator in order to meet your more unique enrollment management needs. So, you might consider posting 2 calculators if you have students applying at the same time for different academic years. This is more catered toward financial aid calculator, and I was thinking about this. You know, this one is recommended by some private institutions and if you used future data and this one is needed, but if we are using the Department template, it's past year data, the most recent past year data, it should work. And then decide where on the institutional Web site the link to the calculator will be located, and today during lunchtime I was sitting together with 2 ladies and one of them could not make it to this session, and she said, "Oh, you're the net price calculator lady." I said, "Yes, I am." And she said, "I have a question for you." I said, "I have an answer for you." So, anyway, her question was- She said, "We have 2 Web sites. One is a general Web site; one is as student porthole. So, for the calculator for us to put on our institution Web site, should I put it on the generic Web site or on the student portal?" The final answer; you know, Elise will have the final answer, and I said, "What I know is, this one is on your institution Web site, so long as it's on your institution Web site, you meet with the requirement, so with this one, your campus will need to discuss about it and also decide on what explanation to add on the output screen." The output screen is where Mohamad put in there, if you have, you know... For example. Let me see. For example, if you have the financial aid, the grant aid, the number you have you didn't include athletic scholarship in that number, you might want to put in there, say this number doesn't include athletic scholarship; those things. And this another reason, you know, I think you might consider preliminary analysis is necessary. When you're doing that, you will say, "Oh, yeah. I need to put this on this one," anticipating where confusion will likely occur, to go one step ahead of the user, put explanation there, hoping they would read. Okay.

Assistance, and this one, what we show, you know, some comment about that guide. That guide is really good. Besides the screen shot it has all the, you know, glossaries needed for this calculator. That glossary may not be needed for people in this room, but especially your IR colleagues might need that. You know, I was in an IR business. I knew that. There are a lot of EFC, that federal methodology, institution methodology, you know we need to explain that and bring that to your IR people, and with the screen shot the IR people that look at that, they know when they write a program those are the



brackets that we need to do to aggregate and to bring that, that will help you with the communication. And then we have the phone number to call. So, this is just some advertisement for this one. Coming soon I'm going to help develop the information center dedicated to net price calculator, and this Web site we will have different presentations, papers and articles talking about this net price calculator, and we have links, you know, to resources and various Web sites; currently I'm thinking some useful links for different types of calculators. If you're thinking about customizing, you just want to see how other people work, and I intend for this one as a one-side buffet type. You go there, get what you need, and the other one is implementation status of non-federal organizations such as VSA; you know, where are they right now? I know they're working on making their calculator HEOA-compliant, so that they meet the federal requirement and if you are a VSA institution, you use theirs; you don't have to worry about not meeting the federal requirement. And FAQ will be the summary of the questions often asked by institutions, and that's in there to help us to see, "Oh, this is what I'm going to do." And the discussion forum, you know, is new questions you know FAQ hasn't covered. And then we have there professional discussion, and also you can always reach me. I am just one click away. MHZ, that's my name, and 005-44, that's a mouthful; it's not easy to remember. The easy one is npcnc, as net p-price, c-calculator. That's not my name, okay? Npc@airweb.org; air is what we breath, air, okay? Association for Institutional Research. Airweb. If you write there, that will reach me, and any questions we have I receive. I make sure I respond to that within a day. So, with this one I return next to Elise, who will answer any questions we have about this calculator. Thank you.

[MILLER:] One more quick thing before you leave. We do have a Webinar; I don't know. There's a Webinar in January that's being recorded; that and all these resources are free. We've seen some other Webinars being advertised by outside organizations that are charging for that, so just so you know in January we are going to have a free Webinar available on the net price calculator. Question.

[AUDIENCE:] So, we use the median?

[MILLER:] Yes.

[AUDIENCE:] The median?

[MILLER:] It is the median. Yes.

[AUDIENCE:] Thank you.

[AUDIENCE:] I have 2 questions regarding regulations. The first one is, it sounds like there are prescribed rules for how you gather this raw data from a past year, but if you're using current or future year, then are there regulations we need to worry about regarding how we come up with the figures?

[MILLER:] No, I would just say that it's best to be transparent in how you do it. Okay?



[AUDIENCE:] My second question is regarding any regulations we should consider if an institution is using this and wishes to capture some of the data with the participant's permission. Are there regulations we need to look at regarding that?

[MILLER:] No; no. I mean, you would want to consider FERPA and some of those things as you're doing it; anything you would consider in getting admissions forms on line or anything like that, but there's nothing, because it's not coming in to us, we don't have any requirements around the data.

[AUDIENCE:] Sorry. Specifically regarding family's income. You know, if they're entering that and we follow our regular disclosures or permissions for admissions data, this is, I guess, slightly different, so I'm concerned. I want to make sure we can-

[MILLER:] Right. Well, you're not capturing the name or anything on this, I guess. Are you considering doing that?

[AUDIENCE:] Possibly. I guess we're just wondering if, you know.

[MILLER:] I would just use all the same privacy and security things that you already have in place.

[AUDIENCE:] Okay. Thanks.

[AUDIENCE:] Good afternoon. Family income; is that the same as the AGI?

[MILLER:] Family income is what is used to determine the EFC.

[AUDIENCE:] Which is the AGI?

[MILLER:] You guys use language that I'm not always familiar with, but yes; that's what I've been told.

[AUDIENCE:] Okay. Second question; I didn't see any mention about professional judgment. Do you people take – you know, when you do...

[MILLER:] If you address the-

[AUDIENCE:] I know. When you give the student an opportunity to say, well. He's gonna say, "My father lost his job last year. His income was \$1,000,000, and now he doesn't have a job, so I can't go to school or anything if I'm not going to get any financial aid," which is not the case.

[MILLER:] Well, that might be something you put down in the context. Say, if your family has special circumstances, please contact us directly, but this isn't supposed to



be a final determination of aid, so that's really something that would happen after they file a FAFSA and actually apply for aid and talk to your office.

[AUDIENCE:] Final question. On financial aid, they don't know if they're going to get Work-Study or SEOG.

[MILLER:] Right.

[AUDIENCE:] How are they gonna figure out what their net price calculator would be?

[MILLER:] This is based on, in our template it's based on previous year, so it's just what someone like me got last year. This is not a financial aid determination. It's just to get beyond the sticker price.

[AUDIENCE:] Thank you.

[AUDIENCE:] Are the questions that the students answer modifiable, and the reason I ask is that I saw the question "Do you want to apply for financial aid?" Well, we've got a separate institutional scholarship application; it's very simple, but some people who submit that don't bother submitting the FAFSA.

[MILLER:] The only reason we ask that question is to get to that final line; the row where we said if you don't know the income of the student, so you could modify how you ask that because no unknown EFC non-FAFSA filers was the final row in the data table.

[AUDIENCE:] Okay. Right

[MILLER:] And that's only to push them to that number so they don't have to go through all the other questions.

[AUDIENCE:] So the questions we're asking are modifiable also?

[MILLER:] Yes. Yes.

[AUDIENCE:] Thank you.

[MILLER:] Can you get to the microphone, please?

[AUDIENCE:] I understand that the intent is to kind of capture a typical student. If you have special populations within your campus that may in fact skew the typical student, we have the flexibility of removing those when we provide the data? Is that true?

[MILLER:] I think if it's a small number of cases the median should help make sure that doesn't happen, and that's why you're using the median, but we have had people who said even with the median, like athletics, for instance can skew it, and in which case I



think as long as you're transparent about that and reveal that in explanations that you provide that that would be okay.

[AUDIENCE:] Right. Right, okay.

[MILLER:] Any other questions? Hi.

[AUDIENCE:] You said that you built this model based upon an approximation of all the FSA data?

[MILLER:] Yes.

[AUDIENCE:] So, how often will you be updating the template?

[MILLER:] We should be able to get the data, I think, around September of each year, so the same timeframe as when we put up this one, we should be able to get the next year's up, so 2009-10 would go up around September/October next year.

[AUDIENCE:] So, the schools will have to go through and you'll have to have a new template for each year and you could have multiple templates still sitting out on your site?

[MILLER:] It's a possibility.

[AUDIENCE:] Okay.

[MILLER:] The requirement is the most recent data available, so if you just have the most recent that we have available, then you are meeting that requirement, so. All right. Oh, one more question here.

[AUDIENCE:] Just curious. Will there be – I'm assuming that as part of our federal annual audits this may be coming into play.

[MILLER:] Right.

[AUDIENCE:] Will there be further guidance on what we need to provide as far as-

[MILLER:] I've put a request in to the folks on that side; I don't think the compliance side of the House has really thought about it yet, since it's still 2 years away before you have to get it on there, but yes; it would be part of the regular audit; do you have a net price calculator, sort of.

[AUDIENCE:] Could it be that simple? Do you have one?



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[MILLER:] I don't know for sure. They will probably check to see if it does, at a minimum, what the template does, so. All right. Thank you very much. Enjoy my hometown.