

# DID YOU KNOW?

*A Look at Current Events in Higher Education*

Rowan University Institutional Research and Planning

## Remembering Virginia Tech One Year Later

**Survivors Of The Tragedy Search For Ways To Prevent Similar Incidents In The Future**

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## University of Houston Study: Hybrid Courses More Effective for Students

**By Dian Schaffhauser, *Campus Technology***

A technical report from a University of Houston Department of Health and Human Performance researcher finds that students in a hybrid class that incorporated instructional technology with in-class lectures scored a letter grade higher on average than their counterparts who took the same class in a more traditional format. Brian McFarlin, a researcher and assistant professor, created e-learning courses using Articulate Rapid E-Learning Studio Pro and integrated this with classroom lectures. The software provides tools to create e-learning courses from PowerPoint and to develop interactive content, quizzes, assessments and surveys.

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## Now, it's colleges that wait for acceptances

**With elite institutions taking lower percentages of applicants, others need to match projections.**

**By Justin Pope, *Associated Press***

Another year of record-breaking competition for spots at elite colleges is over. Now it's time for the colleges to sweat. Continuing a long-term trend, the acceptance rate at many of the country's most selective colleges inched down this year to ever-more agonizing levels for parents and students. Harvard (7.1 percent), Yale (8.3 percent) and Stanford (9.5 percent) were among the growing number of schools where more than nine in 10 applicants were denied. Middlebury (18 percent) and Duke (19 percent) were among the many others reporting record selectivity. But now, the pressure switches to colleges, who generally give students a month after April 1 admissions notifications to make up their minds whether to attend. If colleges admit too few students, they can end up with empty spaces. Too many, and they could get stuck housing extra freshmen in trailers on the quad.

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## Fewer Options Open to Pay for Costs of College

**By JONATHAN D. GLATER, *The New York Times***

Parents will have to navigate unfamiliar and difficult terrain when it comes time to pay for college this year, with student loan companies in turmoil and banks tightening their standards and raising rates on other types of borrowing. Lawmakers and the administration are trying to head off any crisis by making sure that “lenders of last resort” stand ready to take the place of companies that have left the federal loan program. And a growing number of colleges have applied to participate in the federal direct loan program, in which students borrow from the government.

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## Growth in International Applicants Slows

**By Elizabeth Redden, *Inside Higher Ed***

The growth in international graduate student applications at American colleges and universities has slowed considerably, according to new survey results released today by the Council of Graduate Schools. The council found that the number of international applicants grew only 3 percent in 2008, after gains of 9 and 12 percent in the preceding two years. Furthermore, 38 percent of institutions surveyed said they'd seen declines in international student applications from 2007 to 2008. And 65 percent of graduate schools that have consistently participated in the survey still have not recovered from sharp post-September 11 declines.

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## West Chester University to add six new dorms

**By Kathy Boccella, *The Philadelphia Inquirer***

The bathroom down the hall at West Chester University is going the way of letters home to mom and dad - a relic of the past. Six new dormitories will replace the school's aging complex of residence halls. The \$300 million project will add 160 beds and be completed by August 2012. The seven-story buildings will feature a number of must-haves for today's college student: air conditioning, private bathrooms, carpeted bedrooms, and lounges with plasma televisions on each floor. Five existing residences will be demolished and replaced by five new buildings. The sixth dorm is planned for open space just east of University Hall.

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## A Look at Online Orientations

**By Andy Guess, *Inside Higher Ed***

Community colleges are increasingly finding that many of the issues they deal with on a day-to-day basis — retention and remedial education, to name two — are just as present among the students they don't see as the ones who show up for class on campus. That's because distance learners tend to drop out more readily than students who have regular, face-to-face contact with their instructors. And that fact, seen in retention statistics comparing students in traditional and online courses, motivated the City Colleges of Chicago to start at the beginning: at orientation. The system's [Center for Distance Learning](#), which offers over 90 courses and has existed in some form for more than 50 years, started a project on student retention several years ago.

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