SHAPING THE FUTURE OF HIGHER ED

EDUCAUSE 2024 Reflections

This year's Educause conference was a great reminder of the power of our consortium and the strides we're making in supporting each other to navigate and shape the evolving educational landscape. Many sessions highlighted a growing awareness of how data and technology can serve as transformative tools to advance student success and institutional stability. It became clear that the issues we're all tackling—like learning analytics and institutional performance—are resonating widely across Higher Ed.

Institutional Performance
Throughout the conference comments and feedback, we saw an interest expressed in "institutional performance management"—a focus on overall institutional health, including enrollment, recruitment, and program growth— not incompatible with the ongoing student success initiatives that are so central to our collective work.

Caliper Compliance
Our partnership with 1EdTech was another area of productive dialogue. At their members' meeting, we underscored the importance of efforts to address common challenges around Caliper adoption and compliance. Kyle Unruh (Unizin) and Ben Hellar (Penn State) will be leading a 1EdTech committee to work on increasing adoption and verification in collaboration with 1EdTech and other institutions, making it easier for vendors to see the value of Caliper compliance.

Leading the Conversation
The thought-provoking sessions by Tom Andriola (UC Irvine), Gary Chinn (Penn State), Maggie Jesse (University of Iowa), Heather Maness (University of Florida), and Bart Pursel (Unizin) reflected the growing interest in our shared goals. The active engagement from institutions highlighted the progress we're making together in understanding the challenges around delivering infrastructure and analytics and the potential of our technologies and member-driven use cases.

New Data Mart Available!

UDP DISTRIBUTIONS

As part of our commitment to increasing the speed from data to insights, we're continually expanding our collection of [data marts](). Data marts facilitate analytics by further modeling UDP data toward specific areas of analytics, such as student activity during the semester or tools launched per course —saving time and reducing the lift of data preparation.

Our latest addition, *UDP Distributions,* offers a closer look into the distributions of variables within production UDP instances. This mart provides benchmark values for various features across all students and courses for a member's UDP. A goal of this mart is to summarize the current state of the contents within UDP by showing the distribution of categorical and continuous fields, with and without dependencies on other fields. In addition to being another layer of interesting metadata, this mart provides foundational insights for synthetic data creation. By making this datamart available in production environments, Unizin increases transparency and empowers users to better understand the basis of our synthetic data generation process.

Tool Integration Updates

Unizin is thrilled to share that our first set of data from **Honorlock** for the *University of Missouri System* is now entering our infrastructure! We are working to validate the data and prepare it for scaling across the consortium within the UDP.

Additionally, we've initiated conversations with **Blackboard Ally** regarding their Course Accessibility Report tool data. Our goal is to incorporate this valuable information into the UDP as well, enhancing our ability to provide accessibility data on course content for an entire institution.

Finally, **iClicker** is resuming the development of their Caliper event feed. In 2022, iClicker sent a selection of Caliper events to the *University of Michigan*; however, this effort never scaled across the consortium. We met with the iClicker team twice and suggested improvements to their Caliper event profiles, and we are eager to distribute these events consortium-wide when iClicker finishes development.

UDP Enhancements

We are beginning to work on modeling improvements for the next iteration of the UDP!

Our initial focus is rethinking how we model key components like course_offering and course_section to better support combined and cross-listed sections.
These changes won't impact your current UDP setup, and we look forward to gathering feedback in the coming months to refine these enhancements.

We're also currently testing incremental processing for our batch ingest pipeline, marking a shift away from the traditional batch processing framework.
Initially, incremental loading will focus on Canvas data, allowing us to pull data more frequently from the CD2 API into a self-managing database. This change removes an entire ETL source layer from the batch pipeline, reducing runtimes. However, for now, the batch pipeline will still run once per day. Stay tuned for more updates!

Upcoming Events

Get ready to unleash your creativity and innovation at our Spring 2025 Hackathon, happening from March 17 to 19, 2025, at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL)! This is a fantastic opportunity to collaborate, learn, and develop solutions with fellow participants. Stay tuned for more details.

Generative AI: Panel Discussion Series

On November 6th, Unizin's Faculty Development community hosted a panel discussion on Generative AI. This session focused on the first of five guiding principles developed collaboratively by our FacDev community - *Generative AI in education should prioritize educational relevance in the learning context*.

It was a thought-provoking session that sparked engaging conversations about the role of AI in enhancing educational experiences.

Join us on December 4, 2024, at 1:00 PM ET for our next panel in the series, focused on Principle 2: Instructors should be transparent about their acceptance of Generative AI in the learning process.

[Register now](#) to be part of this important discussion as we continue exploring how AI can positively impact education.

Data Snapshot
INSIGHTS AT A GLANCE

1.8 Billion
Caliper Events with valuable student activity updates passed through the UDP over (insert time period here)

215,053
Students Enrolled in Digital Content Program for **Fall '24**. These students had access to their course materials on Day 1 and saved an average of $48.42.

0.43%
Opt-out Rate for Digital Content Program - Less than 1% of students declined course materials as part of Unizin's digital content program