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Never before have campus leaders faced such demands to provide student populations with more for less. Students want more convenience and freedom. They want 24/7 access to campus services and facilities. Plus, they want a sense of safety and security as they move through their days on and off campus. To deliver quality student services in a safe and secure environment security administrators face a daunting task of managing tight budgets, increased demands for accountability, as well as student demographics that quickly change.

Credential cards offer one way to solve a host of student management issues today – and prepare for tomorrow. The cards go far beyond traditional identification cards. In addition to individual profile information, these cards can provide students with secure access to areas such as residence halls, recreation facilities and computer networks and safe methods of payment for campus eateries, laundry and vending machines. Some card options even allow students to use their cards for access to academic information and personal documents.

Equally important, these smart cards afford security administrators more avenues to ensure safe and secure environments for students on and off campus. The cards work in concert with access control systems, video surveillance and mass notification capabilities. With the convergence of technologies today, campuses today can integrate existing systems with advanced credential reader technologies to enhance security of their environments, as well as student life.

Students readily accept – and demand – the convenience and freedom that smart cards provide. And they harbor little concern for the often-unseen “control” over their lives that has burdened the smart card industry for decades. By most accounts, today’s generation of students is more accustomed to supervision from technology than any previous generation. Electronic surveillance resonates with a sense of security and safety for this generation. From baby room monitors and closed circuit televisions in schools to online networking and all types of access control cards, the vast majority of students today are accustomed to technology supervising and controlling their lives.
Managing students and access

For security administrators, smart cards integrate easily with traditional access control systems. The credentials are simple to update with user profile information. And they are easy to deactivate and replace if they are lost or stolen.

As technology has advanced, smart cards now hold more memory and data security capabilities—all at a low cost. For example, when a student drops or adds a class, admissions personnel can use the card to notify the university’s databases. Not only is financial information captured quickly, but the electronic transmission instantly updates the security system. The student can access a new classroom or facility right away, and access to former classroom facilities can be denied.

With a unified approach to access control, campuses are able to enhance their investment in security solutions. Security administrators can create an interface between several systems, including student information, housing administration and access control, to operate with only one ID card. Smart cards can be programmed to allow students access to facilities throughout a campus, including remote sites. In addition, the cards can give students a cashless method of payment for services, such as dining and bookstore facilities, laundry and vending machines, print and copy management facilities, parking and ticket operations. Some cards can be encoded to allow financial aid payment programs to distribute funds into accounts for easy access.

Integrated security solutions also can provide a safer campus environment for everyone on campus. Privilege management capabilities allow security directors to track and configure access 24/7, regardless of campus size. Video surveillance and door access control provide security personnel with total awareness of the campus environment.

Open architecture, modular security devices help leverage one card credentials and current security software on campus. By using these types of devices, such as Schlage’s AD-Series electronic locks from Allegion, as part of the system, campus security can focus initially on providing access control to high priority areas, such as residence halls, labs, classrooms, recreation facilities. Other applications can be added as the campus grows and security needs evolve.

By design, this type of open structure protects an access control investment for years to come. As security needs change, the access control or one-card software can be updated or changed and because your devices use open protocols, you won’t need to change the existing security hardware. And, if your choice of credential technology changes, the modular design of the device allows changes to the reader technology without replacing the entire lock. And, if a multi-technology device was initially chosen, the migration path is even simpler.

The modular, open characteristics of these systems allow the kind of flexibility needed for growing campuses. Users also can choose which openings should remain offline or moved to a network. They can manage both types of locks with the same software and database. As security needs evolve, a facility can have more locks on more doors and move more offline doors to a network solution by simply changing the communication module and connecting the device to the network.

The open architecture platform of Schlage AD-Series locks allows integration with third-party credential software. Well-known providers of one-card systems, including Blackboard, CBORD and Heartland Payment Systems, partner with Allegion to integrate their systems with Schlage AD-Series electronic locks.

By combining hardware and software products, security administrators have more flexible security solutions that they can tailor to their campuses and easily upgrade as their needs and industry technologies evolve.

Professional security experts can help assess current student management systems and recommend phased-in solutions to update, upgrade and improve overall access control. These experts also can recommend security partners who work in concert to integrate smart card access with security controls and ensure scalability over the long term.
Learn more about managing students and access

For more information about how access control hardware can simplify your security objectives, please contact a professional security consultant in your area by calling 888.758.9823 or fill out the Contact Us form on our website at allegion.com.