A Bedtime Story for Student Services

It's 3:00 am and Bianca is sitting in a 24 hour Starbucks in the spring semester of her senior year, working on her Physics 456 homework. In a browser, she clicks on the link to the course management system, logs in with her University web single sign-on userid and password, and starts viewing the course information.

Next, she clicks on the homework link hosted by a third-party provider and "Welcome Bianca" appears along with her new homework assignment for that class. After finishing that, she decides to check her loan status and surfs to the web site of her financing agent. She clicks "Access your record" and is presented with an aggregation of her loan liability without having to identify herself or login.

She takes a deep breath, wondering if any of those job applications had yielded an interview. She clicks on her shortcut to the job placement service and again is presented with the status of her applications, without having to identify herself. One company is requesting an interview, so Bianca purchases a cheap airline ticket offered by an online service that sells only to students. In the past, she had to provide proof of enrollment, but now the technology handles this in the background.

Bianca occasionally wonders what the institution is giving out to other service providers like the financial aid, job placement, and other companies on her behalf. She cares about her information and doesn't like her address and cell number available. She decides to check how this is done and clicks on the "Control your information" link provided on the web single sign-on page. She is presented with the campus information release policy that includes the policy and specific information about online transactions. Bianca knows that each of the transactions she has completed tonight implied that the institution was passing identity information on her behalf to the other sites so they could authorize her to access her information there. She opens the list of sites that she has visited and reviews the type of information that is sent. No, that all looks okay to me. She notices that there's a music site that her institution has an agreement with, but she doesn't use. She clicks the "do not pass information" box, knowing she now can't access the service, but that they won't know anything about her either.

In April, Bianca graduated. One day she was a student and the next, an alumna. She noticed her access changed too. She now could get to an alumni networking service where she put out a query about apartments in the Bay Area. Her loan status had changed on the financing agent's site. She now was out in the wide world of opportunity and responsibility.

What are the important policy, process and technology elements in the story?

What important relationships exist?

Is this an exciting vision?

What does this story imply for governance on campus?

What resources from AACRAO, EDUCAUSE or Internet2 might be useful?