

Union College & Cirrus Identity

[Cirrus Customer Success](#) Last updated August 20, 2026



College Access to InCommon Services

Summary

The [Cirrus Bridge](#) allowed Union College to quickly connect [Okta](#) to [InCommon](#) services and provided campus users a consistent login experience for all applications.

The Challenge

Union was moving from Fisher Identity to [Okta](#) and needed the [Cirrus Bridge](#) to continue to provide access to many of the services offered through the [InCommon](#) federation. Some of the most used at Union are as follows: [ProQuest](#) databases, eBooks and technology for research, [JSTOR](#) and digital library of academic journals and books, [Kanopy](#) is an on-demand streaming video platform for universities, [EBSCO](#) tools for academic libraries, [ScienceDirect](#) a source for scientific, technical, and medical research, [Gale](#) digital archive of research databases, reference books, [HathiTrust](#) digital library, [Atypon](#) an ecommerce service for many scholarly and academic publishers, [Simplicity](#) to support the student experience, [Springer](#) publishing of online journals and books.

Union College implemented Cirrus InCommon / EduGAIN solutions with [Okta](#) for researchers, faculty, staff and students to quickly access critical services provided through the [InCommon](#) federation using their Union login/password. Okta requires the [Cirrus Bridge](#) solutions to support the mesh style Federation required by InCommon.

Goals



Configure Okta to maintain access to over 10 InCommon services providers



Partner with IAM professionals so the small IT team at Union College could focus on other priorities



Provide an intuitive login experience for campus users to single sign-on using their Union College credentials and reduce support costs



Utilize cloud hosting to minimize Union College administration

How Cirrus Helped

We guided Union College through the configuration of the [Cirrus Bridge](#) to enable [Okta/InCommon](#) connectivity.

Then, after inventorying the existing applications used by Union, we helped guide the configuration of the service providers in the Cirrus Bridge primarily focused on the service provider attribute release and accurately matching attributes in Okta. Attribute setup for [REFEDS](#) (the Research and Education FEDerations group) R&S categories is included out-of-the-box with the Bridge, so those integrations are quick.

Union utilized the Cirrus DNS add-on to the Bridge and was able to add a new CNAME for a quick production cutover.

The Cirrus Bridge allows the researchers to use their Union account/password with their existing login screen to access the new applications/service providers offered through InCommon.

The project with Union and Cirrus kicked off in September with configuration and testing in October and November. By December everything was setup in production.

Impact

"The people from the library were the only ones that actually realized that anything had happened and they were super excited about it! They are smitten with Okta and Cirrus and loved the implementation because it simplified their support! Students feel at home and it reduced their number of calls tremendously."

Val Kania, Director, Enterprise Systems



Intuitive User Experience - Users see the same login screen and use their own credentials. Access is provisioned when they select an InCommon service provider.



Reduced IT Staff Support Labor - Staff do not have to learn, implement and maintain Shibboleth. With the labor savings, they can focus on top priorities!



Faster Solutions for Technical Gaps - The Bridge extended Okta and adding new InCommon service providers is quick!



Federation - Now able to leverage use of InCommon/eduGAIN services with Okta.

"It's been one of those integrations that I forget about. We have improved reliability and I haven't seen an issue where someone has access here and not there. Those are time consuming to figure out!"

Val Kania, Director, Enterprise Systems



Developing every student to lead with wisdom, empathy and courage.



2,200 Students



47 Majors