



INSIGHTS

on the college

Research and Institutional Effectiveness

April 2001

Michael A Dowdle

Volume 12, No. 2

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Office of Research and
Institutional Effectiveness
(RIE)

Barbara Silverman
Director

Michael Dowdle
Research Analyst

Odette Richardson
Research Assistant

For more information contact
the office at:

909-594-5611 x4180

or

Visit our web-site at:

IPEDS Surveys Update

What is IPEDS?

IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) was originally developed in 1986 to “meet the goals of providing quality data in a timely fashion to policy makers, researchers, and other concerned customers” and “to provide products and services that would facilitate the use of quality data”. It was established as a federally mandated data collection system by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for postsecondary institutions nationwide.

IPEDS consists of several survey components submitted at the institutional level at various times throughout the year. These components are:

- **Collected Annually:**

- Institutional Characteristics
- Fall Enrollment
- Completions
- Financial Statistics
- Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-time Instructional Faculty
- Graduation Rate Survey
- Student Financial Aid
- Institutional Prices and Student Financial Aid

- **Collected Biennially:**

- Fall Enrollment, by age, residence, and migration
- Fall Enrollment in Occupationally-Specific Programs
- Fall Staff
- College and University Libraries

In the past, the Bureau of the Census, under an interagency agreement with NCES, carried out all data collection and processing tasks.

Redesign of IPEDS Surveys

To further accomplish the goals of NCES in relation to IPEDS, an internal taskforce, the NCES IPEDS Redesign Taskforce, was created to address several externally mandated changes and additions to IPEDS. Changes in technology for data collection and dissemination, changes in postsecondary education, and new expectations for IPEDS were all pressing for the redesign of the IPEDS system. Specifically, the taskforce's goal was to develop a new IPEDS that would:

- respond to external data requirements (mandates, race/ethnicity requirements, Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes, etc);
- improve the timeliness and quality of IPEDS data;
- ensure the relevance of data;
- increase the efficiency of data collection and utility of data; and
- enhance communication and collaboration with data providers and stakeholders.

After consulting with IPEDS users, IPEDS data providers, representatives from a number of higher education organizations, as well as holding a series of meetings at various conferences, eleven recommendations were provided by the taskforce to carry out the substantial changes necessary to make IPEDS meet the new demands and requirements. These recommendations include which institutions will be required to participate, collection times, new and revised data elements, adoption of new race/ethnicity categories, a framework for reporting employee data and, the most noticeable change, the "use of a Web-based system to collect data with built-in edits and other quality checks to process the data when they are entered into the system" (NCES Taskforce for IPEDS Redesign Final Report, 1999).

Web-based IPEDS

The first use of the new IPEDS web-based data collection system was in summer of 1999 to collect data for the Institutional Prices and Student Financial Aid

(IPSFSA) survey. The IPSFA collects data on an institution's name, address, web-site address, student counts for a Student Right-To-Know cohort, student charges and percentages, and average amount of student financial aid received by students in the cohort.

This was the first time no official paper version of the IPEDS survey was available. The only "official" version of the survey was on the data entry screens of the NCES web-site. The web-based IPEDS generally has a window of submission from four to six weeks. This window of submission is a feature of the new system and a departure from the "due date" method of the paper-based IPEDS submissions.

NCES sent letters to the CEO's of colleges asking them to designate a "keyholder" for their institution. An institution's keyholder is responsible for registering the college on the web-based data collection system and has final "locking" responsibilities as well as responsibility for ensuring the accuracy of the data entered into the system. Once the data is locked it is considered submitted and only a call to the IPEDS service center help line will allow the data to be unlocked.

When data is locked in the system, the system runs a series of edit checks to ensure that the data is complete and valid. In the past, edit checks were performed manually after the surveys were sent in to NCES and any problems would have to be corrected then. The new web-based system drastically reduces the time in which the IPEDS survey data can be made available to the public, institutions, or government agencies.

The data collection went well for the "test-run" in Summer 1999. But due to budget constraints for fiscal year 2000, NCES had to drastically cut the data to be collected and reduce the number of collections from three to two for the 2000-01 IPEDS collection. Once again, data collection was entirely web-based.

Peer Analysis System and COOL

In addition to the new web-based data collection system, NCES has introduced two new systems designed to provide the IPEDS data to the public and

institutions. The *IPEDS Peer Analysis System* is a tool to enable a user to easily compare a postsecondary institution of the user's choice, designated as the Lynch Pin institution, to a group of peer institutions. Self-guided tutorials provide a general introduction to the use of the Peer Analysis System. The system generates reports using user-selected IPEDS variables of interest.

College Opportunities On-line (COOL) presents data on prices, financial aid, enrollment, and types of programs to help college students, future students, and parents understand costs and differences between colleges. Access can be gained to both systems by visiting the NCES IPEDS homepage. See the end of this newsletter for the link.

Mt. SAC's IPEDS Status

Mt. SAC's Fall 2000 IPEDS surveys were locked and submitted on November 9, 2000. See below for the components completed in the fall submission. Spring collection has been delayed due to programming problems with the IPEDS web system. Fall data is currently available on the Peer Analysis System. The Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness also maintains copies of the current the past IPEDS surveys. The reporting timelines for the 2000-01 academic year are as follows:

- **Fall 2000**
 - Institutional Characteristics
 - Completions
- **Spring 2001**
 - Fall Enrollment
 - Financial Statistics
 - Graduation Rate Survey
 - Student Financial Aid
- **NOT Collected in 2000-01**
 - Fall Staff
 - Salaries
 - Libraries - Note: This survey is no longer a part of NCES or IPEDS, and will be collected by another agency.

Although the ultimate data entry, checking, validation, and locking responsibilities still lie with the

colleges/districts, the Chancellor's Office bulk uploads the data for many of the survey components using the colleges/districts MIS data. Following is a list of who is responsible for entering the data for the various IPEDS survey components:

Components completed by CCCCCO:

- Institutional Characteristics (part E only)
- Completions
- Fall Enrollment
- Graduation Rate Survey
- Fall Staff (partial)
- Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-time Instructional Faculty (partial)
- Student Financial Aid

Components completed by districts/colleges:

- Institutional Characteristics (parts not completed by CCCCCO)
- Financial Statistics (parts not completed by CCCCCO)
- Fall Staff (parts not completed by CCCCCO)
- Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-time Instructional Faculty (parts not completed by CCCCCO)
- College and University Libraries

The Future of IPEDS

Some items not collected in 2000-01 may be added in future years if funding becomes available. The Fall Staff Survey and some of the other additions that the Task Force recommended are planned for 2001-02. However, the Faculty Salaries Survey will most likely not be reinstated because the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) will continue to collect and publish faculty salary data.

For more information on IPEDS and the web-based system of data collection visit:

NCES IPEDS Home Page

<http://www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/index.html>

CCCCCO IPEDS Overview Page

<http://www.cccco.edu/cccco/mis/ipeds/overview.htm>