

**Attention: Information No Longer Current
(Alert archived November 2011)**

Alert #21 – Update 4

NCES Requests Additional Comments Regarding First-Professional Enrollment and Degree Reporting in IPEDS

Prepared: August 2006

Type: Request for Additional Comments by August 25, 2006

Summary

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) seeks comments on a proposal to revise reporting requirements for first-professional degree programs (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trp15fu.asp>). Institutions would report Ph.D. and other Research Doctor's Degrees separately from Professional Practice Doctor's Degrees. All Master's degrees would be reported in a single category. The NCES proposes to implement the new definitions and categories in the institutional characteristics and enrollment collections beginning in 2007-08, and in the completions collection beginning in 2008-09 (reporting on awards granted between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2008). The new reporting requirements would be optional in the first collection year and mandatory thereafter. Comments and concerns about the proposal should be sent to Elise Miller, IPEDS Program Director, at Elise.Miller@ed.gov, by **August 25, 2006**. Please include the following in the email subject line: First-professional TRP #15 - Additional comments.

Current Status

Proposed Changes to New Categories and Definitions Based on Comments Received:

1. Combine the Master's Degree categories of "research/scholarship," "professional practice," and "other" into one Master's Degree level award.
2. Provide degree title examples (e.g. Ph.D., D.Sc.) for the "Doctor's Degree - research/scholarship" category, or limit this category to the approved degree designations used for the National Science Foundation's Survey of Earned Doctorates.

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3. Eliminate the "entry level" qualifier in the "Doctor's Degree - professional practice" category, so as to include all professional practice doctorates, whether entry level or advanced.

For any data collections prior to the implementation date for the proposed changes, institutions should continue to report data on first-professional degree programs under the existing definition.

Implications for Institutions

There are various concerns with regard to the implementation of changes in first-professional degree and enrollment reporting, including the possible loss of trend data, changes in institutional classifications, and the identification of programs for inclusion in each category. These changes may necessitate making changes in institutional data systems and report formats.

If the first-professional level is eliminated, reporting guidelines will need to be revised. Instructions will be needed on how to report students currently categorized as first-professional who are in programs that do not require an undergraduate degree (e.g., in the future, should they be reported as undergraduate students or as graduate students, or as undergraduates for a certain period and then as graduate students, and, if the latter, how/when to change the level). The NCES would appreciate receiving feedback on the advantages and disadvantages of these possible approaches to reporting this group of students by **August 25, 2006**.

Timeline

April 2004 - NCES posted a notice seeking comments on first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trp7.asp>).

July 2005 - NCES posted a notice seeking additional comments on first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trp7update.asp>).

Fall 2005 - TRP meeting to discuss first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS.

February, 2006 - NCES posted a notice seeking comments on proposal for first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/TRP15a.asp>).

July 20, 2006 - NCES posted another notice seeking comments on new proposal for first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trp15fu.asp>).

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August 25, 2006 - NNCES deadline for final comment to be submitted to Elise Miller, IPEDS Program Director, at Elise.Miller@ed.gov).

Fall 2007 - NCES would like to begin implementation of these new reporting requirements in 2007-08 (institutional characteristics and enrollment) and 2008-09 (completions). As with all changes to IPEDS, the first collection year would be optional, the second year use of the new definition would be mandatory.

Additional Information

The NCES notice about the options for first-professional degree reporting in IPEDS is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/trp15fu.asp>.

Comprehensive information about IPEDS is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds>.

Related AIR Alerts

[AIR Alert # 21](#): NCES Requests Comments Regarding Proposed IPEDS Changes (May 2004).

[AIR Alert # 21 Update 1](#): Proposals and Plans for IPEDS Changes (October 2004)

[AIR Alert # 21 Update 2](#): NCES Requests Additional Comments Regarding First-Professional Enrollment and Degree Reporting in IPEDS (August 2005 - <http://www.airweb.org/page.asp?page=293>)

[AIR Alert #21 Update 3](#): NCES Requests Final Comments Regarding First-Professional Enrollment and Degree Reporting in IPEDS (February 2006)

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Coordinated by the Higher Education Data Policy Committee. All opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Association for Institutional Research.