

2021-2022

Coronavirus Pandemic Guidance Tutorial Script

On behalf of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), welcome to this tutorial providing guidance on how to report IPEDS data given the effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) recognizes the impact the Coronavirus Pandemic may have had and continue to have on institutions across the country.

NCES requests that institutions report data to accurately reflect the time period corresponding with the IPEDS survey component, even if such reporting is seemingly inconsistent with prior-year reporting. For example, if a summer term began later than usual due to Coronavirus Pandemic postponements, continue to report using the timeframes as defined in the IPEDS instructions. NCES expects that some data reported during the 2020–21 data collection year will vary from established prior trends due to the impacts of the Coronavirus Pandemic. If an explanation error is triggered even when submitting accurate data, please provide a brief written explanation. For example: “These data are accurate as reported, but vary with prior-year reporting due to the effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic.” If a fatal error is triggered, please contact the Help Desk and verbally explain that the seemingly inconsistent data are accurate and reflect the effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic. The Help Desk will then be able to override the fatal edit.

Beyond this general guidance, some individual surveys have survey-specific reporting guidance in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

For the Institutional Characteristics (IC) survey, when reporting distance education offerings, please adhere to these considerations.

Part C: Please indicate at what level(s) your institution does or does not offer distance education courses and/or distance education programs.

For distance education courses, select the appropriate level(s) if distance education courses are offered by your institution, even if they are offered via distance education as a temporary response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. NCES expects that more institutions may offer distance education courses in 2020–21 in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, even if they had not previously offered this mode of course delivery in the past.

For distance education programs, select the appropriate level(s) ONLY IF entire programs (i.e., ALL required courses in the programs) can be completed entirely via distance education from beginning to end. Do NOT select if program completion via distance education is only a temporary response to the Coronavirus Pandemic (i.e., temporarily allowing distance education courses to satisfy completion requirements of programs that typically cannot be completed entirely via distance education should not be considered the same as pre-planned fully distance education programs that existed before and will remain even after the Coronavirus Pandemic).

In addition, there are several instances where the Coronavirus Pandemic may affect survey questions related to Student Charges section in the IC survey.

Part D: Are all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students required to live on-campus or in institutionally controlled housing? If your institution typically has this requirement but such requirement is temporarily suspended due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, please answer Yes.

Part D: Does your institution offer institutionally-controlled housing (either on or off campus)? If your institution typically offers institutionally-controlled housing but has temporarily suspended such offerings due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, please answer Yes.

Part D: Do you offer board or meal plans to your students? If your institution typically offers board or meal plans but has temporarily suspended such offerings due to the Coronavirus Pandemic, please answer Yes.

For the Completions (C) survey, the guidance regarding distance education programs mirrors the guidance in the IC survey: When reporting distance education offerings, do not include remote learning implemented in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic unless the program anticipates maintaining this modality permanently. Allowing program completion via distance education is not the same as having planned full distance education programs. In other words, do NOT consider a program to be distance education if completion via distance education is only a temporary response to the Coronavirus Pandemic (i.e., temporarily allowing distance education courses to satisfy completion of programs that typically cannot be completed entirely via distance education).

Reporting institutional funds received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (or CARES) Act will affect the Finance (F), Academic Libraries (AL), and Student Financial Aid (SFA) surveys.

For Finance, there is guidance on how to report the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (or CARES) Act funds. Institutions will report CARES Act funds as “Other federal grants” in Part E – Scholarships and Fellowships (for GASB reporting institutions) and Part C for FASB reporting institutions and For-profit institutions. CARES Act funds should be reported as “Federal nonoperating grants” in Part B – Revenues by Source, Grants - Nonoperating (for GASB reporting institutions) and as “Federal grants and contracts” in Part D – Revenues by Source (for FASB reporting institutions and For-profit institutions).

For Academic Libraries, institutions should include any library-related expenses that are covered by Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds in the appropriate expense sections.

For Student Financial Aid (SFA), guidance on how to account for CARES Act funds are as follows:

Part A: Emergency grants funded through the CARES Act are to be counted as federal aid, but not Title IV aid. As such, students who only receive emergency grants funded through the CARES Act should NOT be included in Group 4.

Part B: Emergency grants funded through the CARES Act should be included for Group 1 in Part B under “Grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state/local government, the institution, and other sources known to the institution”.

Part C: Emergency grants funded through the CARES Act should be included for Group 2 in Part C under “Other federal grants”.

Part D: Emergency grants funded through the CARES Act should NOT be included for Group 3 in Part D under “Report the total amount of grant or scholarship aid from the federal government, state/local government, or the institution awarded to Group 3 students,” as inclusion of these grants would skew net price calculations.

Part E: Emergency grants funded through the CARES Act should NOT be included for Group 4 in Part E under “grant or scholarship aid from the following sources: the federal government, state/local government, or the institution,” as inclusion of these grants would skew net price calculations.

This tutorial addressed overall and survey-guidance for reporting IPEDS data during the 2020-21 data collection cycles in response to the Coronavirus Pandemic. For more information, visit the IPEDS website or contact the IPEDS Help Desk.