

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  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

## **Alert #9 – Update 2**

**Subject: Redesign of IPEDS Surveys—Update #2**

**Prepared: February 1999**

### **Summary**

Planning for the redesign of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) continues to move quickly. See [AIR Alert #9](#) and [Alert 9 Update #1](#) for more background information.

### **Current Status**

#### NPEC Interim Report Released

The interim report of the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative Task Force for IPEDS Redesign is now available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ipedsrd.pdf>. Major recommendations include:

- covering all institutions whose primary purpose is postsecondary education
- collecting at a minimum directory and customer information from all institutions
- establishing collection schedules based on data availability
- using Web-based data collection and processing mechanisms
- developing software to facilitate peer analysis on line
- enhancing communication with data providers and users

Comments are encouraged and should be sent to [Samuel\\_Peng@ed.gov](mailto:Samuel_Peng@ed.gov).

#### AIR Colloquium

The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) Colloquium drew 70 participants (its maximum enrollment) and engendered lively discussion about the proposed changes to IPEDS. There was a consensus about the need to improve communications among a variety of groups and to provide ongoing training. Participants suggested National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) send a letter as soon as possible to presidents asking each to identify an IPEDS coordinator to convey information about IPEDS redesign to affected parties at their institutions and to have authority to release Web-based data. This letter would also inform the presidents about plans for NCES to create institutional Web pages with consumer-information based on the August collection

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instrument, warn about potential changes to institutional databases resulting from the new race/ethnicity categories, and point out that there will be changes in the data collection process for several of their institutional offices. Colloquium discussions also led to some changes relating to working group issues, which are discussed below.

Current Status of New July/August 1999 Collection of Student Charges and Financial Aid Items

At its January meeting the working group dealing with finance issues continued design of a Web-based data collection form for information on tuition and mandatory fees and financial aid awarded to first-time, full time students as defined by the Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) cohort. These data will become part of an individual informational Web page being designed by NCES for every postsecondary institution in the nation. The August 1999 Web-based data collection is a pilot study, but all institutions are encouraged to review the data collection materials and to participate since it will be part of IPEDS (and mandatory) in 2000. The original form was revised on January 22, 1999, and is available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/augdraft.htm>, but changes may be made to reflect feedback from the AIR Colloquium relating to problems with supplying academic year/aid year (AY) 98-99 financial aid data by August 15, 1999, and the need to clarify some of the instructions. As a result, it appears that institutions may have three reporting options: AY 99 actual, or AY 99 estimated, or AY 98 actual data.

The working group also forwarded to NCES its recommendations for data definitions and protocols related to the congressionally mandated study of higher education expenditures. Of particular importance are the recommendations related to expenditures on construction and/or

replacement of instructional facilities and expenditures on technology. The Group also raised a number of questions as to how expenditure data collected through this cost study might best be

evaluated. A draft performance work statement for the college cost study is now available at <http://ocfo.ed.gov/CONINFO/CCS.htm>. Future AIR Alerts will monitor progress on the evolution of this important Cost Study.

Update on Possible New Items for Student Surveys

At its October meeting the student working group compiled a master list of possible additions originating from a variety of sources. A list of the possible additions under consideration and related questions are available at <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedsrev/student2.htm>. The working group requests feedback prior to its March 15-16 meeting, when it will consider input and provide recommendations to NCES. NCES staff had received requests from congressional staff to supply data about institutional selectivity (acceptance and yield rates), academic credentials of

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entering students, and admissions policies. However, there was little support at the Colloquium for supplying such data because of lack of the data on some state systems, concerns about the appropriateness of the data, especially for institutions with open admissions, and recognition that guidebooks already supply such data. Furthermore, Colloquium participants indicated it would be difficult to supply some of the technology-related and non-credit items under consideration and that data related to parents' education, starting salaries of graduates, and their job placement rates would be even more difficult to supply and could better be collected through longitudinal studies. Reception was relatively positive to providing contextual data on the percent of entering students represented by the GRS cohort of full-time first-time students; one-year retention data (for students seeking bachelors degrees only); completions data on second majors; and numbers of technology-mediated courses (though this would take some work on the part of institutions). Participants were receptive to using items from existing surveys, including the Common Data Set, whenever new items are added. They also thought it would be a good idea to have IPEDS forms indicate questions to be added in the future so that institutions could start collecting the new data in the manner requested. There was some discussion about investigating the possibility of collecting new items independently of IPEDS and segmenting by sector, if appropriate.

#### Update on Faculty/Staff Data

Participants at the Colloquium discussed the variety of definitions of faculty and collected specific definitions from about a dozen institutions to demonstrate the many variations of how faculty are counted depending upon the use of the count. (Associate Commissioner Dennis Carroll indicated he would consider receiving multiple counts of faculty from institutions.)

#### Update on Race/Ethnicity Codes

At its February 15-16 meeting, the NPEC panel on race/ethnicity recommended a new reporting format that would include a total of 17 columns in two tables. The first table would consist of six categories for individuals reporting each race/ethnicity alone (i.e., not in combination with another category), non-resident alien, unknown race/ethnicity, Hispanic/Latino plus one or more race(s), non-Hispanic plus more than one race, and a total (the sum of the other 10 columns) equal to the number of individuals in the survey. The second table would include six categories for individuals reporting each race/ethnicity alone or in combination with other categories. Because of double counting of multiracial/ethnic responses in the second table, the total of these six categories would be greater than the total number of individuals. The first table would provide a "minimum/lower boundary" count for each group and the second would provide a "maximum/upper boundary" count.

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The panel also recommended that institutions use a single-question format to survey students (asking them to "select one or more" of six race/ethnicity categories) and include "Hispanic/Latino" as one of the six categories rather than as a separate "yes/no" question. In addition the panel recommended that institutions re-survey continuing students and employees in addition to using the new question for new students/employees (by the fall of 2002) and that they modify institutional databases to add six race/ethnicity fields in addition to the current field (and maintain data using the old codes). It was recommended that reporting formats and other recommendations be made as a final draft by October 1999 and finalized by March 2000, with preliminary recommendations made available earlier (including the May 1999 AIR Forum), that communication with a wide range of organizations be undertaken, and that training be offered. Most institutions will need a two-year lead-time to be able to incorporate the new standards into admissions forms, catalogues, employee biographical forms, etc. and to make changes to their databases. Vendors also need two years. New race/ethnicity categories will be available for reporting IPEDS data in fall 2000, but institutions will not be required to supply Fall Enrollment data until 2002 and Completions and Staff data until 2003. For more information about the new standards see [AIR Alert 6](#). An AIR Alert update providing more detail about the most recent panel meeting will appear shortly.

## Timing

With Web-based submission, IPEDS is moving from a single "due date" to a window of time for submitting data (with a "processing start date" and a "receipt closeout date"). For 1999-2000 the windows are around two months, except for the new Web-based price and financial aid section, for which the window is six weeks. Starting in 2000-2001 all submissions will be Web-based and the windows will all be approximately six weeks. The proposed new processing cycles can be found at <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedtabl.htm>, with a link for providing feedback. Please respond if the proposed timing (either any of the "receipt closeout dates" or the lengths of the windows) would be problematic for you.

## **Implications for Institutions**

It is important for institutions to submit complete and accurate IPEDS surveys on time, monitor proposed new data elements and collection methods, and provide feedback about proposed changes to IPEDS. Federal officials attending the colloquium were clear that the potential \$25,000 fines and loss of eligibility were unlikely events this year. They will take other measures first, including sending letters to institutions' CEOs. Institutions should take advantage of the following opportunities to provide input into the redesign process:

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- Comments about the Interim Report of the NPEC Task Force at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ipedsrd.pdf> should be sent to [Samuel\\_Peng@ed.gov](mailto:Samuel_Peng@ed.gov)
- Comments about the IPEDS survey proposals at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/augdraft.htm> and <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/newicitems.html> should be sent to [Susan\\_Broyles@ed.gov](mailto:Susan_Broyles@ed.gov)
- Comments about the Draft Performance Work Statement for the College Cost Study at <http://ocfo.ed.gov/CONINFO/CCS.htm> should be sent to [Sang\\_Park@ed.gov](mailto:Sang_Park@ed.gov)
- Comments about the student working group questions posted at <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedsrev/student2.htm> should be sent to [mludwig@air-dc.org](mailto:mludwig@air-dc.org)
- Comments about the proposed processing cycle for 1999-2000 (the bottom table at <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedtabl.htm>) should be sent to [Samuel\\_Peng@ed.gov](mailto:Samuel_Peng@ed.gov)

NCES will announce new developments via their News Flash service. You can subscribe at <http://nces.ed.gov/newsflash/index.asp>

**Timeline (note that current targets may change)**

1999. First Web-based software for price (e.g., tuition, fees) and financial aid data

October 1999 Final draft of new IPEDS reporting categories for race/ethnicity  
2000 Complete Web-based software for August data collection

2000 New race/ethnicity categories added to the Web-based survey forms

2000 Second and third Web-based software for IPEDS data to be due by October 15 and December 15, respectively

2001 New CIP codes

2001 Fourth Web-based software for other IPEDS data to be due March 15

2002 New finance form for public institutions

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2002 Mandatory reporting of new race/ethnicity for Fall Enrollment (old categories dropped); new codes stored for future GRS cohorts

2003 Mandatory reporting of new race/ethnicity for Completions and Staff (old categories dropped). **Additional Resources**

- Interim report of NCES Task Force for IPEDS Redesign <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ipedsrd.pdf>
- IPEDS site to monitor for latest updates <http://nces.ed.gov/Ipedsw/news.html>
- Draft Performance Work Statement, College Cost Study <http://ocfo.ed.gov/CONINFO/CCS.htm>
- Revised proposal for new summer 1999 instrument <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/augdraft.htm>
- Questions related to possible additions to student surveys <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedsrev/student2.htm>
- Proposed Processing Cycle for 1999-2000 <http://www.fsu.edu/~air/ipedtbl.htm>
- AIR Alert #9 describing IPEDS Redesign [Alert 9](#)
- First update to AIR Alert #9 [Alert 9 Update 1](#)
- AIR Alert #6 describing new standards for race/ethnicity [Alert 6](#)
- Proposal for student charges on IC Survey <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/newicitems.html>
- Subscription to NCES News Flash <http://nces.ed.gov/newsflash/index.asp>

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