

**Attention: Information No Longer Current  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

## Alert #9 – Update 8

**Subject: Redesign of IPEDS Surveys (Proposed Changes to IPEDS Staff and Salaries Surveys) Update #8**

**Prepared: November 1999**

### Summary

The National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC) Faculty/Staff Review Working Group posted its report on <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/facstaff/facstaff.html>. A form for providing feedback on current practices to NPEC is available at <http://www.airweb2.org/ipeds/facstaff1.cfm>. If you are unable to retrieve the documents from the Web you may obtain a paper copy from Meredith Ludwig at (202) 661-6152. This Alert reports on the issues addressed by the Working Group. Specifics regarding the proposals are described in detail in the report. Matrices for collecting the staff data are at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/facultyStaffmatrices.pdf>.

### Current Status

**Current Data Collection.** The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) has two surveys that collect data on employees of institutions. The Fall Staff Survey collects data on all persons on the payroll of the institution as of October 1 of the reporting year. The Fall Staff Survey is conducted biennially to obtain and report a comprehensive picture of employees in institutions of postsecondary education, by their full-time or part-time status and by the type of work they do. The U.S. Department of Labor designates primary occupational activity categories, which the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) uses on the Fall Staff Survey. Data on the Fall Staff Survey are collected by salary ranges, race/ethnicity, and gender for each primary occupational activity as required by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR).

The Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-time Instructional Faculty Survey (Salaries Survey) collects data on the salaries, tenure, and fringe benefits of full-time *instructional* faculty by contract length, gender, and academic rank. The persons covered in this Survey are a subset of the employees reported as faculty (instruction/research/public service) in Part A of the Fall Staff Survey. Specifically, *instructional faculty* are employees whose major (more than 50%) regular assignment is instruction, including those with released time for research.

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**Charge.** Part of the charge of this NPEC Working Group assembled to review the IPEDS Fall Staff Survey and Salaries Survey was to determine the feasibility of combining these two surveys into one wave of data collection focused on employees of higher education institutions.

**Issues.** In reviewing the Fall Staff Survey and Salaries Survey, the Working Group identified the following issues:

1. Institutions define *faculty* in many different ways and bestow faculty status on individuals in widely varying occupational categories.
2. There was no way to determine a relationship between the number of individuals reported as faculty on the Fall Staff Survey and the number of individuals reported as instructional faculty on the Salaries Survey. Furthermore, it was not clear who should be included or excluded from the population for the Salaries Survey.
3. There seemed to be some confusion as to which employees should be included in the 'executive, administrative, managerial' occupational category.
4. There was a general concern that reporting was particularly problematic for institutions with medical schools, especially on the Fall Staff Survey, and that there was a lack of comparability of data across similar institutions with and without medical schools.
5. The IPEDS does not currently collect any information, which can be used to answer the very important question of how many individuals provide credit instruction in postsecondary education.
6. Finally, the Fall Staff Survey was designed in 1976 by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to reflect the Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) System in place at the time. Since 1998, the SOC has been undergoing revisions and the Fall Staff Survey did not reflect the new SOC occupational codes or guidelines.

To address these issues, the Working Group developed a series of matrices and guidelines for reporting that would:

- help institutions provide data consistent with their unique definitions of faculty by separating faculty status from primary functional responsibility;
- clarify the relationship between the Fall Staff Survey and Salaries Survey and thereby provide guidance in Salaries Survey reporting by indicating exactly which subset of all employees should comprise the population;

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- provide a new functional administrative category to permit more precise definitions by classifying professional administrative personnel with no supervisory responsibilities separately;
- separate medical employees from non-medical employees for use by institutions with a medical school;
- count the number of employees that provide instruction regardless of their functional classification; and
- reflect the occupational classifications and guidelines of the 1998 revision to the SOC.

To encourage institutions to report more consistent data about faculty in general, the headcount matrices include four rows labeled with primary occupational activity categories that further describe employees engaged in instruction, research, and public service:

1. Instruction Combined with Research and/or Public Service
2. Primarily Instruction
3. Primarily Research
4. Primarily Public Service (e.g., extension)

For faculty at a medical school category 1 is "Instruction Combined with Research and/or Public Service and/or Clinical" and category 4 is "Primarily Public Service and/or Clinical."

In addition, a third matrix (available at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/facultyStaffmatrices.pdf> or <http://www.airweb2.org/ipeds/headcountmatrix3.html>) categorizes employees who teach (including employees without a primary faculty assignment). The column labeled "Activity Measure" has yet to be defined. Possible measures to consider include student credit hours, contact hours, courses taught, among others. Responses to the current practices questionnaire will help guide how the activity measure is defined (see <http://www.airweb2.org/ipeds/facstaff1.cfm>).

## **SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Combine the IPEDS Fall Staff Survey and the Salaries Survey using a matrix concept.

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- Update the categories and definitions of the primary occupational activity categories using the 1998 SOC.
- Update the salary ranges.
- Disaggregate employees historically assigned to the primary occupational activity category of faculty (instruction/research/public service) on the Fall Staff Survey into the primary occupational activity categories of instruction combined with research and/or public service, primarily instruction, primarily research, and primarily public service (extension).
- Continue to collect all of the data that has been historically collected with the possible exception of Contracted and Donated Services (Fall Staff Survey Part E).
- Review the data on Contracted and Donated Services (Fall Staff Survey Part E) to determine if it can be dropped in the redesign. If those data are still collected, the Working Group recommends a distinction between contracted and donated services.
- Collect additional data on new hires by academic rank.
- Collect data on who was teaching the previous year in the fall academic term, which included October 30, by primary occupational activity category, faculty status, and employment status.

In addition to the changes proposed by the NPEC Faculty/Staff Review Working Group, changes to the race/ethnic categories for reporting staff data were also proposed.

## **Implications for Institutions**

The Working Group recommendations probably require institutions, especially research institutions, to change their current practices. For example, in order to coordinate the reporting across staff, salary, and instructional activity reports, institutions that currently have different offices preparing the Fall Staff Survey and Salaries Survey may need to either consolidate reporting under a single office or have the offices coordinate their efforts more closely. If they are not currently doing so, institutions will need to start measuring instructional activity by employee category. Institutions will also need to decide which of the four occupational categories are appropriate for their institution and how to determine which faculty are placed in

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each of these categories. In light of changes to the categories for other employees, similar decisions about how to classify other employees will need to be made.

Institutions should study the recommendations of the Faculty/Staff Review Working Group at <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/facstaff/facstaff.html> and complete the related survey at <http://www.airweb2.org/ipeds/facstaff1.cfm>.

## Timeline

**January 1998** - NPEC Steering Committee approves project to study IPEDS surveys, including creation of Faculty/Staff Review Working Group

**Fall 1998-Spring 1999** - NPEC Faculty/Staff Review Working Group holds three meetings

**August 31, 1999** - Final recommendations from NCES Task Force for IPEDS Redesign, including recommendation to accept the new matrices and other proposals from the Faculty/Staff Review Working Group

**Winter 2001** – New matrices and new racial/ethnic categories for reporting IPEDS data appear on forms but the racial/ethnic categories and implementation dates have yet to be determined and may be later than 2001

**Winter 2003** – Completion of recommended matrices and reporting by new racial/ethnic categories (old categories dropped) are mandatory

## Additional Resources

Summary of NPEC IPEDS Faculty/Staff Review Working Group report:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/facstaff/facstaff.html>

Matrices associated with the report: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/facultyStaffmatrices.pdf>

Survey about the Working Group report: <http://www.airweb2.org/ipeds/facstaff1.cfm>

Final Report of NCES Task Force for IPEDS Redesign:  
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ncestfredesign.html> and  
<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/redesign/recommnd.pdf>

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Current status of race/ethnicity reporting: <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/newracereport.html>

IPEDS site with notice of latest updates: <http://nces.ed.gov/Ipedes/whatsnew.html>

Seventh update to AIR Alert #9: [Alert 9 Update 7](#)

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

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