

**Attention: Information No Longer Current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

Alert #9 – Update 9a

Subject: Redesign of IPEDS Surveys

Prepared: November 1998

Summary

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) surveys are slated for major changes by the year 2002, with some as early as fall 1999. In addition to implementing new Congressional mandates and other required modifications, NCES also will consider other substantive, definitional, and procedural changes. This redesign is an opportunity to rethink what types of data can best be used to communicate information to policymakers and consumers about cost and price and how these data might relate to other measures. IPEDS redesign also provides an opportunity to help institutions in their efforts to collect timely, consistent, and relevant data to analyze their own effectiveness and efficiency in comparison with peer institutions.

New items on student charges and financial aid. The Higher Education Amendments of 1998 require the Commissioner of Education Statistics to develop standard definitions for tuition and fees, price of attendance (i.e., student expenses), average financial aid by type of assistance (i.e., federal grants, state grants, institutional grants, and loans), and the number of students receiving each of these types of assistance.

Institutions will be asked to provide data for these measures (for undergraduates only) on an annual basis beginning in fall 1999.

New race and ethnicity codes. A second federal ruling that will impact IPEDS reporting in fall 2002 (with optional reporting available in 2000) is a new standard issued by the OMB for collecting race/ethnicity data. The new standard will require that ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino versus non-Hispanic/non-Latino) be reported independently from race and that respondents also be instructed to select one or more race classifications from five categories. Currently there are four racial categories plus "Hispanic" and only one option is selected. These changes will probably require changes to institutional databases for student and employee data and a survey of all students and employees using the new race/ethnicity classifications.

New finance form for public institutions. It is anticipated that new standards for how public institutions report financial data will be issued in 1999, with new IPEDS reports for finance data in fiscal year 2002.

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Current Status

Working groups are meeting in fall 1998 and spring 1999 to address externally mandated changes; examine specific definitions and instructions; consider possible additions, deletions, and other changes to the IPEDS surveys; and reconsider which institutions should be included in the universe of IPEDS institutions.

Web-based collection of data. NCES plans to start collecting data via Web-based forms, with a target of 2001 and the possibility that some data may be collected via the Web as early as 2000. NCES also plans to establish a Web page for each institution that is eligible for Title IV funding that shows trends in students charges, financial aid, and other institutional information.

Possible new items. In addition to the mandated changes mentioned above, some additional topics are being proposed for inclusion in IPEDS. For example, the working group dealing with the student surveys was asked to consider the items below, which were developed in response to Congressional interest in providing higher education data by institution to the public.

- * admissions data for entering freshmen classes (e.g., total applications v. acceptances, test scores)
- * an unduplicated count of Title IV eligible students enrolled during the financial aid year
- * parents' education
- * time to degree
- * fall-to-fall retention rates for full-time first-time degree seeking undergraduates
- * educational intent of community college students
- * average starting salaries for graduates, employment rates, and to what extent jobs are related to the field of major

Other proposed additions include information relating to non-credit activity, use of technology-mediated instruction, double majors at time of degree, more detail about full-year enrollment, and preliminary fall headcount by level (due October 1). The list of topics for consideration by the finance and faculty/staff working groups is still being developed.

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Schedule. The goal is for NCES to produce an interim report in spring 1999 and a final report for the Commissioner of Education Statistics by late summer 1999. It is anticipated that most changes to IPEDS forms will be made by the 2002 collection cycle, with some of these changes showing up as early as 1999.

Implications for Institutions

Submission of IPEDS data is one of the requirements for participation in Higher Education Act Title IV (federal student financial aid programs). In addition, the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 include a provision for the Secretary of Education to impose a fine of up to \$25,000 per survey on those institutions that do not submit IPEDS surveys in a timely fashion.

NCES Web page tracking institutions that have submitted IPEDS surveys. NCES will establish a Web site listing all institutions submitting (and not submitting) IPEDS surveys, starting in December with the Institutional Characteristics and Completions surveys. Institutions that have not yet submitted their 1998 IPEDS forms or whose states have not yet done so for them should submit them right away if they want to be listed under the "submitted" section of the Web site.

Opportunity to provide input to working groups. The working groups are currently in the process of compiling a master list of proposals. They are very interested in hearing from institutions about 1) how difficult it would be for institutions to provide the new data under consideration, 2) what factors relating to collection, analysis, or reporting may affect data quality, 3) whether additional items, particularly those related to cost, price, and quality, should be considered, and 4) other suggestions and comments. Institutions should take advantage of several opportunities summarized below for input to the IPEDS revision process.

* NCES will be posting a short customer survey about IPEDS at <http://nces.ed.gov/ncesnew.html>

* Web-based forms will allow interested parties to provide feedback relating to issues under consideration (including possible new data items and items being considered for deletion).

* IPEDS redesign will be the topic of the eighth AIR Colloquium to be held in Tallahassee, Florida, January 28-30, 1999.

* The interim report of the NCES internal redesign team will be available for comment in spring 1999 at <http://nces.ed.gov/ncesnew.html>.

Timeline (note that current targets for release of IPEDS forms may change)

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Fall 1998-Spring 1999--Meetings of working groups dealing with students; finance, costs, and financial aid; faculty and staff; and the IPEDS universe

December 1998--NCES Web site tracking submission of IPEDS surveys by institution

January 28-30, 1999--Seventh AIR Colloquium, Tallahassee, FL

Spring 1999--Interim report of NCES Redesign Team available on the Web

April 18-21, 1999--AACRAO meeting, where discussions of redesign will occur

May 30-June 2, 1999--AIR Forum, where discussions of redesign will occur

August 1999--Recommendations of NCES redesign team to be completed

September 1999--Target for new data on student charges and financial data

2000--Target for inclusion of new race/ethnicity categories on IPEDS forms

2000--Target for Web-based software for Institutional Characteristics data

2001--Target for availability of Web-based software for other IPEDS survey data

2002--Target for new finance form for public institutions

2003--Mandatory reporting of new race/ethnicity categories

Additional Resources:

[Alert 9](#) contains a list of resources.

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