College Navigator
Tutorial Script
2024-25 Data Collection Cycle

College Navigator offers a wealth of information about postsecondary education institutions. It was originally designed to provide information for prospective students and their parents, but anyone can take advantage of this easy-to-use format to retrieve selected data from IPEDS surveys, and other data sources.

From the IPEDS website, select 'Find your College,' then, select 'Search for a College.' This page is also available in Spanish from the link in the top left.

In the menu on the left, there are a number of search criteria to help you find an institution. If you don't know the name of the particular institution you're interested in and don't know how to get started, you can use the function known as 'Guide Me' and follow the prompts. It's a way to begin your search using a step-by-step methodology.

For example, step 1 asks if you know the name, or part of the name, of the school you want to search for. Next, the guide says, 'Select a State from the List to the Left or Click 'Use Map' to select multiple states and regions.' The map is regional, and as you can see it's color-coded: the Far West is light green, the Great Lakes dark blue. You could, for example, click on a region as opposed to a specific state.

So, if you knew you wanted to go to college in the far west you could click that part of the map. You can also select other jurisdictions along the bottom of the map, like American Samoa, Micronesia, Guam, and the Marshall Islands.

To select schools by distance, enter the ZIP code and the number of miles. For example, if you want to search for institutions within 200 miles of a particular city, choose '200 miles' and enter a ZIP code.

You can also select by program or major. If you knew that you wanted to major in a particular field, you could find all of the institutions that offer that particular program by clicking 'Browse for Programs.'

If you type in part of the word "Engineering," the selector brings up 60 programs in Engineering and more than 70 programs in Engineering Technology and Engineering-Related Fields; including aerospace, architectural, and applied engineering. If you click on the 'Add' button, the choices would be displayed under 'Your Selections', and then click the 'Remove' button if you change your mind.

You can filter by the level of award such as a certificate or an associate's degree, by clicking the boxes. You can also select particular institution types: public, private, four-year, or two-year.

Expand 'More Search Options' for additional search criteria, such as enrollment, housing, or tuition and fees.

For example, if you live in Tennessee and want to find an institution with in-state tuition under $15,000, use the map to select Tennessee, then select tuition of $15,000 and select the state you live in, also Tennessee.

Then click the 'Show Results' button.

You'll be presented with a list of institutions with in-state tuition, within that price range, for that state.

You can print this screen, export, or save the results, or you can add this institution to a list of favorites. Click 'Add to

Favorites' next to any institutions that you're interested in further exploring. This enables you to do side-by-side comparisons of up to four institutions by checking the boxes and clicking 'Compare.'

At the top is general information about the institution. You can click on 'Expand All' to view more detailed information about many important institutional characteristics such as the estimated student expenses before aid, or graduation and retention rates.

You can look at individual institution data by clicking on the name of the institution. To clear your search criteria and start over, click on 'College Navigator' at the top.

If you know the name, or part of the name, of the school you want to search for, enter it in the 'Name of School' box. You can also enter nicknames. For example, the University of Mississippi is known by many as Ole Miss. If you type "Ole Miss" into the 'Name of School' box and click 'Show Results,' the system will then find the University of Mississippi.

Moussing over the "i" button gives you a pop-up window with some general information about the institution. This helps to verify you selected the right institution.

It tells you that Ole Miss is a four-year public institution that awards bachelor's, master's, post-master's certificates, and doctor's degrees. It's considered to be a Town: Remote campus setting. There is campus housing, and it gives us some information about the student population and the student-to-faculty ratio.

The link for 'University of Mississippi' will take you to a page of information about the institution.

The page is organized with basic information at the top and additional information provided in several expandable sections below.

If you click on 'Expand All' it will display all the information that is available, and you can collapse it all as well.

If you click the plus sign next to 'Admissions,' it expands that section. It provides information about the number of applicants, the percentage of those that were admitted, and separates the data by gender. It also gives you some information about test scores. This would give you an idea of whether an institution's profile matches that of a potential student's.

As you can see, College Navigator provides the general public easy access to data on colleges and universities. It is a great place to start when searching for colleges and universities based on criteria important to you and for comparing institutions across key characteristics when making college choices.

For more information on the material presented in the tutorial, please contact the IPEDs Help Desk.