Human Resources (HR)
SOC Occupational Categories
Tutorial Script
2023-24 Data Collection Cycle

This tutorial discusses the SOC Occupational Categories and how they relate to the IPEDS HR survey component.

IPEDS HR occupational categories now reflect alignment with the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification, or SOC, system. Prior to 2012-13, many occupational categories and definitions in IPEDS remained the same for over two decades. The IPEDS HR survey now reflects current occupational categories and changes in the workforce over the past decade.

In particular, similar job duties, and in some cases skills, education, and/or training, are now grouped together in accordance with the SOC classification principles.

For example, references to "professional" and "non-professional" groups, as well as to previous HR sections, such as Employees by Assigned Position and Fall Staff, no longer exist. Instead, data are broadly collected for instructional staff (including the Primarily Instruction and Instruction combined with research and/or public service (or IRPS) designation) and for non-instructional staff (including research staff, public service staff, and all other non-instructional occupational categories) by employment status (full or part-time).

For example, in IPEDS HR 2011-12, Dietitians were classified as Other Professional and Dietetic Technicians were classified as Technical and Paraprofessional. Under new IPEDS reporting guidelines, they are both listed under Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations. References to "professional" and "non-professional" groups, as well as to HR sections (Employees by Assigned Position, Salaries, and Fall Staff), no longer exist.

The following crosswalk shows the relationship between the IPEDS HR Occupational Categories and the 2018 SOC Occupational Categories. Although there are 23 major groups in the 2018 SOC, IPEDS information is only collected on 22 groups, as it excludes military specific occupations. As we cycle through the crosswalk, you will notice three types of relationships.

First, some HR and SOC occupations are direct matches, for example Management Occupations.

The next type of relationship includes IPEDS HR occupations that include multiple SOC categories. For example, the IPEDS category of Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations includes three SOC occupational groups.

Finally, the SOC category of Education Instruction and Library Occupations is separated into multiple reporting categories for IPEDS reporting purposes, with different reporting requirements based on institutional characteristics. For example, non-degree-granting institutions report all Instructional Staff in the single category called "Instructional Staff" while degree-granting institutions report education occupations in multiple categories:

- Instructional staff:
    - Both Primarily Instruction, and
    - Instruction combined with research and/or public service;
- Research staff; and
- Public Service staff.

It is important to note that Postsecondary Teachers is an occupational category in the 2018 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) Manual with the SOC code 25-1000. This category is not an IPEDS reporting category because staff generally regarded by institutions as "faculty" are not only instructional staff but can be research staff and public service staff as well. Postsecondary Teachers is not a good description of these occupational categories on postsecondary campuses and introduces confusion into the reporting done by institutions.

This slide continues to show the separation of Education Instruction and Library Occupations in IPEDS reporting. Only degree-granting institutions report graduate assistants, and these assistants are considered part-time staff only. Finally, for degree-granting institutions that have 15 or more full-time staff members, library-related occupations are reported separately as: Archivists, Curators, and Museum Technicians; Librarians and Media Collections Specialists; and Library Technicians. All Student and Academic Services and Other Education Occupations are combined into one IPEDS HR reporting category.

Degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff must submit additional data on some staff. For example, Instructional Staff in the "Primarily Instruction" only category, must be reported for 3 subcategories: exclusively credit, exclusively not-for-credit, and combined credit/not-for-credit.

In addition, instructional staff must be reported by tenure status and faculty status, if the institution has a tenure system. For non-tenure track faculty, data are reported by four categories: multi-year contracts, annual contracts, less than annual contracts, and indefinite length contracts (e.g. continuing/ at will contracts).

Multi-year: An employment agreement or contract that is in effect for more than one year, or more than 365 days. The renewal period of a multi-year contract is not on an annual basis. A five-year contract is renewed every five years, not annually.

Annual: An annually renewable employment agreement or contract that is in effect for a stated annual period within one year of execution and may be equal to 365 days or standard academic year or the equivalent. This does not include contracts for partial year periods such as a single semester, quarter, term, block or course.

Less-than annual: An employment agreement or contract that is in effect for a partial year period of less than 365 days or less than a standard academic year or equivalent. This includes contracts for partial year periods such as a single semester, quarter, term, block or course.

Indefinite length: An employment agreement that has an indefinite duration (continuing/ at will). Although the use of contracts and employment agreements varies by institution, this section is meant to capture all non-tenure track faculty, regardless of what type of employment agreement is utilized. This includes formal contracts, informal agreements, at-will employment, teaching periods and alike.

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