

Outcome Measures (OM) Survey Component Overview Tutorial Script 2024-25 Data Collection

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, and the Association for Institutional Research, AIR, welcome to this online tutorial on reporting to the IPEDS Outcome Measures Survey Component, also called OM. The OM component is designed to provide consumers, policymakers and researchers with a fuller picture of student success than the longstanding IPEDS Graduation Rates (GR) and Graduation Rates 200% (GR200) survey components. GR and GR200 – required by the Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 – only collect graduation outcomes for first-time, full-time students, who represent a small share of the undergraduate student population in the U.S. To address this limitation, the Department of Education established the Committee on Measures of Student Success to develop recommendations to capture more complete measures of postsecondary student success.

Based on the Committee’s recommendations, discussions from Technical Review Panels, and public comments, IPEDS introduced the Outcome Measures (OM) survey component in 2015–16 and expanded it in 2017–18 to its current form. OM clarifies the definition of degree/certificate-seeking students, collects additional outcome data for non-first-time, full-time students, and takes into account the mission and role of two-year institutions, which serve a growing number of part-time and non-first-time students.

OM collects academic outcome data for *all* degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates. Students who enter an institution between the 12-month period from July 1 to June 30 are separated into one of four cohorts:

- First-time, full-time entering students
- First-time, part-time entering students
- Non-first-time, full-time entering students
- Non-first-time, part-time entering students

There are two subcohort groups for each cohort – Pell Grant recipients and Non-Pell Grant recipients – resulting in eight undergraduate subcohorts.

For each of these subcohorts, the OM survey component collects students’ highest credential earned (i.e., certificate, associate’s, or bachelor’s) at 4, 6, and 8 years after entry. Additionally, for students who did not earn a credential by the 8-year status point, the survey component collects an enrollment status outcome (i.e., still enrolled at the institution, enrolled at another institution, or enrollment status unknown). The Outcome Measures survey requires all institutions to report on their transfer-out students regardless of the institution’s transfer preparatory mission. This is a key difference between the Graduation Rates survey and Outcome Measures survey.

Data entry must be completed and considered final by the end of the collection period in mid-February, when the Keyholder locks their data. IPEDS coordinators have an additional two weeks to review the data and lock the survey component.

Data collected through the IPEDS surveys provide a basis for postsecondary education analysis and consumer information. The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, requires that institutions that participate in federal student aid programs report data on enrollments, program completions, graduation rates, faculty and staff, finances, institutional costs, and student financial aid and stipulates, "...institutions will complete surveys conducted as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)...in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the Secretary."

Institutions receiving Title IV funding (student financial aid) must complete the IPEDS surveys. Currently, there are over 6,000 institutions that submit IPEDS surveys, with a number doing so voluntarily. NCES is required to provide a list of noncompliant institutions to the Office of Federal Student Aid. Non-compliance can result in warnings and costly fines, or even loss of Title IV funding. More information about fines can be found on the Statutory Requirements page (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ViewIPEDSStatutoryRequirement.aspx>).

It's always a good idea to begin the IPEDS reporting cycle early and seek help when needed from the IPEDS Help Desk. The knowledgeable Help Desk staff is eager to help. Response time may be longer near the end of the collection cycle. In addition, the IPEDS Survey Components webpage contains frequently asked questions (FAQs), a glossary, and both current and archived survey instruments, as well as other relevant information pertaining to the Outcome Measures (OM) survey component.

This concludes the tutorial for the Outcome Measures component.