

# The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

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Advancing Quality in U.S. Postsecondary Administrative Data

Christopher A. Cody, PhD, Principal Researcher/IPEDS Project Director

Roman Ruiz, PhD, Senior Researcher/IPEDS Deputy Project Director

NIAD-QE University Quality Assurance Forum | September 2023

# Agenda

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1. Brief history of IPEDS and overview of current data collection
2. Data collection and quality control procedures
3. Engagement with data providers and data users
4. IPEDS resources

# Brief History of IPEDS and Overview of Current Data Collection

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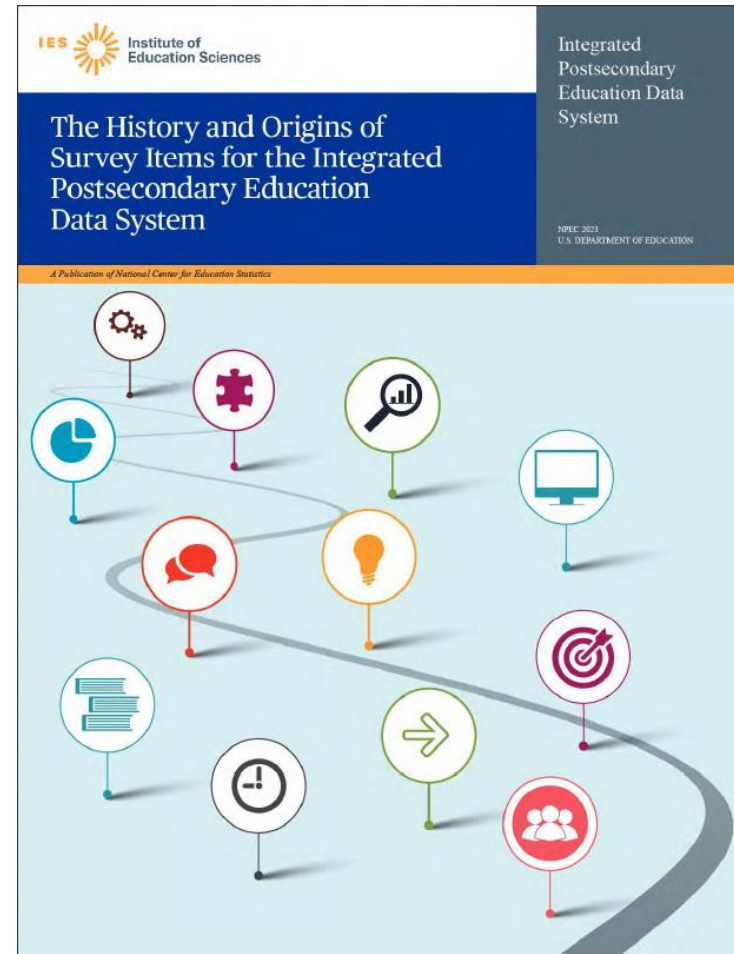
## Milestones in IPEDS History

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- **1867:** The U.S. Department of Education (ED) was established with the purpose of “collecting such statistics and facts as shall show the condition and progress of education in the several States and territories, and of diffusing such information. . . .”
- **1966:** The Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS) was administered between 1966–67 and 1986–87 and included information on institutional characteristics, fall enrollment, earned degrees conferred, finances, and faculty salaries, among other topics.
- **1974:** The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) was established and assigned the responsibility for collecting and disseminating statistics and other data related to education in the United States.
- **1985:** IPEDS was phased in between 1985–86 and 1988–89, beginning with the Institutional Characteristics (IC) survey. The universe included all institutions whose primary purpose was to provide postsecondary education programs that were open to the public.

# IPEDS *History and Origins* Report

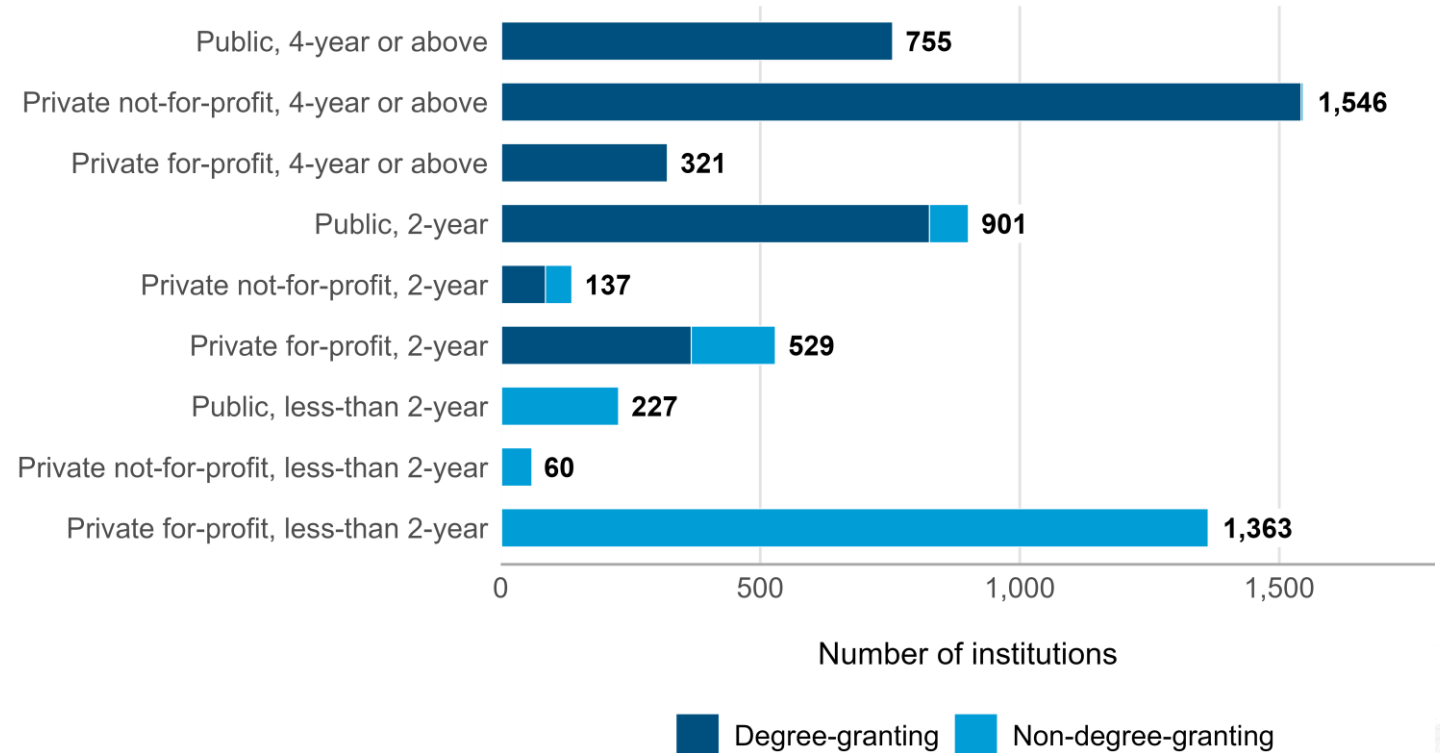
The 2023 update of the IPEDS *History and Origins* report provides an inventory of IPEDS survey components and data elements and aligns them to their legislative origins and requirements.



# IPEDS Universe

- Approximately 6,600 institutions of higher education (IHEs) report to IPEDS (this number varies by year).
- Institutions eligible for federal student aid programs (Title IV) are required to report to IPEDS.
- Some non-Title IV eligible institutions choose to report to IPEDS.

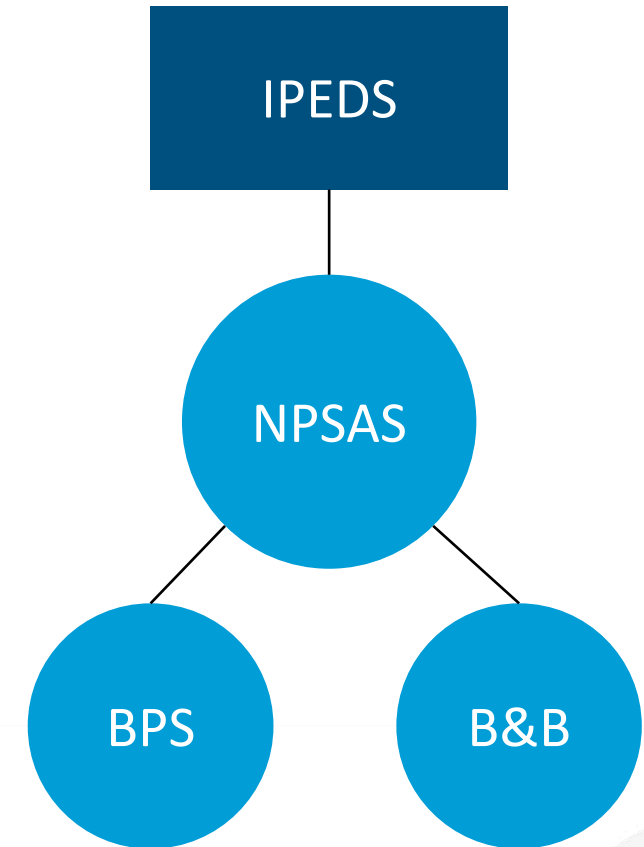
Number of Title IV U.S. postsecondary institutions, by sector and degree-granting status: 2021-22



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Institutional Characteristics component 2021-22 final data.

## IPEDS Universe as Sampling Frame

- The National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS) is a nationally representative sample study of postsecondary institutions and students within those institutions that collects data on the grants, loans, personal savings, and other sources that students and families use to finance higher education.
- The institution-level sampling frame for NPSAS is constructed from the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics (IC) and header files. Strata are formed by classifying institutions by control (public or private), level, and highest degree offering.
- NPSAS data provide the base-year sample for the Beginning Postsecondary Students (BPS) longitudinal study and the Baccalaureate and Beyond (B&B) longitudinal study.



## Legislatively Mandated Institutional Reporting

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- The HEA Amendments of 1992 (P.L. 102-325) added a provision regarding IPEDS to the Title IV HEA Student Financial Aid Program Participation Agreement (PPA).
- HEA Sec. 487(a)(17) states that “the institution will complete surveys conducted as a part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) or any other Federal postsecondary institution data collection effort, as designated by the Secretary, in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the Secretary (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(17)).”
- The Code of Federal Regulations permit a fine of up to \$67,544 for each violation of any provision of Title IV or any regulation or agreement implementing that Title [20 U.S.C. 1094(c)(3)(B) (Section 487(c)(3)(B) of the HEA)].
- Because Title IV institutions are the primary focus of IPEDS and are required to respond, overall response rates for Title IV institutions and administrative units are high. For example, the response rates in the 2022–23 IPEDS collection were greater than 99 percent for each survey component.



## Maintaining the IPEDS Universe

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- Each year IPEDS adds/removes institutions based on review of their Title IV eligibility in the Postsecondary Education Participants System (PEPS) maintained by the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA).
- Eligible institutions are assigned an OPEID, a unique identifier in Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) data systems. Only institutions with a main OPEID are required to report to IPEDS (format 0XXXXX00; begins with “0” and ends with “00”).
- Institutions that have a location OPEID (e.g., ends with “01” to “99”) are sometimes required to report to IPEDS (e.g., large institutions with multiple campus locations); some of these institutions voluntarily report to IPEDS.

## Current IPEDS Data Collection

- IPEDS comprises 12 interrelated survey components administered annually to all postsecondary institutions that participate in Title IV federal student aid programs.
- Each collection year is divided into three collection periods: Fall, Winter, and Spring.

Registration	Fall (August–October)	Winter (December–February)	Spring (December–April)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional Characteristics Header (IC-H)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional Characteristics (IC)</li> <li>• Completions (C)</li> <li>• 12-month Enrollment (E12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Financial Aid (SFA)</li> <li>• Graduation Rates (GR)</li> <li>• 200% Graduation Rates (GR200)</li> <li>• Admissions (ADM)</li> <li>• Outcome Measures (OM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fall Enrollment (EF)</li> <li>• Finance (F)</li> <li>• Human Resources (HR)</li> <li>• Academic Libraries (AL)</li> </ul>

- See Appendix for additional details on data elements collected by component.

## Variation in IPEDS Data Collected by Institutional Characteristics

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Data collected vary based on how institutions respond to certain questions on the IC-Header component (i.e., registration period) and on screening questions within survey components.

Institutional characteristics that affect specific data collected include the following:

- control (i.e., public, private nonprofit, private for-profit)
- level (i.e., less than 2-year, 2-year, 4-year)
- sector
- calendar system (e.g., academic reporter, program reporter)
- degree-granting status
- number of staff (HR component)
- if the institution has tenure system and/or medical school (HR component)



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# Data Collection and Quality Control Procedures

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Roman Ruiz

## Keyholders – IPEDS Data Providers

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- The keyholder is the institutional point of contact with NCES and is responsible for making sure all applicable survey components are submitted accurately and on time.
- Keyholder tasks include entering data into the web-based data collection system; coordinating with other offices on campus to collect the necessary data; running data edits and resolving all edit issues and errors; and locking each component before data collection closes for keyholders.
- If NCES has questions about the data the institution has submitted, the keyholder will be contacted. The keyholder also will receive all prompting emails and other important notices sent during data collection periods.

## Coordinators

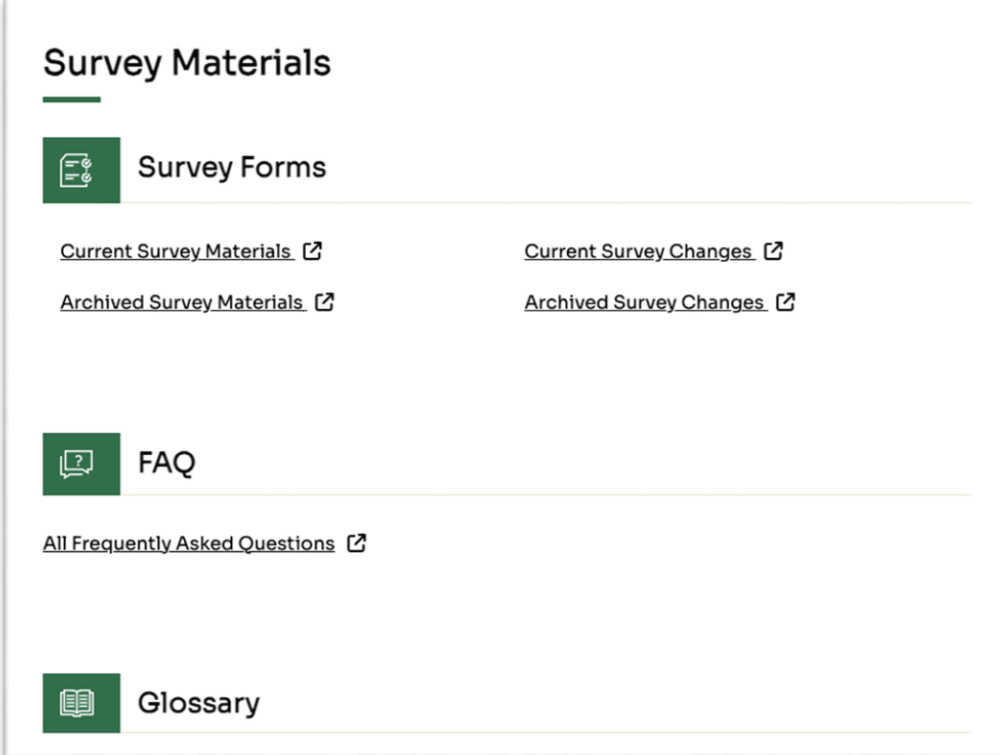
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- Many states and institution systems have IPEDS coordinators who are responsible for state- or system-level coordination of IPEDS submissions.
- Coordinator roles vary by state and system. Some states and systems submit data for institutions from their own information systems—relieving the institutions of some of the burden for reporting directly to IPEDS—and some coordinators may have different due dates for data submission that are not reflected in the federal IPEDS due dates.
- It is the keyholder’s responsibility to know how their role intersects with the coordinator’s role in terms of shared responsibilities for data submission and the timing of data submission.

# Opening Data Collection

At the beginning of each collection year, IPEDS provides extensive written guidance, technical documentation, and survey materials including

- survey forms;
- reporting instructions;
- frequently asked questions (FAQs);
- upload file formats (keyed, fixed-width, XML); and
- narrative edits (descriptions of the edits within the data collection).



The screenshot shows a webpage titled "Survey Materials" with a green underline. It features three main sections: "Survey Forms", "FAQ", and "Glossary". Each section has a green icon and a title. Under "Survey Forms", there are four links: "Current Survey Materials" and "Current Survey Changes" in the top row, and "Archived Survey Materials" and "Archived Survey Changes" in the bottom row. Under "FAQ", there is one link: "All Frequently Asked Questions". Under "Glossary", there are no links visible.

**Survey Materials**

**Survey Forms**

[Current Survey Materials](#) [Current Survey Changes](#)

[Archived Survey Materials](#) [Archived Survey Changes](#)

**FAQ**

[All Frequently Asked Questions](#)

**Glossary**

# Edit Checks

- The web-based Data Collection System (DCS) includes programmed “edits” that check for potential data reliability and validity issues.
- There are two kinds of edit checks that are run in the DCS: screen edits and global edits.

Screen Edits	Global Edits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Screen edits are run as the data are being entered onto the screen.</li><li>• These edits might check for such issues as no data where data are expected and data that sum to unexpected totals.</li><li>• Screen edit checks are those that can be performed with the data available within the IPEDS survey component.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Global edits are performed after the data have been entered and the data reporter clicks on the “Perform Edits” button.</li><li>• These edit might check for values that are out of the expected range based on prior year data, other survey components, or other parameters as decided on by the Survey Directors.</li></ul>



# Edit Check Types

- Edits vary in their level of severity and in what steps data reporters must take to resolve them.
- All edits must be resolved before the survey components can be locked and considered complete.


Edit Type	Description	Example
Confirmation	An edit check in which the data reporter must simply confirm the data reported are valid.	An institution reports a 100% fall-to-fall retention rate for its bachelor’s degree-seeking cohort.
Explanation	An edit check in which the data reporter must provide a written explanation as to why the data reported are valid.	An institution reports it offers distance education courses and programs (IC) but reports zero students enrolled in distance education courses (E12).
Fatal	An edit check that does not allow the data reporter to “lock” and submit the survey component but rather requires that data be corrected or overridden by the Help Desk or Survey Director.	An institution reports a greater number of admitted students than applicants.




# Context Boxes

- Context boxes are optional text boxes on survey screens in which data reporters can provide additional information to help in the interpretation of the data submitted.
- Some context boxes are published on the College Navigator website, an NCES college search tool.

FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME BACHELOR'S COHORT RETENTION:		Prior year data (Fall 2021 cohort)	
E1	Full-time, first-time Fall 2022 bachelor's cohort	<input type="text"/>	
E2a	<u>Exclusions</u> from the Fall 2022 cohort	<input type="text"/>	
E2b	Inclusion to the Fall 2022 cohort	<input type="text"/>	
E3	<b>Adjusted</b> Fall 2022 cohort (line E1- E2a + E2b)		
E4	Students from Fall 2022 cohort <b>still enrolled</b> as of Fall 2023	<input type="text"/>	
E5	Full-time, first-time Fall 2022 bachelor's cohort retention rate (line E4 / line E3)	%	%

 The notes below provide context for the data you've reported above and **may** be posted on the College Navigator website. Choose one option that best explains your data or choose "Not Applicable" if you do not wish to provide context notes. If none of the options provided explain your institution's data, then choose "Other" and write your own context notes. Therefore, you should write all context notes using proper grammar (e.g., complete sentences with punctuation) and common language that can be easily understood by students and parents (e.g., spell out acronyms).

Not Applicable 

## **IPEDS Help Desk**

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Research Triangle International (RTI), the contractor for the IPEDS web-based data collection, staffs a Help Desk Call Center to assist data reporters with submitting accurate data on time.

Key Help Desk responsibilities:

- responding to questions via phone and email
- helping keyholders resolve edit errors
- performing email and phone follow-up prompting for nonresponse
- reviewing edit explanations and context notes
- alerting NCES to problems and data anomalies
- conducting quality control (QC) follow-up on potentially problematic data

## One Last Chance (OLC) Policy

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- IPEDS offers a One Last Chance (OLC) policy that allows institutions a one-time chance to submit data in the event they miss a deadline.
- After each seasonal collection period closes, the IPEDS Help Desk contacts institutions that missed the reporting deadline and have not already used their OLC.
- Once the Help Desk makes contact, the nonreporting institution has 2 additional weeks to submit its data.
- The Help Desk staff can reopen the outstanding survey(s) or work with the keyholder to get the data cleaned and the survey component locked.

# Quality Control

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- Quality control (QC) is an iterative process and involves the entire IPEDS team (NCES and contractors).
- The first line of QC is the edits performed during the data collection process.
- After the data have been collected and migrated, RTI and NCES both perform a series of QC checks.
- Any cases that are flagged for further review are sent to the Help Desk and the Survey Director is notified. When necessary, the Help Desk will conduct additional follow-up with institutions to verify or correct submitted data.
- In the rare instance that an institution does not submit data—or does not submit complete data—data are imputed, usually using a nearest neighbor methodology. Imputed cases are flagged in IPEDS data files.

## Prior Year Revision System

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- The Prior Year Revision (PYR) System allows institutions to correct errors made in their prior year data submissions.
- Survey components open for revision during their regular seasonal data collection period, except for Fall components, which open a week after the current-year data collection opens.

# Engagement With Data Providers and Data Users

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Christopher A. Cody

## Data Collection Communications

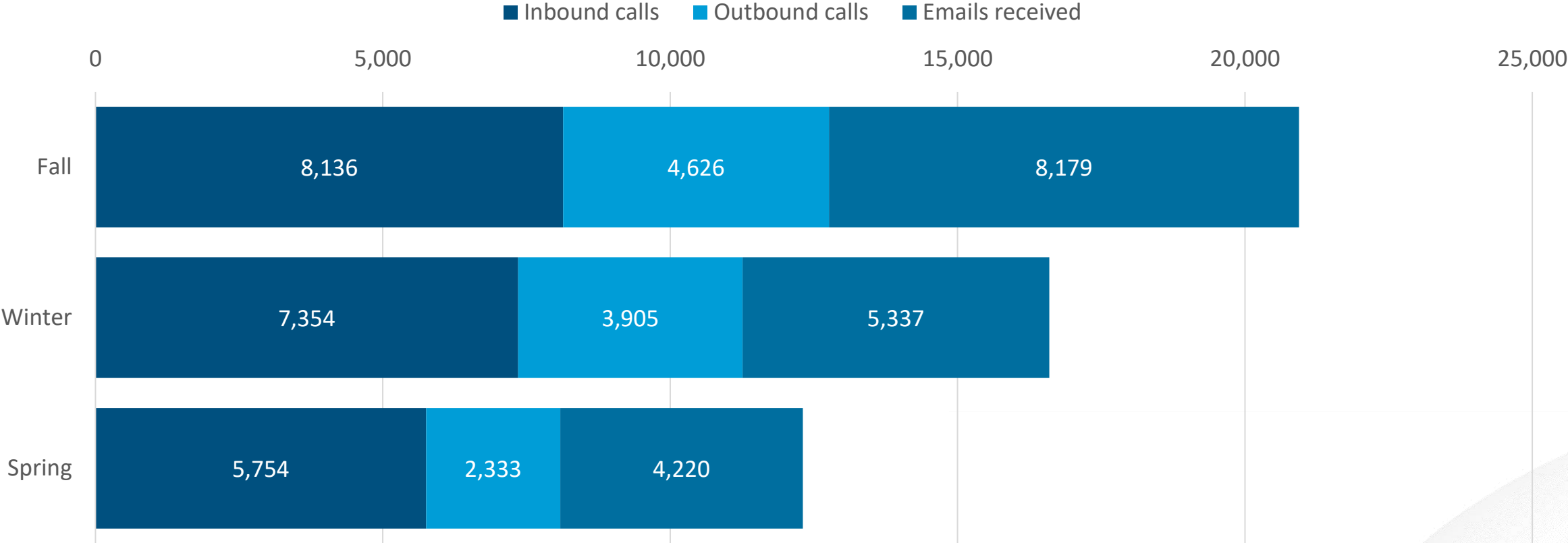
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- RTI is responsible for all communications with keyholders, coordinators, and CEOs of institutions.
- Key communications include drafting and distributing This Week in IPEDS (TWII), sending reminder emails at scheduled intervals, and managing of prompting calls for nonrespondents.
- The IPEDS Knowledge Exchange (which also functions as a listserv) is a free online community for discussion of IPEDS-related questions and topics like best practices and methods for pulling data from student data systems.
- AIR develops the monthly editorial campaign for the IPEDS Twitter account (@ipeds\_nces), which includes data reporting reminders, data release announcements, and topical statistics. In 2022, AIR published 166 tweets that earned 87,000 impressions.



# IPEDS Help Desk Communications

## Help Desk Communications Activity for 2022–23 Data Collection, by Season and Mode



NOTE: Data are as of April 7, 2023.



# Conferences and Meetings

Convening	Description
Conferences	NCES and contractors develop presentations on IPEDS-related topics and attend national and regional conferences (e.g., SHEEO, AIR Forum, SAIR, NEAIR, NASFAA) to share IPEDS updates and advances in data products directly with IPEDS data reporters and users.
Technical Review Panel (TRP)	Meetings of the IPEDS Technical Review Panel (TRP) are conducted by RTI to obtain peer review of IPEDS-related project plans and products and to foster communications with potential users of the data. TRP meetings are typically held twice a year over a 2-day period in the Washington, DC, area. RTI selects a group of TRP panel members (approximately 25) to attend.
National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC)	NPEC is a voluntary organization with members that encompass all sectors of the postsecondary education community, including federal agencies, postsecondary institutions, associations, and other organizations with a major interest in postsecondary education data collection. NPEC's mission is to promote the quality, comparability, and utility of postsecondary data and information that support policy development at the federal, state, and institution levels. NPEC shapes the research and development agenda for IPEDS by identifying topics that will help improve the data for the postsecondary education community, consumers, and policymakers.

## IPEDES Technical Review Panel (TRP)

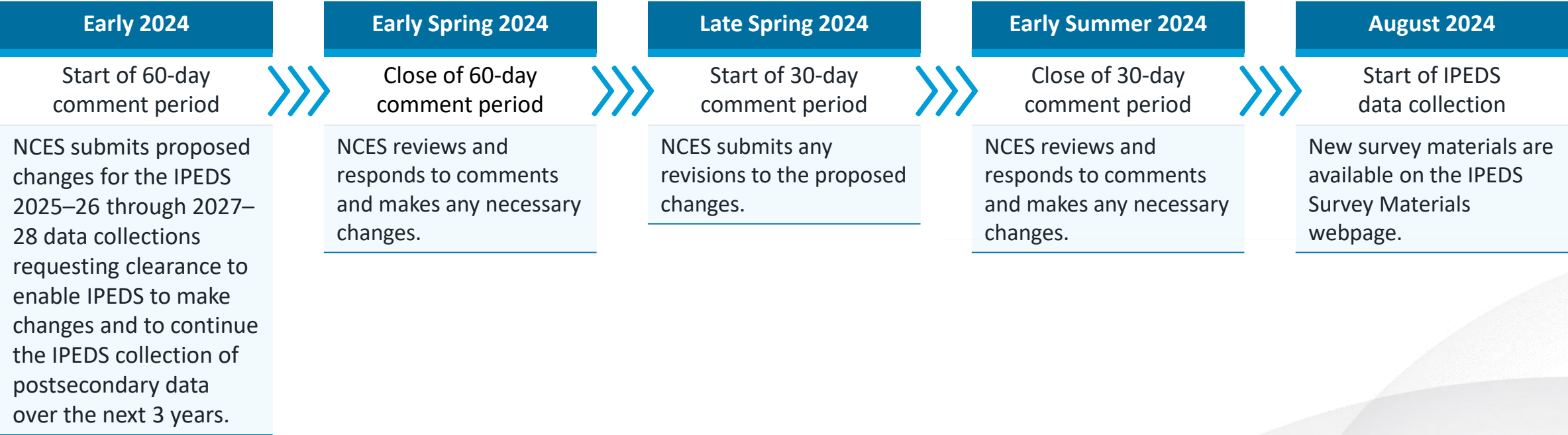
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- RTI invites groups of technical experts to discuss and make suggestions related to
  - emerging areas of concern;
  - legislation and regulations affecting IPEDES;
  - minimizing the time burden of reporting data; and
  - maintaining and enhancing federal data for data users including policymakers, researchers, institutions, and the public.
- TRP meetings occur twice a year. Recent past TRP topics include
  - The IPEDES Finance (F) survey component;
  - nondegree credentials; and
  - incarcerated students and federal Pell Grant eligibility.
- TRP summaries are posted on the RTI website for public comment.

# IPEDS Updates and OMB Process

IPEDS follows a cyclical research and development process that results in substantive changes to the data collection every 3 years following the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance process.

## OMB Clearance Process: IPEDS 2025–26 Through 2027–28





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# IPEDS Resources

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# Association for Institutional Research IPEDS Training Center

- The Association for Institutional Research (AIR) is an international nonprofit membership organization that provides information, resources, and training for professionals who college, analyze, interpret, and communicate data in higher education. AIR holds the subcontract for IPEDS training.
- AIR provides training in a variety of modalities:
  - IPEDS workshops (virtual and in-person)
  - IPEDS keyholder courses (online)
  - IPEDS video tutorials (online)
  - NCES data institute (hybrid)

**air** Professional Overview Learning and Events Resources About AIR MyAIR Q LOG IN

## IPEDS Training Center

Funded by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), AIR produces Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) training opportunities, including video tutorials, virtual and in-person IPEDS Workshops, and online Keyholder courses.

### Upcoming Events

AUG 16 IPEDS WORKSHOP IPEDS New Keyholder (Virtual Workshop)	
AUG 23 IPEDS WORKSHOP IPEDS Student Financial Aid (Virtual Workshop)	
AUG 30 IPEDS WORKSHOP IPEDS Human Resources (Virtual Workshop)	

**Learn**

- Tutorials
- Workshops
- Keyholder Courses
- Institute

**Connect and Share**

- IPEDS Knowledge Exchange
- Stay Up to Date
- Additional Resources

# Data Feedback Report

- The Data Feedback Report (DFR) is an annual report published by NCES that graphically summarizes selected IPEDS data, such as enrollment demographics and student success outcomes.
- Institutions can use the DFR to compare and benchmark their reported data with a group of peer institutions.

**Customized IPEDS DATA FEEDBACK REPORT 2022**

**University of California-Los Angeles**  
Los Angeles, CA

**What is IPEDS?**  
The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is a system of survey components that collects data from all institutions that provide postsecondary education and are eligible to receive Title IV funding across the United States and other U.S. jurisdictions.

**What is the Purpose of This Report?**  
The Data Feedback Report is intended to provide institutions a context for examining the data they submitted to IPEDS. The purpose of this report is to provide institutional executives a useful resource and to help improve the quality and comparability of IPEDS data.

**What is in This Report?**  
The figures in this report provide a selection of indicators for your institution to compare with a group of similar institutions. The figures draw from the data collected during the 2021-22 IPEDS collection cycle and are the most recent data available. The inside cover of this report lists the pre-selected comparison group of institutions and the criteria used for their selection. The Methodological Notes at the end of the report describe additional information about these indicators and the pre-selected comparison group.

**Where Can I Do More with IPEDS Data?**  
Each institution can access previously released Data Feedback Reports from 2005 and customize this 2022 report by using a different comparison group and IPEDS variables of its choosing. To learn how to customize the 2022 report, visit this resource page <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/help/view2/>. To download archived reports or customize the current Data Feedback Report, visit the 'Use the Data' portal on the IPEDS website <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/> and click on Data Feedback Report.

**University of California-Los Angeles**

**Figure 1. Retention rates of first-time bachelor's degree-seeking students, by attendance status: Fall 2020 cohort**

Attendance status	Your institution	Comparison Group Median (N=34)
Full-time retention	87	82
Part-time retention	75	72

**Figure 2. Bachelor's degree graduation rates of full-time, first-time bachelor's degree-seeking undergraduates within 6 years, by type of aid: 2015 cohort**

Type of aid	Your institution	Comparison Group Median (N=34)
Total	82	83
Pell grant	85	77
Stafford loan	84	80
Neither Pell grant or Stafford loan	84	84

**Figure 3. Bachelor's degree graduation rates of full-time, first-time bachelor's degree-seeking undergraduate students within 4 years, 6 years, and 8 years: 2015 cohort**

Time to program completion	Your institution	Comparison Group Median (N=34)
4 years	80	83
6 years	82	83
8 years	82	84

**IPEDS DATA FEEDBACK REPORT**

# Resource Pages

Interactive web-based resource pages provide guidance on key IPEDS topics for data reporters and users.

**Students Cohorts And Subgroups**

Students Cohorts And Subgroups Collected in IPEDS By Survey Component

Aligning Student Counts and Cohorts Across IPEDS Survey Components

Guidance For Data Reporters

Guidance For Data Users

## Student Cohorts And Subgroups In IPEDS

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) consists of 12 interrelated survey components administered annually to all postsecondary institutions that participate in Title IV federal student aid programs. For many survey components (e.g., Admissions, Fall Enrollment, Human Resources) student or employee counts are the unit of information, whereas other survey components present the institution as the unit of information (e.g., Institutional Characteristics, Finance). For survey components that collect student or employee counts, individuals are often reported in disaggregated demographic groups (e.g., by race/ethnicity, gender) which allows for more detailed understanding of specific subpopulations at the institution. The table below provides details on the types of information and subgroups collected by each IPEDS survey component that collects counts of individuals.

**Cohorts and Subgroups Collected in IPEDS, by Survey Component** [Expand All](#) | [Collapse All](#)

**IPEDS** Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

About IPEDS Use The Data Report Your Data Find Your College Collaborate With NCES

Home > Use The Data > Measuring Student Success In IPEDS

## Measuring Student Success In IPEDS: Graduation Rates (GR), Graduation Rates 200% (GR200), And Outcome Measures (OM)

Attending college is a big investment in terms of time and financial resources, but completing college provides a payoff. Measuring student success (i.e., college completion) can serve critical purposes for the higher education community. Students and their families may search for college choices that demonstrate high student success rates, and policymakers may make decisions informed by institutional performance on such measures.

The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) is an important data source to understand institution-level college completion rates. IPEDS collects student success measures through three primary survey components: Graduation Rates (GR), Graduation Rates 200% (GR200), and Outcome Measures (OM).

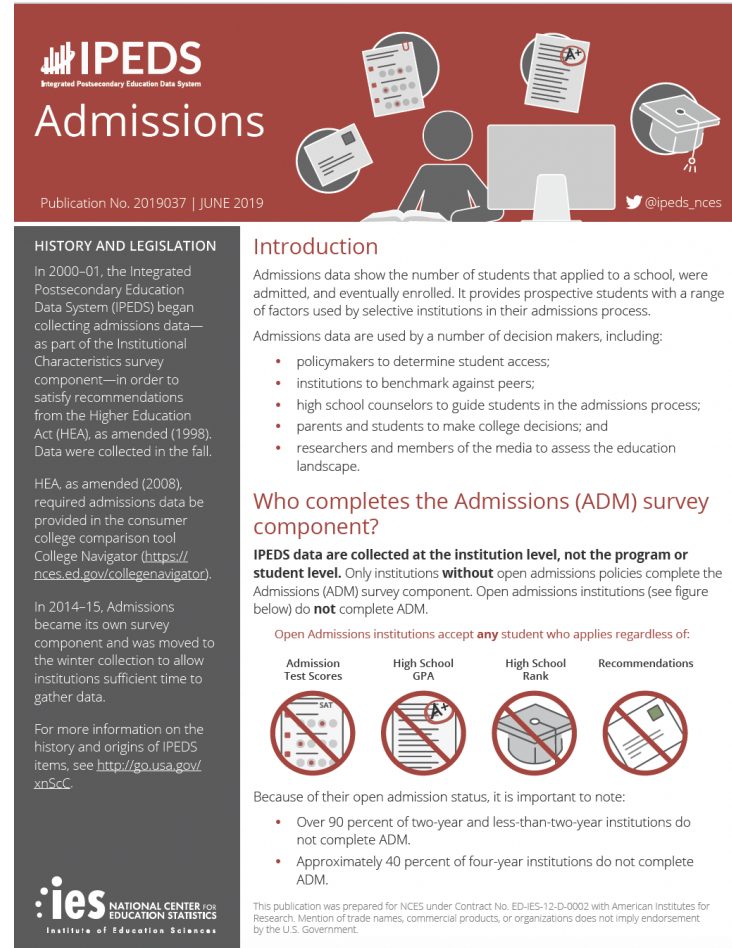
IPEDS introduced the GR survey component in 1997-98 to meet the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-542), which requires colleges to report the completion rates of their full-time, first-time (FTFT) degree/certificate-seeking (DGCS) undergraduates. GR collects students' completion statuses at 100%<sup>1</sup> and 150% of normal time to program completion. The GR200 survey component, which was fully implemented in its current form in 2009-10,<sup>2</sup> tracks the same cohort of students as GR but extends the observed outcome timeline to 200% of time to normal program completion.

A key data limitation of the GR and GR200 student success measures is their limited scope of the student population—that is, their



# Brochures

Static PDF brochures serve as primers on key IPEDS topics, including specific survey components and broader concepts such as timing of data collection and data tools.



**IPEDS**  
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

## Admissions

Publication No. 2019037 | JUNE 2019

**HISTORY AND LEGISLATION**

In 2000–01, the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) began collecting admissions data—as part of the Institutional Characteristics survey component—in order to satisfy recommendations from the Higher Education Act (HEA), as amended (1998). Data were collected in the fall.

HEA, as amended (2008), required admissions data be provided in the consumer college comparison tool College Navigator (<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>).

In 2014–15, Admissions became its own survey component and was moved to the winter collection to allow institutions sufficient time to gather data.

For more information on the history and origins of IPEDS items, see <http://go.usa.gov/xn5cC>.

**Introduction**

Admissions data show the number of students that applied to a school, were admitted, and eventually enrolled. It provides prospective students with a range of factors used by selective institutions in their admissions process.

Admissions data are used by a number of decision makers, including:

- policymakers to determine student access;
- institutions to benchmark against peers;
- high school counselors to guide students in the admissions process;
- parents and students to make college decisions; and
- researchers and members of the media to assess the education landscape.

**Who completes the Admissions (ADM) survey component?**

**IPEDS data are collected at the institution level, not the program or student level.** Only institutions **without** open admissions policies complete the Admissions (ADM) survey component. Open admissions institutions (see figure below) do **not** complete ADM.

Open Admissions institutions accept **any** student who applies regardless of:

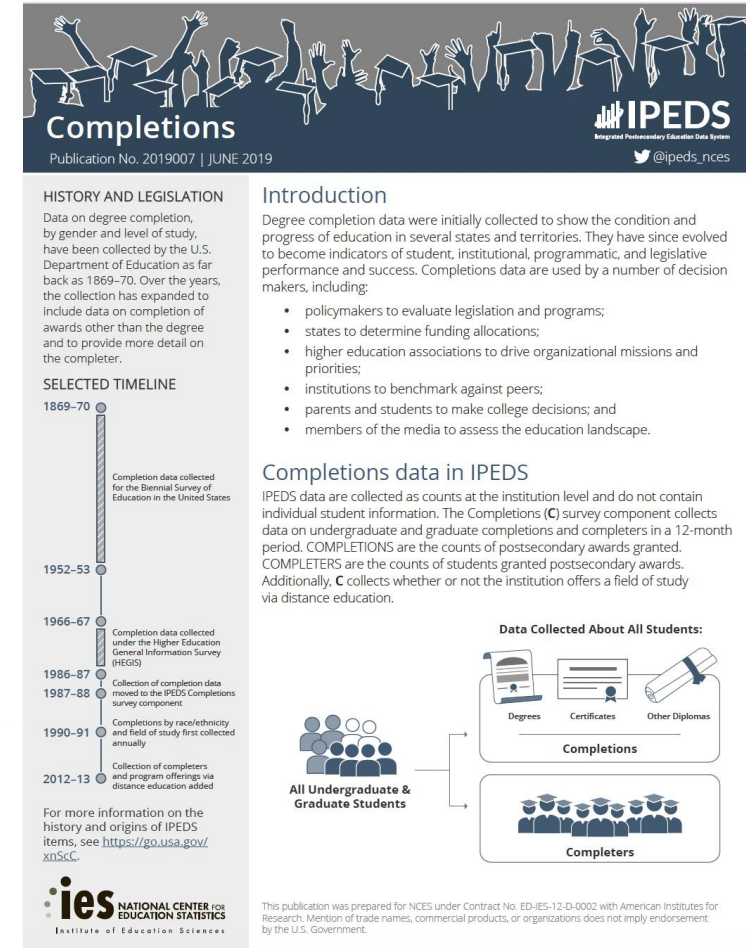
- Admission Test Scores
- High School GPA
- High School Rank
- Recommendations

Because of their open admission status, it is important to note:

- Over 90 percent of two-year and less-than-two-year institutions do not complete ADM.
- Approximately 40 percent of four-year institutions do not complete ADM.

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**ies** NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS  
Institute of Education Sciences



**IPEDS**  
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

## Completions

Publication No. 2019007 | JUNE 2019

**HISTORY AND LEGISLATION**

Data on degree completion, by gender and level of study, have been collected by the U.S. Department of Education as far back as 1869–70. Over the years, the collection has expanded to include data on completion of awards other than the degree and to provide more detail on the completer.

**SELECTED TIMELINE**

- 1869–70: Completion data collected for the Biennial Survey of Education in the United States
- 1952–53
- 1966–67: Completion data collected under the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS)
- 1986–87: Collection of completion data moved to the IPEDS Completions survey component
- 1987–88
- 1990–91: Completions by race/ethnicity and field of study first collected annually
- 2012–13: Collection of completers and program offerings via distance education added

For more information on the history and origins of IPEDS items, see <https://go.usa.gov/xn5cC>.

**Introduction**

Degree completion data were initially collected to show the condition and progress of education in several states and territories. They have since evolved to become indicators of student, institutional, programmatic, and legislative performance and success. Completions data are used by a number of decision makers, including:

- policymakers to evaluate legislation and programs;
- states to determine funding allocations;
- higher education associations to drive organizational missions and priorities;
- institutions to benchmark against peers;
- parents and students to make college decisions; and
- members of the media to assess the education landscape.

**Completions data in IPEDS**

IPEDS data are collected as counts at the institution level and do not contain individual student information. The Completions (C) survey component collects data on undergraduate and graduate completions and completers in a 12-month period. COMPLETIONS are the counts of postsecondary awards granted. COMPLETERS are the counts of students granted postsecondary awards. Additionally, C collects whether or not the institution offers a field of study via distance education.

**Data Collected About All Students:**

- Degrees
- Certificates
- Other Diplomas

**Completions**

**All Undergraduate & Graduate Students**

**Completers**

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Institute of Education Sciences

# Tip Sheets

Tip sheets are short guidance documents written for data reporters on IPEDS topics that require specialized or supplemental information. These sheets help to improve understanding and ensure accurate reporting.

## Data Tip Sheets And FAQs

Here you can find resources such as tip sheets and frequently asked questions that will assist you in reporting and using IPEDS data. In addition, links are provided to the IPEDS glossary and Data Center User Manual that are also helpful resources. Check back regularly for more materials.

### Resources

[Expand All](#) | [Collapse All](#)

#### Data Tip Sheets

- [Mapping Old Post-baccalaureate Award Levels with New Award Levels](#)
- [Assistance Transitioning to the New IPEDS Data Center](#) 📄 (387 KB)
- [IPEDS Finance Data FASB and GASB - What's the Difference?](#)
- [Finance Reporting Solutions for Jointly Audited Institutions](#)
- [IPEDS Finance Survey Tips Scholarships, Grants, Discounts, and Allowances](#)
- [Reporting Students for Institutions in Consortia](#)
- [Reporting Study Abroad Students](#) 📄 (225 KB)
- [FASB - Crosswalk of ASU 2016-14](#) 📄 (327 KB)

**Title:** Reporting Study Abroad Students in IPEDS Survey Components

**Purpose:** The table provides supplemental guidance to existing survey instructions on reporting study abroad students enrolled for credit at the institution, by role of the institution and IPEDS survey component.

**Description:** The inclusion and exclusion of study abroad students in IPEDS survey components depends on the survey component and the role of the institution where the student is enrolled for credit. The table explains when an institution should report study abroad students in nine (9) IPEDS surveys. How an institution reports a study abroad student depends on the type of institution where the student is enrolled for credit: home institution or host institution. If a student is seeking a degree or certificate at a home institution but may be taking classes in a foreign location, then the data on the student is reported in IPEDS surveys based on the information in the home institution column of the table. If a student is visiting and taking courses for credit, but not seeking a degree or certificate at a host institution, then the data on the student is reported in IPEDS surveys based on the information in the host institution column of the table. As a reminder, for student to be reported by either home or host institution, the student must be enrolled for credit at that institution.

**Key Terms:**

- Home institution – student is seeking a degree or certificate at that institution but may be taking classes in a foreign location
- Host institution – student is visiting and taking courses for credit, but not seeking a degree or certificate at that institution

# Data Tools

- IPEDS offers a suite of data tools designed for users with a range of experience levels and data analysis needs.

Beginner	Intermediate	Advanced
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• College Navigator</li><li>• Data Explorer</li><li>• Data trends (“Trend Generator”)</li><li>• Look up an institution</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Data Feedback Report (DFR)</li><li>• Statistical tables</li><li>• Summary tables</li><li>• Compare institutions</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Custom data files</li><li>• Complete data files</li><li>• Access database</li></ul>

- In addition to staffing the IPEDS Help Desk Call Center for keyholders and other data reporters, RTI staffs a second Help Desk to support data users with NCES data tools.

# Use the Data Webpage

## Search Existing Data



### Data Explorer >

Search for tables, charts, publications, or other products related to postsecondary education by keywords and filters.



### Publications and Products >

Review publications using IPEDS data including First Looks, Web Tables, methodology reports, and Digest Tables.

## Create Custom Data Analyses



### Data Trends >

Use the Trend Generator to view trends on most frequently asked subject areas including: Enrollment, Completions, Graduation Rates, Employees and Staff, Institutional Revenues, and Financial Aid.



### Look up an Institution ? >

Look up information for one institution at a time. Data can be viewed in two forms: institution profile (similar to College Navigator) and reported data (institution's response to each survey question).



### Statistical tables ? >

Create simple descriptive statistics (e.g., total, count, average, median, standard deviation, percentiles) on selected IPEDS institutions and variables.



### Summary Tables ? >

Customize a summary table for a select subgroup of institutions on the following popular topics: tuition and fees, room and board, student financial aid, admissions, test scores, student enrollment, degrees/certificates awarded, and graduation rates.

## Download IPEDS Data



### Custom data files >

Data are available starting with the 1980-81 collection year for the Custom Data Files function, which zip the data into comma separated value (\*.csv).



### Compare Institutions ? >

Download IPEDS data files for more than 7,000 institutions and up to 250 variables. Data files are provided in comma separated value (\*.csv) format.



### Complete Data Files >

Data are available starting with the 1980-81 collection year for the Complete Data Files function, which zip the data into comma separated value (\*.csv). Beginning with the 2004-05 collection year, data for each collection year are compiled into an Access database.



### Access Database >

Beginning with the 2004-05 collection year, data for each collection year are compiled into an Access database.

# Data Tool Examples

## Compare Institutions

Final Release Data [\(Change\)](#)

1. Select Institutions | 2. Select Variables | 3. Output

My Comparison Institution - None Selected [ADD](#)

How would you like to select institutions to include in your data file/report?

[By Names or UnitIDs](#)
[By Groups](#)
[By Variables](#)
[By Uploading a File](#)

Continuous variable
  Alpha/String variable
  Categorical variable

Search for variable(s)  [Search](#) When you have finished selecting variables from the tree, click Continue [Continue](#)

- Frequently used/Derived variables
- Institutional Characteristics
- Admissions and Test Scores
- Student Charges
- Fall Enrollment
- 12-Month Enrollment
- Completions
- Retention rates, Entering Class and Student to faculty ratio
- Graduation Rates
- Outcome Measures
- Student Financial Aid and Net Price
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Academic Libraries

## Trend Generator

IPEDS | Data Tools | User Guide | [Help Desk 1 866-558-0658](#)

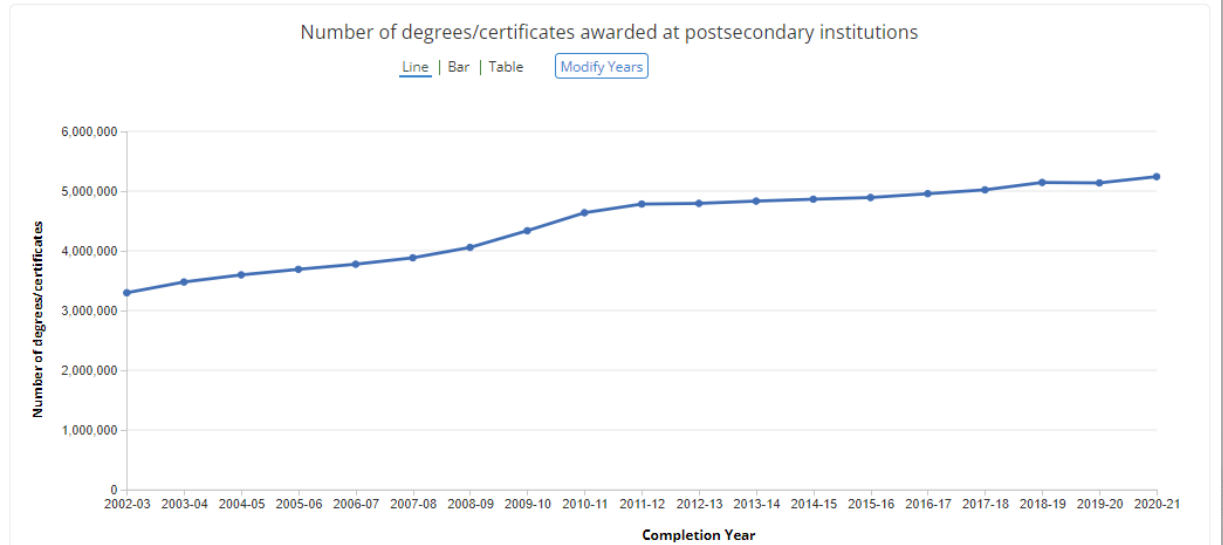
Change question

Degrees and Certificates Awarded: How many degrees/certificates are awarded at postsecondary institutions?

[BUILD TABLE](#)

**In completion year 2020-21, the number of degrees/certificates awarded at postsecondary institutions was 5,241,937. This is based on 5,832 institutions.**

[LIMIT RESULTS](#)



Notes: This table presents data collected from Title IV institutions in the United States. Prior to 2009-10, the data include only Title IV primarily postsecondary institutions.  
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), Completions component final data (2001-02 - 2019-20) and provisional data (2020-21).

## Christopher A. Cody

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Principal Researcher/IPEDS Project Director  
+1.202.403.5000

## Roman Ruiz

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Senior Researcher/IPEDS Deputy Project Director  
+1.202.403.5000



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# Appendix

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# IPEDES Components and Data Elements

## Institutional Characteristics (IC)

### Directory information

Physical and web addresses	Levels of enrollment
Other identification numbers	Mission statement
Control (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit)	Veteran's questions
Award levels	Percentage of students with disabilities
<b>Student charges</b>	
Cost of attendance (tuition, fees, books and supplies; living costs; other costs) for full-time, first-time students	Tuition and fees for full- and part-time students for all undergraduate students, all graduate students, and selected professional practice programs



# IPEDES Components and Data Elements (continued)

## Fall Enrollment (EF)

Level (undergraduate, graduate) and full- or part-time status	Race/ethnicity and gender
Age category (odd years)	Migration (student state of residence; even years)
Distance education enrollment	Retention rates

## 12-Month Enrollment (E12)

### Unduplicated headcount

Level (undergraduate, graduate) and full- or part-time status	Race/ethnicity and gender
Distance education enrollment	Dual enrollment (high school students enrolled for credit)

### Instructional activity (number of credit/contact hours)

Undergraduate, graduate, and doctor's professional practice	Used to calculate full-time equivalent (FTE) students
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# IPEDES Components and Data Elements (continued)

## Completions (C)

Number of degrees, certificates, or other recognized postsecondary credentials (completions)

Race/ethnicity and gender	Level of award	Classification of instruction program (CIP) code
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Students who receive a degree, certificate, or other recognized postsecondary credentials (completers)

Race/ethnicity and gender	Level of award	Age category
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## Graduation Rates (GR)

Full-time, first-time students only	Race/ethnicity and gender
Bachelor's and other subcohorts	Completers within 100% and 150% of normal time to completion

## Graduation Rates 200 (GR200)

Full-time, first-time students only	Completers within 200% of normal time to completion
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# IPEDES Components and Data Elements (continued)

## Outcome Measures (OM)

### Cohorts

Full- and part-time students	First-time and non-first-time students	Pell Grant recipients and nonrecipients
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### Counts

Students who have received an award (4, 6, and 8 years)	Students still enrolled at reporting institution (4, 6, and 8 years)
Students subsequently enrolled at another institution (8 years)	Students whose subsequent status is unknown (8 years)

## Admissions (ADM)

Admissions considerations	Test scores (SAT/ACT)	Counts of applications, admitted, enrolled
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## Student Financial Aid (SFA)

Aid awarded and average amount of different aid types for different student subgroups	Information on some Veteran and Defense Department benefits
Calculation of the net price of attendance	Edits to prior years of cost of attendance

# IPEDS components and data elements (continued)

Human Resources (HR)	
Race/ethnicity and gender	Salaries for instructional staff
Tenure status for faculty	Standard Occupational Classifications (SOC) for staff
Finance (F)	
Revenues and expenses	Scholarships and fellowships (public)/student grants (others)
Endowments	Assets and liabilities
Academic Libraries (AL)	
Library collections/circulation	Expenditures

# IPEDS Key Webpages

Webpage	URL
IPEDS survey methodology	<a href="https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/survey-components/ipeds-survey-methodology">https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/survey-components/ipeds-survey-methodology</a>
IPEDS survey materials	<a href="https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/survey-materials/index">https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/public/survey-materials/index</a>
IPEDS survey components	<a href="https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/survey-components">https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/survey-components</a>
Use the Data	<a href="https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data">https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data</a>
Technical Review Panel (TRP)	<a href="https://ipedstrp.rti.org/">https://ipedstrp.rti.org/</a>
National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC)	<a href="https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/join-in/npec">https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/join-in/npec</a>
Association for Institutional Research IPEDS Training Center	<a href="https://www.airweb.org/collaborate-learn/ipeds-training-center">https://www.airweb.org/collaborate-learn/ipeds-training-center</a>



## References

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- McNeely, E. M. (2023). *The history and origins of survey items for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System: 2022–23 update* (NPEC 2023). U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/NPEC/data/The-History-and-Origins-of-Survey-Items.pdf>
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