

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)

Managed by: The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education

Website: www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds

Data Center: www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter

College Navigator: <http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>

IPEDS is the most comprehensive publicly-available source of data on the 7,500+ postsecondary institutions in the United States. It allows the public, researchers, and policymakers to identify and compare trends over time across several institutional characteristics. Each year, institutions report data to IPEDS via surveys that are administered during three distinct reporting periods.

Prior to IPEDS, the Higher Education General Information Surveys (HEGIS) collected information on postsecondary education institutions, with many components reflecting current IPEDS data elements.¹ The HEGIS surveys were administered from 1966-67 to 1986-87. IPEDS was phased in between 1985-86 and 1988-89 to streamline data collections and to alleviate institutional burden and duplication across existing systems, including HEGIS, the Survey of Non-Collegiate Postsecondary Institutions (SNPI), and the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS).² IPEDS became statutorily required for all colleges and universities that receive Title IV (federal student financial aid) funds through the 1992 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act

(HEA). Over time, additional survey components and data items have been added through regulatory, legislative, and agency action, increasing the amount of information available on institutions that receive federal student aid funding.

NCES can only add data items to IPEDS survey components if those items are approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Changes to the IPEDS data collection come about chiefly by statutory changes to the Higher Education Act (HEA), the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA) or through Department of Education initiatives.

When changes are proposed to IPEDS data collections, RTI International, the primary NCES contractor for the IPEDS collection, convenes Technical Review Panels (TRPs). The TRPs serve to promote data quality and ensure IPEDS Survey Component questions reflect the diversity of the postsecondary system. TRPs, which are composed of postsecondary professionals, including institutions, data users, and researchers, provide RTI with technical input on IPEDS data collections and mandated changes. The IPEDS National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC), which participates in TRPs, also informs research and development activities for IPEDS.



CONSUMER INFORMATION

IPEDS data are made available to consumers through the College Navigator tool, which details information on institutional enrollment, cost, financial aid, completion, academics, accreditation, and campus safety. Much of the information included in the College Navigator tool is required by law. IPEDS data also are used in several other consumer information tools, such as the College Scorecard, Financial Aid Shopping Sheet, College Affordability and Transparency Center, and numerous college search tools created by states and private entities.



DATA USERS

More detailed, customizable information is available from the IPEDS Data Center, which includes functions that allow users to compare institutions and develop descriptive statistics. For more in-depth analyses, users may download data files containing IPEDS survey components for a defined set of institutions. These downloadable files may be used for a variety of research purposes, including informing institutional improvement or conducting policy analysis. Users also may download institutional Data Feedback Reports (DFRs), which provide institutions with an annual benchmarking analysis.

¹ National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (October 2011). The History and Origins of Survey Items for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012833.pdf>.

² NCES Taskforce for IPEDS Redesign (August 31, 1999). Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): An improved system. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/redesign/redesign.pdf>.

Selected Timeline³

- 1966 » The **Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS)**, the precursor to IPEDS, is created.
- 1985 » **IPEDS is phased in**, incorporating and adding to the HEGIS data collection.
- 1992 » 1992 HEA amendments require all institutions that receive Title IV aid to **report to IPEDS**.
- 1997 » The **Graduation Rate Survey** is added to identify completion trends for student athletes and other students under the Student Right to Know and Campus Security Act of 1990.
- » The “**Common Form**” for reporting finance information is updated based on new Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) recommendations for private nonprofit institutions.
- 1999 » The IPEDS Redesign Taskforce releases ***Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): An Improved System***, which recommends several current services, including a web-based system with three waves of reporting (fall, winter, and spring), the creation of training workshops and a technical assistance Help Desk, the implementation of quality control checks, and the development of peer analysis and data access tools.⁴
- » The **Student Financial Aid (SFA)** component is developed to comply with 1998 HEA amendments.⁵
- » The **IPEDS For-Profit Finance (F)** survey form implemented to collect finance data from for-profit institutions.
- 2000 » The **Employees by Assigned Position (EAP)** component is added to IPEDS.
- 2002 » The **Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB)** form begins to be phased in to collect finance data from public institutions (phase-in complete in 2004-05). Public institutions use the Common Form until 2002.
- 2005 » The EAP, Salaries and Fall Staff survey components are merged to create the **Human Resources component**.
- 2007 » 12-month unduplicated headcount enrollment and instructional activity data are moved to the new **12-Month Enrollment (E12)** component.
- 2008 » **200% graduation rates** are added to IPEDS and the SFA component is expanded to include net price, Pell Grant, and student loan data as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).
- » Phase-in begins of the **revised race/ethnicity categories**, required by the 1997 OMB Race/Ethnicity Standards.
- » New **post-baccalaureate award categories** are implemented. These categories become mandatory in 2010-11.
- 2011 » Revised **race/ethnicity categories** become mandatory.
- 2014 » **Data on veterans** is incorporated into the Institutional Characteristics (IC) and SFA components.
- » Admissions data elements are shifted from the IC component to a new, **separate Admissions component**.
- » A new **Academic Libraries component** is added to replace the Academic Libraries Survey.
- » The **For-Profit Finance Form (F)** is updated to provide more detailed information.
- 2015 » The **Outcome Measures component** is implemented to collect completion, transfer, and subsequent enrollment data for four cohorts of students: full-time first-time, part-time first-time, full-time transfer, and part-time transfer.⁶

OVERVIEW

Collection Frequency⁷	Annually:
	» SEPTEMBER — OCTOBER Institutional Characteristics, Completions, 12-Month Enrollment
	» DECEMBER — FEBRUARY Student Financial Aid, Graduation Rates, 200% Graduation Rates, Admissions
	» DECEMBER — APRIL Fall Enrollment, Finance, Human Resources, Academic Libraries ⁸
Years of Data Availability	1980-present ⁹
Governance	» Statute/regulation
	» Title IV/FSA Compliance
	» Departmental/NCES policy
Uses	» Inform federal and state policy
	» Institutional benchmarking
	» Inform institutional practice
	» Consumer tools
	» Research reports
Participation	Mandatory for all Title IV institutions
Coverage	» 7,397 institutions and 79 administrative/system offices ¹⁰
	» 28,305,025 undergraduate and graduate students ¹¹

³ Unless otherwise noted, citations may be found in: Fuller, C. (2011). The History and Origins of Survey Items for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012833.pdf>.

⁴ Peng, S. (1999). Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS): An improved system. Final Report of the NCES Taskforce for IPEDS Redesign. National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/pdf/redesign/redesign.pdf>.

⁵ Fuller, C. (2011). The History and Origins of Survey Items for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. National Postsecondary Education Cooperative, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012833.pdf>.

⁶ Information on changes in 2014-15 and 2015-16 may be found in: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Changes to the 2014-15 and 2015-16 Data Collections. Retrieved from <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisChangesForNextYear.aspx>.

⁷ National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). 2014-15 Data Collection Schedule. Retrieved from <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ViewContent.aspx?contentId=21>.

⁸ Admissions and Academic Libraries components were added in 2014-15.

⁹ This includes HEGIS and IPEDS data.

¹⁰ Ginder, S.A., Kelly-Reid, J.E., and Mann, F.B. (2014). Enrollment in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2013; Financial Statistics, Fiscal Year 2013; and Employees in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2013. First Look (Provisional Data). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015012.pdf>.

¹¹ Ginder, S.A., Kelly-Reid, J.E., and Mann, F.B. (2014). Postsecondary Institutions and Cost of Attendance in 2013-14; Degrees and Other Awards Conferred, 2012-13; and 12-Month Enrollment, 2012-13: First Look (Provisional Data). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2014/2014066rev.pdf>.

Data Measures in IPEDS

This is a summary of the measures included in the IPEDS data collection (indicated by a check mark). Text after a measure gives more specific information about the level of detail collected.

ACCESS

Enrollment

PRICE

Tuition/Price: **Cost of attendance, tuition/fees, net price**

Grant aid: **Student averages for annual total, Pell, state, institutional grants**

Debt

PROGRESS

Persistence: **First-year only**

Remedial course completion

Gateway course completion

Course completion

Credit accumulation

Transfer-out: **No information on receiving institution**

Still enrolled beyond graduation timeframe

COMPLETION

Graduation rates: **100%, 150%, 200%**

Time to degree

Credits to degree

Credentials conferred

OUTCOMES

Employment rate

Earnings/wages

Repayment measures

Learning outcomes

Continuing education outcomes

OTHER

Contextual information about state and/or service area

Institution and/or program details

Course information

Academic and student support services

Student experience, engagement, satisfaction, and/or behavior

Faculty demographics, courseloads, and/or student ratios

Student Characteristics

This list denotes which student characteristics this data collection uses to disaggregate data measures. Note that not all measures are disaggregated by all characteristics listed here.

Enrollment status: **First-time, transfer**

Attendance pattern: **Full-time, part-time**

Degree/certificate-seeking status: **Bachelor's-seeking, associate's/certificate-seeking, non-degree/certificate-seeking**

Income: **Pell receipt***

Race/ethnicity

Gender

Age

Program of study

Military status*

Level of academic preparation

* This disaggregate is only available in the Student Financial Aid survey component.

SOURCE:

National Center for Education Statistics. Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System 2014-15 Survey Materials. Retrieved from <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/VisIndex.aspx>.