

**SECTION B. Description of Statistical Methodology**

**B.1. Respondent Universe**

The primary universe of interest for IPEDS consists of approximately 6,750 institutions (according to our most recent count) that are eligible to participate in Title IV student financial aid programs AND whose primary purpose is to provide postsecondary education. By law, these schools are required to respond. Schools that do not participate in Title IV and those that participate (but are not primarily postsecondary) may voluntarily provide data to IPEDS. Title IV schools are shown by highest level of offering (4-year award or above, 2-year award, less than 2-year award) and by control (public, private not-for-profit, private for-profit):

**Table 4a. Title IV Institutions in the IPEDS Universe  
Estimated Counts for 2008-09 Collection**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Private not-for-profit</u>	<u>Private for-profit</u>
Total	6,750	2,100	1,900	2,750
4-year	2,650	600	1,600	450
2-year	2,250	1,200	200	850
Less than 2-yr	1,750	200	100	1,450
Administrative units	100	100	0	0

**B.2. Statistical Methodology**

There is no sampling done for any of the IPEDS survey components.

Because of the institutional compliance requirements outlined in sections A.1. and A.2. of this document, sampling is not an option. This has been discussed at length at meetings of our Technical Review Panel, with other areas of the Department of Education including the Office for Civil Rights, the Office of Postsecondary Education, the office of Federal Student Aid, and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education, and with other Federal Agencies such as Census, BEA and EEOC.

**B.3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates**

IPEDS response rates for institutions receiving federal financial aid are nearly 99.9%. There were only 11 institutions that did not respond to one or more of the

IPEDS surveys in 2006-07. IPEDS targets the Title IV institutions (others may respond, but no follow-up is done) and the web-based survey system incorporates an automated e-mail module that automatically generates follow-up e-mail to “keyholders” (individuals appointed by the CEOs as responsible for IPEDS data submission). Follow-up e-mails are generated if the institution does not attempt to enter data or if, at 2 weeks and one week before closeout, the case is not locked. The CEOs of non-responding institutions are also contacted by standard mail with follow up phone calls if, two weeks prior to closeout, the school has not entered any data. This has proven to be very successful in past years. In addition, the names of institutions that do not respond to the IPEDS surveys, and a history of all regular contact with these institutions, is provided to the Federal Student Aid office for appropriate action.

#### **B.4. Tests of Procedures and Methods**

The data collection procedures and data items described in this submission have been tested in a number of ways. Most of the data elements requested have already been collected in previous IPEDS surveys and prior to that, similar data elements had been collected for over 20 years in HEGIS.

However, data quality is an overriding concern that NCES must continue to assess and evaluate. One approach is to assess relevant data from different IPEDS components and from different survey years to evaluate the consistency and reliability of reported data. These interrelationships among surveys and relationships over time were used to develop the automated tests used to edit each IPEDS data submission. Edit checks currently help to identify potential problems and provide opportunities to correct them early in the data collection. As the number of institutions that automate their responses to IPEDS increases, it becomes increasingly difficult to fully validate their responses. However, by implementing a web-based data collection effort that requires error resolution and correction prior to data submission, NCES has been gathering cleaner data in a more timely fashion. The web-based system still accommodates intermediate reporting units such as community college boards, state university systems offices, and corporate offices.

The web-based data collection method was tested in a successful pilot collection of Institutional Price and Student Financial Aid information in August 1999, and has been in full-scale implementation since the Fall of 2000. Throughout the implementation of the web-based system, as a result of discussions with data providers and associations that use the data, NCES has revised the data collection items, definitions, and instructions based on the recommendations of our constituents, and following appropriate public comment periods.

In July 2005, NCES completed a validity study of the IPEDS data. Data items that were changed using the IPEDS Prior Year Data Revision System were examined and compared to the institution’s original submission. This study also allowed for

review of IPEDS imputation methods and results. A full report of the study, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System Data Quality Study, is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2005175>.

Three additional study are currently underway for the finance, human resources and graduation rates data.

## **B.5. Reviewing Individuals**

Listed below are individuals who have reviewed, in whole or in part, the IPEDS surveys, and/or participated in Technical Review Panel meetings charged with revising and refining the surveys and data items collected.

### Representatives from the National Center for Education Statistics

1. Samuel Barbett, Statistician (502-7305)
2. Patricia Brown, Statistician (502-7317)
3. Dennis Carroll, Associate Commissioner (502-7323)
4. Tara Coffey, Statistician (502-7476)
5. Steve Kaufman, Statistician (502-7371)
6. Paula Knepper, Senior Technical Advisor (502-7367)
7. Andrew Mary, Statistician (502-7337)
8. Edith McArthur, Statistician (Demography) (502-7393)
9. Elise Miller, IPEDS Program Director (502-7318)
10. Janice Plotczyk, Statistician (502-7459)
11. Sabrina Ratchford, Statistician (502-7436)
12. Thomas Weko, Senior Research Scientist (502-7643)

### Representatives from Agencies, Other Federal Offices, and Postsecondary Institutions/Systems

1. David Bergeron, Office of Postsecondary Education
2. Cheryl Blanco, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
3. Camille Brown, South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
4. Mark Chisholm, University of New Mexico
5. Margaret Cohen, George Washington University
6. Brian Cook, American Council on Education
7. Mary Ann Coughlin, Springfield College
8. Keith Greiner, Iowa College Student Aid Commission
9. Tammy Halligan, Career College Association
10. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi, California State University System
11. Natasha Janson, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
12. Hans L'Orange, State Higher Education Executive Officers
13. Joseph Marks, Southern Regional Education Board
14. Tod Massa, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
15. Charles McGrew, Council on Postsecondary Education
16. Kent Philippe, American Association of Community Colleges
17. Kenneth Redd, Council of Graduate Schools (and formerly National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators)
18. Mary Sapp, University of Miami
19. Jessica Shedd, National Association of College and University Business Officers
20. Carol Yoakum, Illinois Board of Higher Education