

# **ACADEMIC LIBRARIES SURVEY**

**SEPTEMBER 2010 – SEPTEMBER 2012**

**OMB SUBMISSION**

**FEBRUARY 2010**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

A. JUSTIFICATION	
1. CIRCUMSTANCES MAKING COLLECTION OF INFORMATION NECESSARY.....	3
2. PURPOSES AND USES OF THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES SURVEY.....	3
3. APPROPRIATE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY.....	4
4. EFFORTS TO IDENTIFY DUPLICATION.....	4
5. METHODS USED TO MINIMIZE BURDEN ON SMALL ENTITIES.....	4
6. FREQUENCY OF DATA COLLECTION.....	5
7. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES OF DATA COLLECTION.....	5
8. CONSULTANTS OUTSIDE THE AGENCY.....	5
9. PROVISION OF PAYMENTS OR GIFTS TO RESPONDENTS.....	5
10. ASSURANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY.....	5
11. SENSITIVE QUESTIONS .....	6
12. ESTIMATES OF HOUR BURDEN FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION.....	6
13. ESTIMATES OF COSTS .....	6
14. COSTS TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.....	6
15. REASONS FOR CHANGES IN RESPONSE BURDEN AND COSTS.....	7
16. TIME SCHEDULE FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES SURVEY.....	7
17. APPROVAL TO NOT DISPLAY EXPIRATION DATE FOR OMB APPROVAL.....	7
18. EXCEPTIONS TO CERTIFICATION FOR PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSIONS...7	
B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS	
1. RESPONDENT UNIVERSE .....	1
2. STATISTICAL PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION.....	1
3. PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION.....	1
4. METHODS FOR MAXIMIZING RESPONSE RATES.....	1
5. TESTS OF PROCEDURES AND METHODS.....	2
6. REVIEWING STATISTICIANS.....	2
C. JUSTIFICATIONS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE CONTENT	
1. NEW SURVEY ELIGIBILITY CHANGE.....	1
2. ITEM 507 -GENERAL CIRCULATION TRANSACTIONS – CHANGE IN INSTURCTIONS.....1	
3. ITEMS 511 – 516 – INFORMATION SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS - NEW QUESTIONS.....1	
4. ITEM 602 – REFERENCE TRANSACTIONS IN A TYPICAL WEEK- CHANGE IN LOCATION AND DURATION.....	2
5. ITEMS 900-904 – VIRTUAL REFERENCE – NEW QUESTIONS.....	2
APPENDIX A – CERTIFICATE OF CONFIDENTIALITY TRAINING.	
APPENDIX B – 2010 AND 2012 ACADEMIC LIBRARY SURVEY (ALS) QUESTIONNAIRE	
APPENDIX C – 2010 AND 2012 ACADEMIC LIBRARY SURVEY (ALS) INSTRUCTIONS	
APPENDIX D – 2010 AND 2012 CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER LETTER	
APPENDIX E – 2010 AND 2012 LIBRARY DIRECTOR LETTER	
APPENDIX F – 2010 AND 2012 NON-RESPONSE CALLING SCRIPT	
APPENDIX G – 2010 AND 2012 ELGIBILITY CALLING SCRIPT	
APPENDIX H – REMINDER LETTERS	

## **A. JUSTIFICATION**

### **1. Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary**

#### **Purpose of this Submission**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is seeking a three-year clearance to conduct the Academic Libraries Survey (ALS) in 2010 and 2012. The current clearance for the Academic Libraries Survey expired on September 30, 2009.

#### **Legislative Authorization**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education, is conducting this study, as authorized under Section 153(a) of the *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (H.R. 3801) which states:

“(a) GENERAL DUTIES.—The Statistics Center shall collect, report, analyze, and disseminate statistical data related to education in the United States and in other nations, including—(1) collecting, acquiring, compiling (where appropriate, on a State-by-State basis), and disseminating full and complete statistics (disaggregated by the population characteristics described in paragraph (3)) on the condition and progress of education, at the...postsecondary...level[s] in the United States, including data on—

(E) access to, and opportunity for, postsecondary education...”

Activities for the Academic Library Survey are included in Subsection (e) of Part 1.

#### **Prior and Related Studies**

The Academic Libraries Survey has been administered as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) in the past. Since 2000, the Academic Library Survey has been conducted independently of IPEDS.

### **2. Purposes and Uses of the Academic Libraries Survey**

ALS provides NCES with the basic data needed to produce descriptive statistics for approximately 4,300<sup>1</sup> academic libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas of the United States. The ALS collects data on the libraries in the universe of 2-year and 4-year postsecondary institutions in the United States. Collection of these data will enable the nation to plan effectively for the development and use of postsecondary education library resources.

Congress uses the data to assess the need for revisions of existing legislation concerning academic libraries and academic library programs. Federal agencies that administer library grants for collections development, resource sharing, and networking activities (i.e., the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), the National Library of Medicine (NLM), and the Library of Congress) require the data to evaluate the condition of academic libraries in order to better administer their programs. State education agencies and college librarians and administrators use the data for regional and national comparisons of library resources to plan for the effective use of funds. Finally, library associations and researchers use the survey results to determine the status of academic library operations and the profession.

---

<sup>1</sup> Survey materials will be mailed to 4,300 degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Some will answer no to one of the eligibility questions and no longer be in the universe of academic libraries as defined by ALS, and some schools show as multiple institutions in IPEDS but want to report all of their library data in one record for ALS (e.g. the University of Phoenix has 30 separate records in IPEDS but reports library data under one record for the ALS).

### **3. Appropriate Use of Information Technology**

In 2000, the ALS began using a fully automated web-based data collection of academic library data. NCES will continue to use this advanced technology to reduce respondent burden and to improve the timeliness and quality of the reported data. NCES has facilitated the cooperation of academic libraries responding to ALS in a variety of ways. These actions include: the system allows for direct data entry; edit checks and data verification procedures are built into the system, thus improving data quality and the efficiency of data collection by resolving errors at the time of data submission; and processing time and cost are reduced as a result.

### **4. Efforts to Identify Duplication**

Although there is no other national survey yielding similar in-depth data on U.S. academic libraries, there are three academic library surveys that are conducted by library associations. Since 1961, the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) has conducted an annual survey of approximately 120 research libraries in the United States and Canada. ARL has given permission to two other library associations to use ARL survey items.

The Association for College and Research Libraries (ACRL), a division of the American Library Association (ALA), began conducting an annual survey of academic libraries in the United States and Canada in 1998. The ACRL survey has two parts. The first part addresses standard library operations and the survey questions come from the ARL survey. The second part is concerned with current trends in academic libraries and the survey questions change each year. The 2008 ACRL survey collected data from 1,533 libraries out of 3,007 libraries invited to participate; the response rate was 50.9 percent.

The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL) conducts the third survey. Its annual survey is sent to member libraries that are not included in the ARL sample. The ASERL sample includes approximately 15 libraries.

NCES maintains a dialogue with state education agencies, library associations, including ARL and ACRL, and other data providers and data users concerning ALS. Relevant data sources within NCES and other federal agencies and programs are also reviewed on a continuing basis. ALS is a national survey, conducted by NCES, and therefore, is held to the highest statistical standards. The 2008 ALS achieved a response rate of 87 percent.

ALS presents opportunities for historical and trend analysis because ALS and its antecedents (IPEDS and HEGIS) have collected information on all U.S. academic libraries for 30 years. The association with IPEDS has also added depth to the ALS because it allows an analysis of academic libraries in the context of the colleges and universities of which they are a part. Therefore, NCES asserts that ALS represents a unique source of data on academic and research libraries for library professionals, federal and state policymakers, and the public.

### **5. Methods Used to Minimize Burden on Small Entities**

To reduce the burden on respondents, NCES works with ALA, ACRL, and ARL to assure the appropriateness of data being requested. The technical working group also considers the feasibility of collecting certain items.

Adding the new eligibility question to the 2010 and 2012 survey, as proposed in this package, will reduce the burden to small libraries because more of them will be deemed ineligible to participate in the survey.

**6. Frequency of Data Collection**

The Academic Libraries Survey is a biennial survey. The next administration of the survey will begin in November 2010.

**7. Special Circumstances of Data Collection**

There are no circumstances that will require special data collection efforts.

**8. Consultants outside the Agency**

In addition to review within NCES, the following individuals from the U.S. Census Bureau reviewed data collection methods and content:

- Jill O’Brien Assistant Division Chief for Special Statistics, Governments Division
- Johnny Monaco Chief, Education & Related Statistics Branch, Governments Division
- Cindy Sheckells Section Chief – Library Programs, Governments Division
- Laura Hardesty Survey Statistician, Governments Division
- Jamie Hug Survey Statistician, Governments Division
- Carma Hogue Assistant Division Chief, Statistical Research and Methodology, Governments Division
- Terri Craig Chief, Statistical Methodology Branch, Governments Division
- Natasha Issac Math Statistician, Governments Division

The Academic Libraries Survey Technical Working Group provided recommendations on survey content. The committee is composed of the following members:

- Denise Davis Director, Office for Research and Statistics, ALA
- C. Colleen Cook Dean, Texas A&M University
- Teresa A. Fishel Library Director, Macalester College
- Martha Kyrillidou Senior Program Officer, Statistics and Measurement, ARL
- Bill Miller Director of Libraries, Florida Atlantic University
- Kenley Neufeld Library Director, Santa Barbara City College
- Rita Pellen Associate Director, Florida Atlantic University
- Patricia Profeta Assistant Dean, Library, Indian River Community College
- Mary Jane Petrowski Director of Publications, ACRL

The 60-day Federal Register notice was published on March 12, 2010, Vol 75, page 11870. No public comments have been received.

**9. Provision of payments or Gifts to Respondents**

There are no payments or gifts offered to survey respondents.

**10. Assurance of Confidentiality**

ALS data are not collected under a pledge of confidentiality. However, NCES and the Census Bureau take steps to protect potentially individually identifiable data (The Census Bureau will collect the ALS data under an interagency agreement with NCES). The data are collected as statistical aggregates without any direct identifiers for individuals beyond the name of the library. On the final edited file, for all institutions where any data reported for staff are based on data from one or two staff members, the data for salaries, wages, and benefits will be suppressed. The remaining data will only be reported in statistical summaries that preclude the identification of any individual library staff participating in the survey.

**11. Sensitive Questions**

The ALS questionnaire contains several items about income and benefits, which are reported for the entire library and not specific individuals employed by the library. The collection of data related to income is central to understanding key policy issues driving this study. The recruitment of professional and support staff and the retention of experienced librarians are related to the salary and benefits offered by an academic library. In the Outlets and Staff section, there are several items that request data on salaries and wages for the librarians and other professional staff, all other paid staff, student assistants, and the total number of full-time FTEs. There is also a question about the expenditures for employee fringe benefits.

The cover letters to Library Directors and Chief Academic Officers will state the following: “The collection of salary and benefits data is an important component of this voluntary library survey. NCES and the Census Bureau take steps to protect potentially individually identifiable information such that when there are only one or two FTEs within a staffing category, salary and benefits data for that category will not be shown”.

**12. Estimates of Hour Burden for Information Collection**

Assuming the expected response rate of 87 percent, the total burden for ALS information collection is estimated to be 8 hour and 14 minutes per respondent at 3,741 academic libraries. This translates into 61,577 estimated total burden hours between 2010 and 2012, averaging at 20,526 burden hours per year.

Respondent type	Universe n	Response rate	Number of respondents	Hours per instrument	Number of instruments per respondent	Total burden hours	Total number of responses
2010 ALS Collection	4,300*	0.87	3,329	8.23	1	27,398	3,329
2012 ALS Collection	4,300*	0.87	3,329	8.23	1	27,398	3,329
Total	4,300*	-	3,329	-	-	54,796	6,658
Annualized Total over 3 years	-	-	-	-	-	18,265	3,329

\* Survey materials will be mailed to 4,300 degree-granting postsecondary institutions. Some will answer no to one of the eligibility questions and no longer be in the universe of academic libraries as defined by ALS, and some schools show as multiple institutions in IPEDS but want to report all of their library data in one record for ALS (e.g. the University of Phoenix has 30 separate records in IPEDS but reports library data under one record for the ALS). As a result, we estimate the final universe to be 3,827 and the estimated 87% response rate translates into 3,329 library respondents.

The standard NCES procedure for estimating cost is to multiply the estimated total survey reporting hours by the average salary and associated computer costs of \$23.10 per hour. The respondent dollar cost is estimated to be \$632,894 in each, the 2010 and 2012 collection year. Respondents to the ALS will not incur any costs other than of their time to respond.

**13. Estimates of Costs**

No additional costs will be imposed on our respondents, other than those reported in Section 12, Estimates of Hour Burden for Information Collection.

**14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government**

The cost to the Federal Government for the ALS 2010 survey is \$925,000 for the work of the Census Bureau. Estimates were based on the number of institutions, the length of the questionnaires, and the data processing requirements. This includes costs for all aspects of data collection, data cleaning, editing, and processing. Administrative overhead and mailing costs are included. The Census Bureau estimates were compiled from individual estimates developed within each division involved in the survey. NCES also has

contract with K-Force Government Solutions, Inc. to produce the online instrument for ALS. This work is estimated at \$450,000. This includes the compare tool, web survey instrument, preparation of various project reports and technical documentations. Altogether, the total cost of ALS to the government is \$1,400,000 for each, the 2010 ALS and 2012 ALS data collection, plus \$100,000 in NCES personnel costs for both 2010 and 2012 ALS, and plus the cost for the off year 2011, including \$500,000 for Census Bureau to plan the next cycle and \$300,000 for K-force to update and upgrade the website. The average annual cost for the ALS study between 2010 and 2012 is \$1,200,000.

**15. Reasons for Changes in Response Burden and Costs**

This collection is showing an increase in burden of 15,133 hours as compared to the last approved collections (2006 and 2008). This increase is the result of a more accurate account of hours it takes to complete the survey. For the first time, in the FY 2008 collection, the respondents were asked to provide the number of hours it took to complete the survey. The burden estimate included in this submission is based on what the 2008 reports. The increase also accounts for the twelve new items being added to the survey (detailed in Part C).

**16. Time Schedule for Academic Libraries Survey**

The new data elements collected for FY2010 will be included on all data file and publication releases. ALS data will be disseminated through the following methods:

1. Unimputed suppressed data will be released on the Compare Academic Libraries Tool on July 6, 2011.
2. Imputed suppressed data files and file documentation will be released on the NCES website in SAS, Text, Access, and SPSS on December 8, 2011.
3. First look publication and supplemental publication will be released on the NCES website as a PDF file on December 8, 2011.

The latest ALS publication can be found at: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2010348>. The Compare Academic Libraries tool can be found at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/compare/index.asp?LibraryType=Academic>

User IDs and Passwords issued	October 19, 2010
Registration and software release	November 9, 2010
Data collection	November 9, 2010 to February 28, 2011
Non-response follow-up	December 7, 2010 to February 28, 2011
Edit review	November 9, 2010 to June 15, 2011
Compare Academic Libraries Tool	July 6, 2011
Final file to NCES	August 23, 2011
Final File released	December 8, 2011
Final First Look publication to NCES	September 14, 2011
Final First Look publication released	December 8, 2011

**17. Approval to not Display Expiration Date for OMB Approval**

We are not seeking approval to not display the expiration date of OMB approval.

**18. Exceptions to Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions**

There are no exceptions to the topics in Item 19 of Form OMB 83-1.