

## **SECTION B. Description of Statistical Methodology**

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### **B.1. Respondent Universe**

The primary universe of interest for IPEDS consists of approximately 7,000 institutions (according to our most recent count) that are eligible to participate in Title IV student financial aid programs. By law, these schools are required to respond to IPEDS. (Section 490 of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 (P.L. 102-325). IPEDS allows other (non-title IV) institutions to participate on a voluntary basis. About 200 elect to respond. 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 31. Title IV Institutions in the IPEDS Universe  
Estimated Counts for 2011-12 Collection**

	<u>Total</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>Private not-for-profit</u>	<u>Private for-profit</u>
Total	7,000	2,100	1,900	3,000
4-year	2,900	600	1,600	700
2-year	2,300	1,100	200	1,000
Less than 2-yr	2,000	400	100	1,500

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### **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, in Part A of this submission, 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 47 institutions that did not respond to one or more of the IPEDS surveys in 2009-10. 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). As shown in section A.16, Table 30, frequent communications occur with the institution over the course of the data collection to ensure compliance with this statutorily mandated collection. 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.

#### **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. Craig Bowen, Research Scientist (219-7128)
3. Michelle Coon, Statistician (502-7357)
4. Archie Cubarrubia, Statistician (502-7601)
5. Tara Lawley, Statistician (502-7476)
6. Andrew Mary, Statistician (502-7337)
7. Elise Miller, IPEDS Program Director (502-7318)
8. Janice Plotczyk, Statistician (502-7459)
9. Sabrina Ratchford, Statistician (502-7436)
10. Jessica Shedd, Research Scientist (502-7446)
11. Thomas Weko, Associate Commissioner (502-7643)

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

1. Patrick Alles, Independent Colleges of Indiana
2. Gary Andeen, Oregon Independent Colleges Association
3. Craig Bach, Kaplan Higher Education
4. David Bergeron, Office of Postsecondary Education (ED)
5. Victor Borden, Indiana University
6. Chris Brewer, Tennessee Higher Education Commission
7. Julie Carpenter-Hubin, Ohio State University
8. Mark Chisholm, University of New Mexico
9. Margaret Cohen, George Washington University (Washington, DC)
10. Robert Collins, Apollo Group/University of Phoenix
11. Bryan Cook, American Council on Education
12. Mary Ann Coughlin, Springfield College (Massachusetts)
13. Keith Greiner, Iowa College Student Aid Commission
14. Tammy Halligan, Career College Association
15. Denise Hammon, Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
16. Albert Hermsen, Wayne State University (Michigan)
17. Marsha Hirano-Nakanishi, California State University System
18. Gigi Jones, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
19. Christine Keller, Association of Public and Land-Grant Universities
20. Sandra Kinney, Technical College System of Georgia
21. Hans L'Orange, State Higher Education Executive Officers
22. Joseph Marks, Southern Regional Education Board
23. Tod Massa, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
24. Lesley McBain, American Association of State Colleges and Universities
25. Charles McGrew, Council on Postsecondary Education
26. Soon Merz, Austin Community College (Texas)
27. Kimberly Pearce, Capella University
28. Patrick Perry, California Community Colleges Chancellors Office
29. Kent Philippe, American Association of Community Colleges
30. Brian Prescott, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education
31. Kenneth Redd, National Association of College and University Business Officers
32. Matthew Reed, The Institute for College Access and Success
33. Mary Sapp, University of Miami (Florida)
34. Michael Tamada, Occidental College (California)
35. Dawn Geronimo Terkla, Tufts University (Massachusetts)