

Technical Review Panel No. 32 Improvements to the Student Financial Aid Survey

Final Actions

On September 14–15, 2010 RTI International, the contractor for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) web-based data collection system, convened a meeting of the IPEDS Technical Review Panel (TRP) in Arlington, VA. Meetings of the IPEDS 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. The purpose of this meeting was to solicit further input from the postsecondary education community regarding improvements to the Student Financial Aid (SFA) component of IPEDS. The panel consisted of 44 individuals representing the federal government, state governments, institutions, data users, association representatives, and others. The TRP examined the challenges faced by institutions, particularly program reporters, in completing the SFA component. The TRP discussed ways of improving the SFA component by further clarifying definitions and reporting elements and improving the calculation of average institutional net price by better aligning the SFA component for program reporters with the data reported by these institutions in other IPEDS components.

A summary of the TRP's suggestions was posted to the web for public comment following the meeting. Emails were sent to keyholders and coordinators announcing the posting of comments. Comments were left open for 30 days and the comment period closed on December 3, 2010. We received one comment from an interested party. Based on TRP discussions, public comments, and RTI recommendations, NCES has taken the actions listed below.

SFA data collection for all institutions

- Revise SFA instructions so that institutions are directed to report “aid awarded,” rather than “aid received” or “aid awarded and accepted.” (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)
- Add an additional column to Part E to collect the number of students in Group 4 receiving any Title IV grant aid, by income categories. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)

SFA data collection for program reporters

- Collect data for Groups 1 and 2 for an academic year period, rather than a 12-month period. The institution will determine its own definition of academic year, so long as it falls within the 12-month reporting period covered. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)
- Change the definition of Groups 3 and 4 to include only those students enrolled in the institution's largest program. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)
- Collect data for Groups 3 and 4 for an academic year, for the institution's largest program. The institution will determine its own definition of academic year, so long as it

falls within the 12-month reporting period covered. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)

- Change the full aid year reporting period to July 1–June 30. This is the 12-month period that the institutionally-defined academic year must fall within. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)

IC pricing data for program reporters

- In addition to the largest program pricing data, the **IC** survey will collect prorated academic year price for largest program (in addition to the currently collected program year price). (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year because HEOA related)

12-Month Enrollment component for all institutions

- Eliminate the choice of reporting periods, so that all institutions report for the July 1–June 30 period. For program reporters, this will align E12 with SFA, and make cohort reporting for those two components consistent. (Implementation Year: 2011-12, no preview year)