

Technical Review Panel No. 36 Collecting Data on Veterans

Final Actions

On November 8 and 9, 2011, 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 Washington, DC. Meetings of the IPEDS TRP are conducted by RTI to solicit expert discussion and suggestions on a broad range of issues related to postsecondary education and the conduct of IPEDS. The TRP is designed to advise and work with RTI to improve IPEDS data collection and products, data quality, and user-friendliness. The TRP does not report to or advise the Department of Education (ED).

RTI's specific purpose for TRP 36 was to solicit input from the postsecondary education community regarding collecting data on veterans. The panel consisted of 43 individuals representing institutions, researchers and other data users, state governments, the federal government, higher education associations, and others. Many of these either directly represented veterans organizations or represented institutions enrolling a large number of veterans and military service members.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Program (Post-9/11 GI Bill) went into effect in August 2009 and expanded the educational benefits available to veterans. These changes have translated to dramatic growth in both the number of beneficiaries and benefits payments under the program to support study at postsecondary institutions. The increase in beneficiaries and federal dollars expended has led to demand for more information for (1) researchers to study the impact of these programs on college participation and success; (2) institutional researchers and other data users to conduct peer comparison in serving these students; (3) veterans and military service members looking to use their educational benefits; and (4) policymakers to assess the effectiveness of benefits programs and return on investment.

The TRP suggested collecting information on veterans and military servicemembers and the use of education benefits in order to capture data necessary for policymaking and analysis, while also improving information available to veterans and military servicemembers considering postsecondary education.

After the conclusion of the TRP, RTI posted a summary of suggestions to the web for public comment. RTI solicited comments by notifying keyholders and coordinators through a "This Week in IPEDS" email announcement. Comments were left open for approximately 60 days and the comment period closed on March 7, 2012. During the comment period, RTI received 15 comments from interested parties. Following the comment period, RTI outlined recommendations for NCES based on the outcome of the TRP meeting and subsequent public comment period. NCES has taken the actions listed below.

2014-15 Detailed Changes to Forms by IPEDS Survey Component

NCES requested and received clearance on new items on the Institutional Characteristics and Student Financial Aid components. New items and associated reporting instructions are available for preview through the Survey Materials web page, to give institutions one-year advance notice of how new data items will be collected in the future. The items was previewed in 2013-14 and implemented in 2014-15.

The preview screens and instructions for the survey forms are available from the link <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/visresults.aspx>, and also from the data collection system, under the Survey Materials option within the Help menu.

Summary of Changes to the Institutional Characteristics Component (All Institutions)

Add the following item to collect data on Institutional Characteristics:

- Which of the following are available to veterans, military servicemembers, or their families?
 - Yellow Ribbon Program (officially known as Post-9/11 GI Bill, Yellow Ribbon Program)
 - Credit for military training
 - Dedicated point of contact for support services for veterans, military service members, and their families
 - Recognized student veteran organization
 - Member of Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges

Collected at the time of IPEDS registration on the institution's Identification screen of web address:

- Does your institution post tuition policies specifically related to Veterans and Military Servicemembers on a website?
 - Yes. Please provide the URL.
 - No. Please provide an explanation.

(Implementation year: 2014-15, preview year: 2013-14)

Summary of Changes to the Student Financial Aid Component (All Institutions)

Add the following items:

- Number of undergraduate receiving Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and the total dollar amount of tuition and fee benefits awarded to them through the institution.
- Number of graduate students receiving Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and the total dollar amount of tuition and fee benefits awarded to them through the institution.
- Number of undergraduate receiving DoD Tuition Assistance and the total dollar amount of DoD Tuition Assistance awarded to them through the institution.
- Number of and graduate students receiving DoD Tuition Assistance and the total dollar amount of DoD Tuition Assistance awarded to them through the institution.

(Implementation year: 2014-15, preview year: 2013-14)

Postsecondary Education Outcome Measures Continuing Work: ED, DoD, and VA

Consistent with [Executive Order 13607: Establishing Principles of Excellence](#) and [Public Law 112-249: Improving Transparency of Education Opportunities for Veterans](#), the United States Departments of Education (ED), Veterans Affairs (VA), and Defense (DoD) have continued to work together to identify outcome measures that will provide information on available educational programs to support informed decision making about educational choices, especially as they relate to veterans and servicemembers. The purpose of the outcome measures is to capture important information on students' experiences during school, upon completion of a degree or certificate, and post-graduation using existing administrative data. Outcome measures and definitions were published to College Navigator on November 8, 2013. An additional set of outcome measures that require analysis and in some cases data from additional data systems have been identified for further exploration. ED, DoD, and VA will continue to analyze data sources to determine course of action to obtain veteran and servicemember student outcome measures and cohort information from existing systems. Topics for future exploration include: average

number of years to complete degree/certificate, average number of institutions attended prior to completing degree, employment rates in field of study, unemployment rates, and average salary for graduates.