

Report and Suggestions from IPEDS Technical Review Panel 44: Improvements to the Human Resources Survey for Degree-Granting Institutions

Based on a review of the current Human Resources component, the Technical Review Panel suggests that a number of changes be made to the survey forms, and that definitions and data items be clarified to improve the quality of the data being reported and reduce reporting burden for institutions. Comments from interested parties are due to Janice Kelly-Reid, IPEDS Project Director at RTI International, at ipedstrpcomment@rti.org by November 14, 2014.

On July 22 and 23, 2014, 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 44 was to discuss how data collected through the Human Resources (HR) survey component are currently used and how potential changes would impact institutions, researchers, and the Department of Education. The panel consisted of 47 individuals representing institutions, researchers and other data users, state governments, the federal government, higher education associations, and others. A number of panelists come from a human resources background and have specific knowledge of this topic.

The panel was asked to review the current HR survey component for degree-granting institutions and discuss strategies for improving the quality and comparability of the data, while also preserving trend data. This review of the HR component also focused on clarifications to several of the data items in response to challenges faced by institutions.

Background

Each year, IPEDS collects institutional data on the financial and human resources involved in the provision of institutionally based postsecondary education. The primary purpose of the IPEDS HR component is to measure the number and type of staff supporting postsecondary education by employment status (full-time and part-time) and occupational category. The HR component meets data collection and reporting requirements as outlined in federal higher education and civil rights laws. Additionally, the data collected in the HR component provide information on staffing levels at the institutions for various occupational categories and can be used in peer institution analysis, in workforce utilization studies, and to address issues related to general demographics of higher education faculty and staff.

NCES is sensitive to the need to balance increased reporting burden with the utility of the data requested. Each TRP meeting, regardless of the topic being discussed, is charged with minimizing the additional institutional burden as a result of increased IPEDS reporting requirements. Specifically, members of the TRP met on June 29-30, 2010 (TRP 31: Improvements to the Human Resources Survey) to examine the reporting burden for degree-granting institutions completing the HR component. Based on the suggestions from TRP 31, NCES adopted and implemented, in 2012-13, a number of changes to simplify the HR component. In the same year, NCES also implemented

required changes to align IPEDS reporting with the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The new occupational categories replaced the primary function/occupational activity categories previously used for HR reporting, resulting in a major revision to the data collection forms. The process of aligning postsecondary occupations to the 2010 SOC proved to be extremely burdensome for many institutions and highlighted that many common postsecondary occupations are not clearly reflected in the classification system.

In response to these challenges, the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC)¹ prepared an internal paper in 2013, *Improving the IPEDS Human Resources Survey Materials and Resources*. Based on the findings and recommendations outlined in the paper, NCES implemented several improvements to the 2013-14 HR data collection, such as clarifications to the data collection screens, revised instructions, and expanded FAQs.

A subsequent meeting of the TRP (TRP 41: Managing Reporting Burden), held March 19-20, 2013, was convened to solicit additional input from the postsecondary community regarding managing the IPEDS response burden for institutions. TRP 41 was asked to review the current data collection and consider ways to simplify the components by eliminating potentially duplicative or unnecessary data. As of the date of TRP 44, no recommendations from TRP 41 related to the HR component had been implemented, as the timing of TRP 41 precluded them from being included in the most recent Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance package.²

RTI convened this meeting of the TRP (TRP 44) to review the HR component and assess the utility of the data to meet policy and research needs. Given the increased demands placed on institutions over the last several years, the TRP focused on adjusting existing data elements to improve data quality, which may, in turn, lessen or reduce reporting burden for institutions.

Discussion Item #1: Salary Outlays—Instructional Staff

Each year, NCES issues the *Digest of Education Statistics*, a congressionally-mandated report that provides information on the progress of education in the United States. The *Digest* reports statistics on a variety of higher education issues such as student enrollment, degrees conferred, and faculty employment. NCES uses data from the IPEDS HR component to present descriptive information on faculty and staff in postsecondary education, such as change in average salary over a period of time.

Prior to 2012-13, the IPEDS HR component collected the total annual salary outlays for full-time non-medical school instructional staff at degree-granting institutions for staff on 9/10-month contract lengths/teaching periods and 11/12-month contract lengths/teaching periods respectively. Historically, salary outlays were reported in the *Digest* for full-time instructional faculty on 9-month contracts based on IPEDS data reported for the 9/10-month contract length/teaching period. In addition, in 2004, IPEDS began publishing equated 9-month average salaries for full-time non-medical school instructional staff at degree-granting institutions by adjusting the total salary outlays for staff on 11/12-month contract lengths/teaching periods to the equivalent of 9-month outlays.

¹ NPEC was established by NCES in 1995 as a voluntary organization that encompasses all sectors of the postsecondary education community including federal agencies, postsecondary institutions, associations, and other organizations with a major interest in postsecondary education data collection.

² All new or substantially changed items to be collected in IPEDS are reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The PRA (44 U.S.C. §§3501-3520) requires federal agencies to “justify any collection of information from the public by establishing the need and intended use of the information, estimating the burden that the collection will impose on respondents, and showing that the collection is the least burdensome way to gather the information.”

Effective with the 2012-13 data collection, the differentiation between 9/10-month and 11/12-month contract lengths/teaching periods was eliminated based on a suggestion from TRP 31, and IPEDS began calculating weighted average monthly salaries for full-time non-medical school instructional staff by gender and academic rank. The number of these staff and the number of months covered by their annual salary (9, 10, 11, or 12 months), along with total salary outlays for these individuals, are used to calculate a weighted average monthly salary for each gender and academic rank. The weighted average monthly salary can then be multiplied by 9 to generate an equated 9-month salary.

The impact of the recent methodological changes on published data in the *Digest* and other NCES publications was assessed and presented. The findings demonstrated that these changes introduce issues related to the quality and comparability of reported data and the preservation of trends. For example, the changes discussed above, particularly those related to contract length/teaching period, can make separating out the 9/10-month salary outlays from the total challenging. Additionally, the new methodology makes it difficult to calculate comparable and reliable statistics for full-time non-medical school instructional staff on 9-month contracts as has been done in the past.

To address these issues, the panel suggested returning to a methodology similar to that used prior to 2012-13 whereby salary headcounts and outlays are collected by contract length/employment agreement (instead of number of months worked), with clarified language and definitions along with this larger change. Since institutions already report salary headcount breakdowns, the panel agreed that this change will not introduce significant burden. Additionally, the panel noted that collecting both headcounts and outlays in this manner will improve the quality, clarity, and comparability of the resulting data.

The data currently collected on salary outlays reflect only base salary agreements. Compensation outside the base salary period and additional compensation beyond the base salary agreement, such as supplements, overloads, bonuses, or stipends, are not included in the salary outlays data. To align instructional staff headcounts with salary outlays, the panel noted that *contract length/employment agreement* should refer to the number of months covered by the base salary period.

The panel suggested that further study may be helpful to gather information on additional compensation that is not captured by base salary. Depending on the information gathered, this topic may be explored in greater detail during a future meeting of the TRP.

While it was noted that additional descriptive statistics, such as salary data by discipline, are of interest, the panel agreed that adding such data elements would pose serious challenges to institutions and would add significant burden. Additionally, several panelists were unsure whether collecting these breakdowns would be appropriate for all institutional sectors.

Discussion Item #2: Salary Headcounts—Less Than 9 Months

Within the reporting of salaries data, the process of accounting for and verifying the number of full-time non-medical school instructional staff whose contracts/employment agreements cover a period of less than 9 months is a source of significant confusion for many respondents. Currently, salary headcounts for full-time non-medical school instructional staff are collected from degree-granting institutions in Part G of the survey, based on the number of months covered by the employee's annual salary (i.e., 9, 10, 11, or 12 months). A count of the remaining full-time non-medical school instructional staff who are not accounted for is automatically generated by subtracting the number of staff reported in Part G from the total number of full-time non-medical school instructional staff reported in Part A of the survey. Although the remaining instructional staff in the balance column

should include only those staff whose contracts/employment agreements are for less than 9 months, it is difficult from a QC perspective for IPEDS project staff to ensure that the correct staff—and only the correct staff—are included here.

Prior to the 2012-13 data collection, salary headcounts were collected as a separate category for full-time non-medical school instructional staff on less-than-9-month contract lengths/teaching periods. Panelists agreed that collecting the number of full-time non-medical school instructional staff whose contracts/employment agreements are for less than 9 months provides a uniform methodology for collecting salary headcounts and will reduce confusion surrounding the balance column.

As a result of this discussion, the panel suggested expanding the survey forms for degree-granting institutions to collect the number of full-time non-medical school instructional staff whose contract/employment agreement covers a period of less than 9 months by gender and academic rank to square the data file and clarify reporting. The calculated balance can then be used in edit checks to ensure that all full-time non-medical school instructional staff are accounted for in the reporting of salaries data. As has been the case historically, only salary headcounts (no salary outlays) will be collected for this group. The panel agreed that collecting headcounts for this group will not introduce significant burden because institutions already maintain this level of detail to cross-check the count in the balance column on the current version of the forms.

Discussion Item #3: Salary Outlays—Non-instructional Staff

In 2012-13, salary class interval screens were eliminated from the HR component based on a recommendation from TRP 31. This change significantly reduced the amount of data degree-granting institutions were required to report but meant that no salaries data would be collected for non-instructional staff. To address this, TRP 31 further recommended collecting total annual salary outlays for full-time non-medical school non-instructional staff by occupational category. This recommendation was made prior to the alignment with the SOC and did not consider the adoption of the new occupational categories for HR reporting.

TRP 44 reviewed the changes to the HR component implemented in the 2012-13 data collection and addressed the limitations of collecting total annual salary outlays for non-instructional staff using the new occupational categories. The SOC is structured in such a way that supervisors of staff in major groups 13-0000 through 29-0000 are classified with the workers they supervise; consequently, salary outlays are collected as one broad measure within each occupational category. Given the variation that exists within these occupational categories in terms of job capacity, panelists were concerned that the data carry a high risk of misinterpretation. For example, it would be inappropriate for data users to calculate average annual salaries by occupational category unless the HR component was further modified to address the differences in level of employment (i.e., executive, managerial, administrative, etc.) that are not clearly differentiable in the current occupational categories. Moreover, the data, as currently collected, do not provide the level of detail necessary to obtain a greater understanding of what is driving college costs and how much is being spent at the various levels of employment.

Given the structure of the SOC, panelists noted that the data necessary to effectively compare spending at the various levels of employment would not be available unless the HR forms were expanded to differentiate between executive/administrative/managerial and other professional (support/service) personnel. While several panelists felt that adding a greater level of detail would improve the utility of the data collected on non-instructional staff salaries and help meet policy and research needs, other panelists pointed out that reporting such data would require data providers to

develop new processes for identifying executive, administrative, and managerial staff within each occupational category. Given that these data are not specifically mandated, several panelists were concerned with placing additional demands on institutions. To simplify reporting, the panel considered collecting *total* salary outlays for all non-instructional staff combined.

The panel examined multiple approaches for collecting salary outlays for non-instructional staff, but panel members did not feel that they had enough information to make a more definitive suggestion at this time. RTI would appreciate additional comments on this topic, particularly with respect to the appropriate level of detail to collect. Three possible suggestions are to:

- eliminate the collection of salary outlays for non-instructional staff due to concerns of potential misrepresentation of the averages;
- collect *total* salary outlays for all non-instructional staff combined; and
- expand the collection to use executive/administrative/managerial and other professional (support/service) categories.

Discussion Item #4: Utility of Data by Faculty Status

Currently, degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff are required to report staff by faculty status. IPEDS defines *faculty* as “A status designated by the institution according to the institution’s policies.” Faculty status can apply to full-time and part-time, instructional and non-instructional staff. Data are reported based on the following classifications:

- With faculty status
 - Tenured
 - On tenure track
 - Not on tenure track
 - Multi-year, continuing, or at-will contract
 - Annual contract
 - Less-than-annual contract
- Without faculty status

In 2013, an internal NPEC paper was produced, *Improving the IPEDS Human Resources Survey Materials and Resources*. The findings suggested that reporting by faculty status is producing incomparable data across institutions. For example, many institutions use the term *faculty* broadly to refer to all instructional staff, while other institutions use the term more restrictively, such as including only those staff with specific academic ranks (e.g., professor, associate professor, and assistant professor) or only those who have specified rights and benefits (such as voting in the faculty governing body). Thus some institutions report all their instructional staff as *faculty*, while others report only a subset of their instructional staff as *faculty*. The NPEC paper further recommended clarifying who is being reported as *without faculty status*.

The panel examined several recommendations that originated from the NPEC paper, beginning with the recommendation to reevaluate the utility of reporting staff data by faculty status. Panelists expressed strong opinions about identifying the total number of employees with faculty status. Given

that data by faculty designation are included in the *Digest*, several panelists stressed the importance of maintaining data for trend purposes and were hesitant to suggest eliminating the faculty status differentiation from the survey screens.

Panelists noted that there is general confusion on the differences between staff *without faculty status* and others classified as contract faculty not on tenure track. Degree-granting institutions classify full-time staff with faculty status who are not on tenure track (or where the institution does not have a tenure system) in categories of employment agreements or contracts. There may also be staff who do not have faculty status and are classified as *without faculty status*. Individuals without faculty status can have tenure status or employment agreements/contract lengths but are currently not reported this way.

The panel agreed that despite the variation in institutional policies, faculty designation is an important characteristic of postsecondary staff. There is a high level of interest in this information—particularly as it relates to instructional staff, research staff, and librarians. The panel considered several approaches for capturing information on the number of employees by faculty status, but did not reach consensus on the level of detail to collect and ultimately provided three options for public consideration. The three options are discussed below.

Option #1: Collect Total Number of Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

One proposed solution is to eliminate the tenure and contract length differentiation for faculty reporting and reduce the amount of detail that degree-granting institutions are required to report. Two sample HR survey screens for collecting total number of staff with faculty status, by occupational category, can be found in Appendix A (exhibits A-1 and A-2).

Options 1A and 1B would collect counts of non-instructional staff and instructional staff respectively by occupational category, tenure status (if applicable), and contract length; these numbers would be used to calculate the total number of staff reported, by occupational category (i.e., the sum of the values entered for each tenure status and/or contract length/employment agreement). An additional column after the total column would collect the number of staff with faculty status for each occupational category. Also, for staff classified as primarily instruction, these data would also be collected for the following three subcategories: exclusively credit; exclusively not-for-credit; and combined credit/not-for-credit.

This approach would eliminate the without-faculty status designation and collect data for all staff (faculty and non-faculty staff) by tenure status and employment agreement/contract length. While this approach would collect more detailed data on the tenure status or employment agreement/contract length of non-faculty staff, it would not be possible to distinguish between tenured and contracted faculty in the totals.

Option #2: Collect Number of Tenured and Contracted Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

Panelists examined a second approach to collect separate counts of tenured and contracted faculty. The panel noted that non-faculty staff can be tenured or tenure-eligible, as designated by the institution; examples include instructional staff in lower academic ranks, instructional staff who are not voting members of the faculty board, and tenured instructional staff who move into an executive role and retain their tenure status but relinquish their faculty designation. A number of panelists felt the distinction between tenured and contracted faculty would capture important information about the

permanent workforce. Under Option #2, additional columns would collect the number of tenured faculty (i.e., number of faculty with tenure and on tenure track categories combined) and contract faculty (i.e., number of faculty not on tenure track), by occupational category (see Exhibits B-1 and B-2 in Appendix B for proposed screen view of data collection).

Panelists noted that data collected under this approach could address questions related to the proportion of faculty who are tenured. Collecting only the total number of faculty, without the tenure or contract differentiation, would not allow for such analysis. The panel also noted that collecting the further disaggregation of faculty, as described in Option #2, would provide comparable data on contract faculty for degree-granting institutions with a tenure system and degree-granting institutions with no tenure system. Option #1 would not provide comparable values of contracted faculty because the number of tenured faculty could not be separated out from the total.

Option #3: Collect Number of Staff by Faculty Status, Tenure Status, Contract Length/Employment Agreement, and Occupational Category

The panel also considered collecting the same level of detail that is currently collected (i.e., no change). Option #3 would keep the tenure and contract length differentiation for faculty reporting and collect the number of full-time instructional and non-instructional staff by tenure status (if applicable), and contract length. While this approach would continue to capture more detailed information on the number of faculty in each of the tenure status categories and employment agreement/contract length categories, it would not address the original issues with the current format (i.e., more detailed data on staff without faculty status are being lost). The consequences of retaining the current format are accepting the loss of data on non-faculty staff.

The panel did not reach consensus on the level of detail to collect but agreed that there needs to be a balance between meeting the demand for data and imposing an undue level of burden on institutions. RTI encourages comments concerning faculty status and the balance of collection against level of burden on institutions.

Discussion Item #5: Categorization of Instructional Staff and Non-instructional Staff by Employment Agreement/Contract Length

In 2012-13, based on the recommendation of TRP 31, the following subcategories were added for the purposes of classifying non-tenure-track contract faculty:

- multi-year contract;
- annual contract; and
- less-than-annual contract.

The IPEDS Help Desk received numerous calls following the implementation of the new subcategories; specifically, callers asked how to classify continuing and at-will contract employees. NCES revised the multi-year contract category label for 2013-14 HR reporting to clarify that the multi-year contract category should include continuing and at-will contracts.

The panel reviewed the utility of the current employment agreement/contract length categories and suggested adding two broad categories of employment agreement/contract length:

- fixed term, with subcategories for multi-year, annual, and less-than-annual; and

- employment agreements/contract lengths of indefinite duration (e.g., continuing and at-will).

The panel agreed that the larger distinction between these two broad categories is important, but was concerned that additional breakdowns beyond the proposed subcategories could inadvertently exclude additional types of agreements. Given the amount of variation that exists in agreements of infinite duration, the panel determined that it is important to capture these data at the most general level.

Discussion Item #6: Utility of Data on Instructional Staff by For-Credit and Not-for-Credit

In 2012-13, based on the suggestion of TRP 31, the “primarily instruction” category for full-time instructional staff was expanded to classify instructional staff according to the following three subcategories:

- exclusively credit;
- exclusively not-for-credit; and
- combined credit and not-for-credit.

Degree-granting institutions are required to designate instructional staff into one of the three subcategories; however, many respondents indicated that reporting these data presents significant challenges as institutions may not track or classify instructional staff in this way. In addition, although TRP 41 suggested eliminating the collection of these data for 4-year institutions, panelists were concerned that collecting sector-specific data would decrease comparability of the data and reduce the utility of the data for researchers. Collecting sector-specific information would also introduce inconsistent reporting standards across IPEDS components.

Panelists agreed that not-for-credit education is becoming increasingly common and felt that capturing the distribution of instructional staff teaching for-credit courses versus not-for-credit courses provides important context to instructional cost measures and increases comparability across sectors. The panel suggested clarifying the subcategories to reflect alignment with the instructors’ letter of agreement/contract to reduce confusion and make it easier for institutions to classify staff. For example, individuals who have an auxiliary contract to teach not-for-credit courses should be reported according to the parameters of their primary contract rather than by their combined course load.

Additionally, the panel suggested that further study on this topic should examine the extent to which the IPEDS data collection can address not-for-credit activity measures to better align instructional costs with student enrollment.

Discussion Item #7: Categorization of Instruction, Research, and Public Service Staff, and Alignment with the SOC Coding Guidelines

The alignment with the 2010 SOC required the adoption of new occupational categories to collect data separately for instructional staff, research staff, and public service staff, as follows:

- instructional staff:
 - primarily instruction
 - instruction/research/public service (IRPS)

- non-instructional staff:
 - research staff
 - public service staff

IRPS staff are those individuals who have instruction as part of their job, but for whom instruction cannot readily be differentiated from the research or public service functions of their jobs (e.g., they teach, but the percentage of their time spent teaching is not discernible because their teaching responsibilities are not clearly differentiated from their other responsibilities). According to the SOC Coding Guidelines, these individuals should be classified in one of the three primary categories (instruction, research, or public service) based on the occupation that requires the highest level of skill or, where there is no measurable difference in skill requirements, where they spend the most time. However, panelists noted that for staff in the IRPS classification, each of these functions is an integral component of the individuals' regular assignment. The panel agreed that the IRPS category describes these individuals' work far better than any one of the three primary categories and noted that this level of detail is needed for policy and research purposes.

The panel agreed that the further breakdown of instructional staff collects data in a way that better reflects the postsecondary industry while still keeping with the spirit of the SOC Coding Guidelines, and therefore recommended no changes to the IRPS category at this time. To align with the SOC Coding Guidelines, the panel suggested that data collected at the lower level (IRPS) can be aggregated into the primary category, instructional staff, as needed.

Discussion Item #8: Tenure Status—Non-instructional Staff and Part-Time Staff

TRP 41 suggested eliminating the tenure status differentiation for four specific non-instructional occupational categories:

- Business and Financial Operations Occupations;
- Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations;
- Community, Social Service, Legal, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations; and
- Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations.

However, after examining the collection of data by tenure status for these and other non-instructional occupational categories, the panel agreed on the importance of maintaining comparability by continuing to collect the current level of detail. The panel noted that non-instructional staff with tenure status can include both faculty and non-faculty positions and agreed that capturing this level of detail is important for workforce equity analysis purposes.

Next, the panel was asked to evaluate the utility of collecting data by tenure status for part-time staff. Panelists noted that while tenure track and tenure appointments are generally full-time, institutions have different policies related to tenure eligibility in terms of employment status (full-time and part-time). Examples of part-time staff who have tenure status include retired faculty who return to the institution to teach as adjunct instructional staff and tenured staff who change employment status from full-time to part-time. Given that the designation of tenure is not limited to full-time staff, the panel agreed on the importance of continuing to collect tenure status for part-time staff.

The panel acknowledged that there is some degree of burden associated with reporting non-instructional and part-time staff by tenure status but agreed that the value of having reliable national-level data on tenured employees justifies the imposed burden.

Discussion Item #9: Review of Non-instructional Staff Occupational Categories

Following the required alignment of the IPEDS HR survey with the 2010 SOC in 2012-13, institutions are now instructed that each job at the institution must be categorized in one of the available SOC-aligned occupational categories (approved by BLS for IPEDS reporting) according to the 2010 SOC. However, the SOC classification system is not designed with postsecondary institutions in mind. Many common postsecondary occupations are not reflected in the SOC classification system, and respondents have identified a number of roles as difficult to classify using the new SOC-aligned occupational categories. These include the following:

- student and academic affairs staff;
- financial aid staff; and
- registrars and student records/registration staff.

Although BLS provided recommendations for classifying these staff into SOC codes, many panelists felt that classifying these staff within the existing structure as suggested would be challenging and generally a poor fit. For example, BLS recommends classifying financial aid staff in the Business and Financial Operations Occupations category, which maps to the 2010 SOC major group Business and Financial Operations Occupations (13-0000). Part of the panel's concern relates to classifying financial aid staff and loan officers or business office staff in the same detailed occupation. Panelists felt that this category misrepresents specific differences in the nature of the work performed by financial aid staff and suggested that the Student and Academic Affairs and Other Education Services Occupations category, which corresponds to the 2010 SOC major group Other Education, Training, and Library Occupations (25-9000), is a better fit.

Aside from questions about the appropriateness of using the existing occupational categories to classify postsecondary occupations, panelists questioned the value gained by collecting roles such as those listed above separately in new detailed occupational categories within the SOC structure. Given that other sources collect more detailed information specific to the higher education workforce, panelists were hesitant to recommend separating or splitting existing occupational categories into new detailed occupations to reflect roles that are common to postsecondary education. Instead, the panel suggested clarifying or updating the titles of the existing occupational categories for the purposes of the IPEDS data collection to better reflect postsecondary occupations.

The SOC permits NCES to clarify the titles of occupational categories for HR reporting to reflect current industry terminology as long as the occupational categories align with an approved aggregation scheme created from the 23 major groups in the SOC. The panel agreed that being able to refine occupational category titles to better reflect postsecondary occupations creates an opportunity for the postsecondary community to (1) consider appropriate ways to address areas of confusion and (2) improve the usefulness of the data collected through the HR component.

Other than providing links to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources position description spreadsheets, IPEDS does not provide specific suggestions for mapping roles to SOC codes and corresponding occupational categories for HR reporting. Currently, if an occupation is not included as a distinct, detailed occupation in the structure, many institutions

classify it in an appropriate “All other” occupation. The panel agreed that additional guidance on the appropriate classifications for staff would improve the overall quality of the data reported to IPEDS. In addition to establishing clear standards for reporting staff in areas that have been identified as problematic, this will bring the occupational categories for IPEDS reporting and the SOC classifications into further alignment.

Discussion Item #10: Utility of Data on Graduate Assistants, by Function

Federal mandates require a headcount of graduate assistants involved in instructional activities, but reporting headcounts in the other occupational categories is not required. All degree-granting institutions report graduate assistants by race/ethnicity, gender, and function. To reduce the amount of burden associated with reporting these data, TRP 41 suggested collapsing the occupation codes for reporting graduate assistants into the following general classifications:

- Teaching;
- Research; and
- Other.

The panel agreed with this approach and endorsed the idea of collapsing the categories to collect the total headcount of graduate assistants in these three broad categories.

Several panelists felt that in addition to information on graduate assistants, there is a high level of interest in having information on other types of staff who support postsecondary education, such as postdoctoral staff members. For HR reporting purposes, postdoctoral staff members on the payroll of an institution are included in the counts of employees by occupational category and are classified based on where the majority of their work is performed. The panel pointed out that funding sources may differ between postdoctoral salaries, and thus a postdoctoral salary could be paid by the institution, a separate entity, or some combination of the two. Furthermore, those not paid by the institution may not be counted as an employee of the institution. Therefore, given that collecting information on postdoctoral staff members could require slightly different reporting criteria from the other sections of the HR component, panelists questioned if the HR component is the best place for collecting this information. The panel agreed that additional research related to this topic should identify how to best collect these data, through IPEDS or another survey, as there is a decided need for them.

Discussion Item #11: Annual Reporting of Race/Ethnicity

The collection and reporting of race/ethnicity and gender data on the HR component are mandatory for all institutions that receive, are applicants for, or expect to be applicants for Title IV federal financial assistance. The collection of these data is also mandated by P.L. 88-352, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 (29 CFR 1602, subparts O, P, and Q). Data on race/ethnicity and gender of staff are currently collected every other year (in odd-numbered years). The reporting of data by race/ethnicity and gender is optional in even-numbered years.

Nearly all IPEDS data items, including student data by race/ethnicity and gender, are collected annually. The panel agreed that collecting annual data on faculty and staff by race/ethnicity and gender would provide more comprehensive demographic information and better facilitate trend analysis. Although these items are not specifically mandated, there is a significant demand for annual data on race/ethnicity and gender for workforce equity analysis purposes and to provide more

immediate answers to policy and research questions. While this would certainly increase the level of burden during alternate years, panelists noted that institutions should already have the framework in place for collecting and reporting on the gender and race/ethnicity of the workforce. Given the value of these data, the panel recommended that the reporting of race/ethnicity and gender data be required annually. This would align the HR survey with the collection of race/ethnicity and gender data across all other IPEDS survey components.

Discussion Item #12: Utility of Data on New Hires

Currently, degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time employees report the number of newly hired permanent full-time staff by occupational category. In addition, for instructional staff, these data are collected by faculty status, tenure status (if applicable), and contract length. The panel reviewed the suggestion made by TRP 41 to eliminate reporting on new hires if these data are not needed for compliance with other federal agencies outside of IPEDS (e.g., the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). While this change would reduce the amount of data that institutions are required to report, panelists pointed out that there is a significant demand for information about new hires by various demographic and occupational characteristics to better address policy and research questions, as well as provide information on diversity and other key issues in the higher education workforce. Given the decided need of these data, the panel recommended retaining the collection of these data.

The period of reporting provides a snapshot of new hires at one point in the fall rather than a full year of data. Institutions are asked to report the number of full-time permanent staff who were included on the payroll of the institution between July 1 and October 31 of the most recent year either for the first time (new to the institution) or after a break in service and who were still on the payroll of the institution as of November 1 of the most recent year. This raises concerns about the possible undercounting of new hires who start outside of the snapshot date, particularly at institutions with nontraditional calendar systems.

To collect more complete information on new hires and improve data quality, the panel suggested broadening the reporting period for new hires to include any newly hired, full-time, permanent staff on the payroll of the institution between November 1 of the previous calendar year (i.e., the first day following the snapshot date of the prior year HR survey) and October 31 of the most recent calendar year.

Discussion Item #13: HR Forms for Institutions with Fewer Than 15 Full-Time Staff

An abbreviated version of the HR survey forms is presented to institutions with fewer than 15 full-time staff. Eligibility is determined based on the institution's response to the relevant screening question. In 2012, only 328 institutions completed this version of the form.

Eliminating the abbreviated version of the form and requiring all degree-granting institutions to complete the same version of the form regardless of the number of staff would align HR reporting with the strategy used to differentiate degree-granting from non-degree-granting institutions across all other IPEDS survey components (i.e., one form for degree-granting institutions and one form for non-degree-granting institutions). However, while panelists agreed that aligning the forms across all degree-granting institutions would improve comparability and capture more complete data on staff at degree-granting institutions, the panel felt that it would not be advisable to recommend changes without additional information in terms of the impact this would have on the affected institutions

(i.e., those with fewer than 15 full-time staff). RTI encourages comments from institutions that have used the <15 version of the forms in the past.

Discussion Item #14: Programs that Determine Medical/Non-Medical Breakout

As a result of suggestions made by TRP 9 (held on October 13-14, 2004), NCES clarified the definition of *medical school* to include any institution that offers Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degrees. These institutions complete separate medical school screens in the HR component, based on a recommendation from the IPEDS Redesign Task Force. This eliminated medical school instructional staff from the salaries reporting, thereby removing their relatively high salaries from any calculations. Medical school staff have many sources of income, such as billing from medical practice plans and research grants, which makes it difficult to determine the portion of their salary related to instruction.

The Help Desk has received comments from institutions that do not offer D.O. or O.D. programs but feel as if they should still be considered a medical school because of other programs offered, such as podiatry, naturopathy, and chiropractic. The panel was asked to review the definition of *medical school* and consider expanding it to include other programs that would determine the medical/non-medical breakout. Panel members did not feel that they had enough information to make a more definitive suggestion at this time. RTI encourages comments on this topic.

Summary of Proposed Revisions to the IPEDS Components for All Institutions

Following is a list of the suggested changes discussed in this report.

- **Salary outlays and headcounts** (required for degree-granting institutions; applies to full-time non-medical school instructional staff):
 - Collect salary outlays separately by contract length/employment agreement (i.e., 9-month, 10-month, 11-month, 12-month).
 - Clarify the definition of contract length to reflect the length of contract/employment agreement (as opposed to the number of months worked).
 - Collect the headcount of full-time instructional staff on contract/employment agreements of less than 9 months by gender and academic rank.

- **Faculty status** (required for degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff; applies to full-time and part-time staff, instructional and non-instructional staff, medical school and non-medical school staff, new hires):

The TRP suggested three potential approaches for collecting the tenure status of instructional and non-instructional staff. One option would be to collect the total number of staff with faculty status, by occupational category (see Exhibits A-1 and A-2 in Appendix A). Another option would be to collect the number of tenured faculty and contracted faculty, by occupational category (see Exhibits B-1 and B-2 in Appendix B). Alternatively, a third proposed solution would maintain the level of detail currently collected.

- **Employment agreement/contract length** (required for degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff; applies to full-time and part-time staff, instructional and non-instructional staff, medical school and non-medical school staff, new hires):
 - Add category “Employment agreements/contract lengths of indefinite duration (e.g., continuing and at-will).”

- **For-credit and not-for-credit reporting** (required for degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff; applies to full-time and part-time instructional staff, includes both medical school and non-medical school staff [reported separately]):
 - Clarify the subcategories to reflect alignment with primary letter of agreement/contract.
- **Non-instructional occupational categories** (required for all institutions):
 - Provide better guidance on where to classify the most problematic roles among the existing categories.
- **Graduate assistants, by function** (required for degree-granting institutions):
 - Implement new, condensed categories specifically for graduate assistants:
 - graduate assistant—teaching;
 - graduate assistant—research; and
 - graduate assistant—other.
- **Reporting of race/ethnicity** (required for all institutions):
 - Implement annual collection of staff data by race/ethnicity.
- **Data on new hires** (applies to degree-granting institutions with 15 or more full-time staff):
 - Revise the reporting period for new hires to include any newly hired, full-time, permanent staff on the payroll of the institution between November 1 and October 31.

Next Steps and Reporting Implications

Once the TRP summary comment period has closed, RTI will review the comments and provide NCES with final recommendations based on the suggestions of the TRP. NCES will review the recommendations to determine next steps and any reporting implications for IPEDS. Proposed burden estimates will be submitted to OMB for information collection clearance. The next OMB package will cover IPEDS data collections starting 2016-17. NCES plans to revise burden estimates based on suggestions from this TRP for the 2014-15 data collection and beyond.

Comments

RTI is committed to improving the quality and usefulness of IPEDS data. We encourage interested parties to send any comments or concerns about this topic to Janice Kelly-Reid, IPEDS Project Director, at ipedstrpcomment@rti.org by November 14, 2014.

Appendix A

Option #1: Sample HR Survey Screens for Collecting Total Number of Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

Exhibit A-1.								
Option 1A for Non-instructional staff (degree-granting institutions)								
Occupational category	Tenured	Tenure track	Not on tenure track/no tenure system				Total	Of total, number with faculty status
			Continuing/ at will contract	Multi- year contract	Annual contract	Less than annual contract		
Research Staff	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Public Service Staff	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Archivists, Curators, and Museum Technicians 25-4010	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Librarians 25-4020	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Library Technicians 25-4030	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Student and Academic Affairs and Other Education Services Occupations 25-2000 + 25-3000 + 25- 9000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Management Occupations 11-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Business and Financial Operations Occupations 13-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations 15-0000 + 17-0000 + 19- 0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Community, Social Service, Legal, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations 21-0000 + 23-0000 + 27- 0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations 29-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Service Occupations 31-0000 + 33-0000 + 35- 0000 + 37-0000 + 39-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Sales and Related Occupations 41-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Office and Administrative Support Occupations 43-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations 45-0000 + 47-0000 + 49- 0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations 51-0000 + 53-0000	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Total	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV

CV indicates a calculated value and RV indicates a reported value. The screens will incorporate any applicable changes based on the outcomes of other discussion items below.

Appendix A

Option #1: Sample HR Survey Screens for Collecting Total Number of Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

Exhibit A-2. Option 1B for Instructional staff (degree-granting institutions)								
Occupational category	Tenured	Tenure track	Not on tenure track/no tenure system				Total	Of total, number with faculty status
			Continuing/ at will contract	Multi-year contract	Annual contract	Less than annual contract		
Primarily instruction	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Exclusively credit	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Exclusively not-for-credit	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Combined credit/not-for-credit	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Instruction/research/ public service staff	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV
Total	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV

CV indicates a calculated value and RV indicates a reported value. The screens will incorporate any applicable changes based on the outcomes of other discussion items below.

Appendix B

Option #2: Sample HR Survey Screens for Collecting Number of Tenured and Contracted Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

Exhibit B-1. Option 2A for Non-Instructional Staff (degree-granting institutions)												
Occupational category	Tenured	Tenure track	Total	Of total, number with faculty status	Not on tenure track/no tenure system					Of total, number with faculty status	Total	Total with faculty status
					Continuing/at will contract	Multi-year contract	Annual contract	Less than annual contract	Total			
Research Staff	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	CV
Public Service Staff	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Archivists, Curators, and Museum Technicians 25-4010	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Librarians 25-4020	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Library Technicians 25-4030	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Student and Academic Affairs and Other Education Services Occupations 25-2000 + 25-3000 + 25-9000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Management Occupations 11-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Business and Financial Operations Occupations 13-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Computer, Engineering, and Science Occupations 15-0000 + 17-0000 + 19-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Community, Social Service, Legal, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations 21-0000 + 23-0000 + 27-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations 29-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Service Occupations 31-0000 + 33-0000 + 35-0000 + 37-0000 + 39-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV
Sales and Related Occupations 41-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV

Appendix B

Option #2: Sample HR Survey Screens for Collecting Number of Tenured and Contracted Staff with Faculty Status, by Occupational Category

Office and Administrative Support Occupations 43-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations 45-0000 + 47-0000 + 49-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations 51-0000 + 53-0000	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV		RV	CV	CV
Total	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV		CV	CV	CV

CV indicates a calculated value and RV indicates a reported value. The screens will incorporate any applicable changes based on the outcomes of other discussion items below.

Exhibit B-2. Option 2B for Instructional Staff (degree-granting institutions)

Occupational category	Tenured	Tenure track	Total	Of total, number with faculty status	Not on tenure track/no tenure system					Of total, number with faculty status	Total	Total with faculty status
					Continuing/at will contract	Multi-year contract	Annual contract	Less than annual contract	Total			
Primarily instruction	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV		RV	CV	CV
Exclusively credit	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Exclusively not-for-credit	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Combined credit/not-for-credit	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Instruction/research/public service staff	RV	RV	CV	RV	RV	RV	RV	RV	CV	RV	CV	CV
Total	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV	CV

CV indicates a calculated value and RV indicates a reported value. The screens will incorporate any applicable changes based on the outcomes of other discussion items below. Degree-granting institutions with no tenure system would report the total number of faculty for all employment agreement/contract length categories combined.