

Report and Suggestions from IPEDS Technical Review Panel #9

Human Resources Issues in IPEDS Winter Components

PROPOSAL SUMMARY: IPEDS should merge the three human resources components (Employees by Assigned Position, Salaries, and Fall Staff) into one component with three sections to simplify reporting and ensure data consistency and accuracy. The associated instructions and definitions should be revised and clarified. Also, IPEDS should reinstate the collection of tenure status to the Salaries component (or the Salaries section of the merged component).

The IPEDS Technical Review Panel (TRP) met on October 13-14, 2004 in Washington, DC to discuss various issues regarding the IPEDS Winter collection components. The panel members included 32 individuals representing federal government, state government, institutions, national data users, and other professions. The panel considered merging the IPEDS Winter components (Employees by Assigned Position (EAP), Salaries (SA), and Fall Staff (S)) into one component with three sections to simplify reporting and ensure data consistency and accuracy. Additionally, the panel considered how medical schools report to IPEDS; whether the Salaries component should be expanded to include tenure status; and whether the definition of "faculty" should be changed.

Background:

NCES and IPEDS data users have found some cross-survey inconsistencies when comparing the IPEDS Employees by Assigned Position (EAP) data to Salaries and Fall Staff. The purpose of this Technical Review Panel (TRP) was to further discuss suggestions made in previous TRP meetings regarding possible changes to the IPEDS human resources (HR) components, including whether or not it is feasible for NCES to combine the three components into one HR component. Information related to each component follows.

The Salaries component collects data as of November 1 of the reporting year on the number of full-time instructional faculty by rank, gender, and length of contract; total salary outlays; and fringe benefits and number of full-time instructional faculty covered by these benefits. The data are collected annually (since 1990); however data were not collected in 2000. Prior to the 2001 collection, data were requested by tenure status. As of 2004, this component is applicable to all Title IV degree-granting institutions, unless they meet one of the following exclusions: all instructional faculty are part time; all contribute their services; all are in the military; or all teach preclinical or clinical medicine. This component was formerly referred to as Salaries and Fringe Benefits of Full-Time Instructional Faculty.

The Fall Staff component is required biennially in odd-numbered years from all institutions with 15 or more full-time employees. Fall Staff collects data on the numbers of full- and part-time employees as of November 1 of the reporting year. Specific data elements include: number of full-time faculty by contract length and salary class intervals; number of other persons employed full-time by primary occupational activity and salary class intervals; part-

time employees by primary occupational activity; tenure of full-time faculty by academic rank; and new hires by primary occupational activity. Most data are provided by race/ethnicity and gender. Prior to 2001, the survey also requested the number of persons donating (contributing) services or contracted for by the institution. Before 1993, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) collected Fall Staff data using the EEO-6 survey form. In 1993, IPEDS assumed responsibility for collecting Fall Staff data for EEOC in cooperation with the Office for Civil Rights.

The addition of the EAP component to IPEDS was proposed by the National Postsecondary Education Cooperative focus group on faculty and staff. The survey was instituted in 2001-02 and is required of all Title IV institutions. The survey allows institutions to "assign" all faculty and staff to distinct categories. The EAP collects information on all employees on the institution's payroll as of November 1 of the reporting year, by full- and part-time status; by function or occupational category; and by faculty status and tenure status. Institutions with medical schools are required to report their medical school employees separately. The EAP data are matched against Salaries and Fall Staff for consistency.

Issues Addressed:

- Should NCES continue to collect faculty status information on the Employees by Assigned Position (EAP) component? Or should faculty status be requested on the Salaries (SA) component? Should collection by faculty status be limited to 4-year institutions only?
- Is NCES collecting information consistently for full-time post-doctorates, researchers and graduate assistants? How/where should full-time post-doctorates and researchers be reported across the HR surveys?
- Should the new hires definition be revised to include full-time faculty on less-than-9-month contracts?
- Should NCES continue to collect "medical school" data separately on EAP? What is the purpose/intent/reason for doing this? Should the definition of "medical school" be expanded to include other entities such as dental and veterinary schools?
- Should the scope of the Salaries component be revised to include or exclude certain full-time instructional faculty (e.g., faculty teaching law; specific clinical or health-related fields)?
- Is it feasible to combine the three HR surveys into one HR survey?
- Are definitions/ instructions clear or do they need to be clarified?
- Is there a need for additional data items?

Proposal:

The TRP suggested the following:

- Merge the IPEDS winter components (Employees by Assigned Position (EAP), Salaries (SA), and Fall Staff (S)) into one component with three sections to simplify reporting and ensure data consistency and accuracy.
 1. EAP would be the driver;
 2. component sections would be determined by data reported on EAP;

3. items (cells) in the other component sections would be populated as much as possible with numbers collected on EAP.

The survey items would be reorganized to be more logical in flow; for example, headcount information would be collected before salary intervals. The glossary and the instructions would be restructured based on the new design of the HR components. A single set of instructions for all 3 sections would improve the consistency of reporting between the sections.

- Clarify the definition of the term "faculty." Respondents have been inconsistently defining the term "faculty," some defining it based on instructional function and some based on designation of faculty status. To confound the issue, in EAP and Fall Staff the use of "faculty" means different things. The panel suggests using EAP to define the term and perhaps changing the terminology to indicate "instructional employees." As a result, the current instruction for institutions to use their own definition of "faculty" would be eliminated to ensure comparability of data across institutions. An explanation would be added indicating that, although institutions have varying definitions for "faculty," they should classify their instructional employees according to the IPEDS categories and definitions.
- Clarify the definition of "medical school" to include any school that grants an M.D. or D.O. A screening question would be added to the Institutional Characteristics component (collected in the fall) to facilitate this determination. All employees affiliated with (housed with or under the authority of) the medical school would be reported with that school. Any employees that are in health disciplines that are not considered part of a medical school would not be included in the medical school "section." The panel suggested providing a caveat box to list the disciplines included in the medical school component.
- Continue to collect the headcount for faculty with less than 9-month contracts but eliminate the collection of salary and expenditure information for these employees.
- Add the purpose of the collection to the beginning of the instructions so that respondents more fully understand the intent of the collection.
- Develop clearer definitions and add frequently asked questions (FAQs) in order to help respondents.
- Add tenure status back to the collection of data on number of faculty by rank (as it was prior to the 2001 data collection).
- Add a question at the end of the merged component to determine if there were any employees that were difficult to categorize in order to assess whether future changes should be made to definitions, instructions, and/or items collected.

What are the reporting implications of this proposal?

Under this proposal, institutional reporting to IPEDS would be minimally affected and definitions and instructions would be more consistent, resulting in more accurate data. There would be few changes to data items, except for the proposal to add tenure status back to the Salaries portion of the collection (which applies to degree-granting institutions only). If this proposal is accepted and implemented, screens for the data collection would continue to be tailored to the institution's needs; institutional keyholders would have one set of edits/error messages for the entire HR component; data provided in the EAP section

would be used to pre-populate cells in the Salaries and Fall Staff sections to enhance the error resolution process; and the HR data would be locked as one component, rather than as 3 individual components (as is currently required).

When will this be implemented?

Pending receipt of comments from the higher education community and concurrence with this proposal, NCES would like to implement this new combined format with the Winter 2005-06 data collection. As with all changes to IPEDS, any new items included in the combined format in 2005-06 would be optional; they would be mandatory in 2006-07.

Comments:

While NCES is concerned about improving the consistency and accuracy of the data collected in the IPEDS Human Resources components, there is also concern about whether or not the changes suggested will have an impact on the postsecondary institutions that respond to IPEDS. We encourage interested parties to send any comments or concerns about this proposal to [Elise Miller](#) by February 15, 2005. Please include the following in the email subject line: Human Resources TRP - Proposal Comments.