



# **Graduation Rates (GR) Survey Component Overview Tutorial Script 2020-21 Data Collection Cycle**

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, and the Association for Institutional Research, AIR, welcome to this tutorial on the IPEDS Graduation Rates survey component, also called GR.

The GR component is part of the Winter collection of IPEDS surveys, which opens in early December. Data entry must be completed and considered final by the end of the collection period, in mid-February, when the keyholder locks their data. IPEDS coordinators have an additional two weeks to review the data and lock the survey component.

Data collected through the IPEDS surveys provides a basis for postsecondary education analysis and consumer information. collected through the IPEDS surveys provide a basis for postsecondary education analysis and consumer information. The Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, requires that institutions that participate in federal student aid programs report data on enrollments, program completions, graduation rates, faculty and staff, finances, institutional costs, and student financial aid and stipulates, "...institutions will complete surveys conducted as part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)...in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the Secretary."

Institutions receiving Title IV funding (student financial aid) must complete the IPEDS surveys. Currently, there are over 6000 institutions that submit IPEDS surveys, with a number doing so voluntarily. NCES is required to provide a list of noncompliant institutions to the Office of Federal Student Aid. Non-compliance can result in warnings and costly fines, or even loss of Title IV funding. More information about fines can be found on the Statutory Requirements page (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ViewIPEDSStatutoryRequirement.aspx>).

The purpose of the Graduation Rates component is to track the cohorts of first-time, full-time degree/ certificate-seeking undergraduates, as well as their completion status at 100% and 150% of normal time at postsecondary institutions. These data are collected to assist institutions in complying with the Student Right to Know Act.

Include students enrolled during the fall term or during the 12- month period between September 1st and August 31st.

Report all degree or certificate-seeking students by race/ethnicity and gender. Degree or certificate-seeking includes students enrolled in courses for credit who are seeking a degree, certificate, or another formal award. This includes students enrolled in vocational or occupational programs, those enrolled in off-campus centers, and those enrolled in distance learning/ home study programs.

High school students also enrolled in postsecondary courses for credit are not considered degree/certificate-seeking.

Be sure to include full-time students taking remedial courses if the student is considered degree-seeking for the

purpose of student financial aid determination.

This includes students who:

- Received any type of federal financial aid, regardless of what courses they took at any time;
- Received any state or locally based financial aid with an eligibility requirement that the student be enrolled in a degree, certificate, or transfer-seeking program; or
- Obtained a student visa to study at a U.S. postsecondary institution.

In certain cases, such as leaving school to join the armed forces or for the purposes of a religious mission, becoming totally and permanently disabled, or passing away, the student may be excluded from the cohort.

For four-year institutions that determine program intent upon entry, students are to be separated into two sub-cohorts: students entering bachelor's or equivalent degree programs, and students seeking other than a bachelor's degree. Institutions that do not determine degree intent upon entry should report all students as if they are bachelor's degree-seeking.

For the bachelor's or equivalent degree-seeking sub-cohort, report how many students completed programs within 150% of normal completion time by the level of program they ultimately completed.

Additionally, institutions report on the length of time it took baccalaureate graduates to complete. For two-year institutions, report how many students completed programs within 100 % and 150% of normal completion time by the level of program they ultimately completed.

For less-than-two-year institutions, report how many students completed programs within 100% and 150% of normal completion time.

For some of the items, context boxes are provided so keyholders may provide text to explain or clarify data entries. Notes from the context boxes may be displayed on College Navigator.

College Navigator was developed to provide comparable information to the public about postsecondary institutions and is used by students, parents, counselors, researchers and administrators from other institutions, and others.

It is always a good idea to begin the IPEDS reporting cycle early and seek help, when needed, from the IPEDS Help Desk. The knowledgeable Help Desk staff is eager to help. Response time may be longer near the end of the collection cycle.

In addition, the IPEDS Resources page contains frequently asked questions, a link to the glossary, data tip sheets, an archive of survey instruments, and other relevant information.

This concludes the tutorial for the GR survey component.