IC Header for 4-year degree-granting institutions

Overview

Institutional Characteristics Header Overview
Welcome to the Institutional Characteristics Header survey component (IC Header). This survey was introduced to collect data that are key to reporting throughout the IPEDS data collection, and must be completed and locked before any other survey can be started. Some IC Header questions may require nothing more than a confirmation, if nothing has changed. Please make changes as necessary, and complete items that do need a response (enrollment questions). Remember, it is the responsibility of the keyholder to provide NCES with accurate data about the institution. Please never hesitate to call the IPEDS Help Desk at 1-877-225-2568 and ask for help to make sure that you are reporting correctly!
Changes to This Year's IC Header Component: • A new screening question regarding access to library collections has been added for degree-granting institutions only.
Because of the importance of the IC Header data in determining the screens you will receive in other surveys, be sure to report correctly, and to contact the IPEDS Help Desk if you have **ANY** questions about what you need to report.
The IC Header data affect other survey components in the following ways: • The Educational Offerings question verifies your institution's inclusion in IPEDS. • The Control and Levels page is key to all survey components, especially to Finance (F) and Graduation Rates (GR). Additionally, this is important information for students, impacts many federal reports, and is used in placing institutions in appropriate net price groupings. • Calendar system selection impacts student charges data reported in Institutional Characteristics (IC), Fall Enrollment (EF) data, GR data, and Student Financial Aid (SFA) data related to the net price calculation. • Enrollment levels impact student charges in IC and enrollment categories in the EF survey component.
• The Open Admission question determines whether the Admissions component will be required in the Winter. • The Academic Libraries expenses question determines whether the Academic Libraries component will be required in the Spring. This question is asked of degree-granting institutions only. • The operations question for new institutions determines reporting of 12-month enrollment (E12).
To download survey materials package for this component: Survey Materials

Part A - Educational Offerings

1. Which of the following types of instruction/programs are offered by your institution? [Check one or more]

If your institution does not offer occupational, academic or continuing professional programs, you are not expected to complete this or any other IPEDS survey.

	☐	Occupational, may lead to a certificate, degree, or other formal award
	☐	Academic, leading to a certificate, degree, or diploma
	☐	Continuing professional (postbaccalaureate only)
	☐	Recreational or avocational (leisure) programs
	☐	Adult basic or remedial instruction or high school equivalency
	☐	Secondary (high school)

Part B - Organization - Control and Levels

1. What is your institutional control or affiliation?

Be sure to select the correct control for your institution. Errors on this question have an impact throughout the IPEDS surveys, in federal reporting, in net price groupings, and on your institutions appearance to students. If you reported incorrectly in a previous year, please contact the Help Desk at 877.225.2568 to correct the error.

○ Public - Select primary and or secondary controls below	
Primary control	Secondary control (if applicable)
Select One	Select One
○ Private for-profit	
○ Private not-for-profit independent (no religious affiliation)	
○ Private not-for-profit religious affiliation - Select affiliation below	
Select One	

2. What award levels are offered by your institution? [Check all that apply]

When reporting award levels for sub baccalaureate certificates (levels 1, 2, and 4), **determine program length by the number of credit or contact hours**, NOT the academic year length in parentheses. The academic year length is meant only to provide context.

The 'Other' award level should not be used unless your program truly does not fit any of the other award levels. We expect very few institutions to fit the 'Other' category.

Even though Teacher Preparation certificate programs may require a bachelor's degree for admission, they are considered subbaccalaureate undergraduate programs. Check the applicable award level 1, 2, or 4, depending on the length of the Teacher Preparation program.

Award Level		
BELOW THE BACCALAUREATE:		
1	☐	**Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma of** (less than one academic year) **- less than 900 contact or clock hours,** or **- less than 30 semester or trimester credit hours,** or **- less than 45 quarter credit hours**
2	☐	**Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma of** (at least one but less than two academic years) **- at least 900 but less than 1800 contact or clock hours,** or **- at least 30 but less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours,** or **- at least 45 but less than 90 quarter credit hours**
3	☐	**Associate's degree**
4	☐	**Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma of** (at least two but less than four academic years) **- 1800 or more contact or clock hours,** or **- 60 or more semester or trimester credit hours,** or **- 90 or more quarter credit hours**
BACCALAUREATE AND ABOVE:		
5	☐	**Bachelor's degree** or equivalent
6	☐	**Postbaccalaureate certificate**
7	☐	**Master's degree**
8	☐	**Post-master's certificate**
17	☐	**Doctor's degree - research/scholarship**
18	☐	**Doctor's degree - professional practice**
19	☐	**Doctor's degree - other**
12	☐	**Other** (specify in box below)

You may use the space below to provide context for the data you've reported above.

Part B - Organization - Calendar System

Your response to the next question determines how your institution reports Institutional Characteristics student charges data in the fall, Student Financial Aid data in the winter, and Graduation Rates data in the winter. It also impacts the net price calculation in the Student Financial Aid survey.

If the calendar system differs from prior year or requires a change, please contact the Help Desk at 877.225.2568.

3. What is the predominant calendar system at the institution? [Choose one]

Academic Year Reporting Method (Standard academic terms)

Selecting one of the following calendar types determines that your institution will provide Student Financial Aid and Graduation Rates data based on a FALL COHORT and student charges data for a full ACADEMIC YEAR.

- ○ Semester
- ○ Quarter
- ○ Trimester
- ○ 4-1-4 or similar plan

Program Reporting Method (Other calendar system)

Selecting one of the following calendar types determines that your institution will provide Student Financial Aid and Graduation Rates data based on a FULL-YEAR COHORT, and student charges data by PROGRAM.

- ○ Differs by program
- ○ Continuous basis (every 2 weeks, monthly, or other period)

Hybrid/Mixed Reporting Method (Standard academic terms, other academic calendar)

Selecting the hybrid calendar type determines that your institution will provide Student Financial Aid and Graduation Rates data based on a FULL-YEAR COHORT, and student charges data for a full ACADEMIC YEAR.

- ○ Hybrid (Other academic calendar)

Part B - Organization - Student Enrollment

4. Does your institution enroll any of the following types of students?

Include all levels offered by your institution, even if there are no students currently enrolled at that level.

*Responses to this question determine which screens will be generated for reporting academic year tuition charges, and for reporting Fall Enrollment during the spring collection. Additionally, checking **Yes** for full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students determines that your institution must report cost of attendance data (on the IC component) and Student Financial Aid data for these students.*

	Full-time		Part-time	
Undergraduate (academic or occupational programs)	○ No	○ Yes	○ No	○ Yes
First-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate	○ No	○ Yes	○ No	○ Yes
Graduate (not including doctor's-professional practice)	○ No	○ Yes	○ No	○ Yes

5. Does your institution enroll students in doctor's degree - professional practice programs?

*Checking **Yes** for this question will allow your institution to report graduate level students in Fall Enrollment. If you select **Yes** to enrolling students in one of the listed programs, you will also report tuition for the appropriate program(s).*

○ No

○ Yes

Do you enroll students in one of the following?

Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.), Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.), Medicine (M.D.), Optometry (O.D.), Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.), Pharmacy (Pharm.D.), Podiatry (Pod.D., D.P., or D.P.M.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Law (J.D.)

○ No

○ Yes

6. For Fall 2010, did your institution have any full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students enrolled in programs at the baccalaureate level or below?

*If you answer **Yes** to this question, you will be required to provide Graduation Rates data for the 2010-11 cohort in the winter collection. If you answer **No** to this question, indicate the reason you are not required to report Graduation Rates for the cohort year requested.*

If you reported any full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates on the 2010-11 Enrollment survey, the data will be preloaded below.

○ No

- ☐ This institution did not enroll full-time, first-time (undergraduate) students.
- ☐ This institution did not offer programs at or below the baccalaureate level.
- ☐ This institution was not in operation in 2010-11.

○ Yes

Full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students from 2010-11 Enrollment survey (GR Cohort)

Part B - Multi-institution or Multi-campus Organization

7. Multi-institution or multi-campus organization

Is the institution part of a multi-institution or multi-campus organization that owns, governs, or controls the institution? Do NOT indicate a religious affiliation here; that information is collected separately.

If you need assistance, contact the Help Desk at 1-877-225-2568. You will not be able to lock your submission if this question is blank.

- ○ No, this institution **IS NOT** a part of a multi-institution or multi-campus organization that owns, governs, or controls the institution.
- ○ Yes, this institution **IS** a part of a multi-institution or multi-campus organization that owns, governs, or controls the institution.

If yes, select the name of the multi-institution or multi-campus organization that owns, governs, or controls the institution after clicking on 'Select System' below.

Select System

Part C - Other Survey Screening Questions - Open Admission

2. Does your institution have an open admission policy for all or most entering first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate-level students?

If the only requirement for admission is a high school diploma or GED/other equivalent, your institution is still considered open admission. Institutions that require only an Ability to Benefit or similar test beyond the diploma/equivalent, and only reject a very small number of students based on the test, are also considered open admission.

If your institution does not have an open admission policy, you will be required to report Admissions component regarding your admissions procedures and admissions yield.

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

You may use the space below to provide context for the data you've reported above. These context notes will be posted on the College Navigator website, and should be written to be understood by students and parents.

Part C - Other Survey Screening Questions - Library Access and Expenses

Does your institution have access to a library collection?	
○	No
○	Yes (receives AL component)

Were your annual total library expenses for Fiscal Year 2016 greater than zero?	
○	No
○	Yes (receives AL component)

Part C - Other Survey Screening Questions - Levels of Enrollment Offered

Was your institution in operation during the academic year 2015-16?

*If you answer **Yes** to this question, you will be able to specify the levels of enrollment offered at your institution during 2015-16 and to report 12-month enrollment during the fall collection.*

- ○ No
- ○ Yes. Please specify the levels of enrollment offered during 2015-16.
  - ☐ Undergraduate
  - ☐ Graduate (not including doctor's-professional practice)
  - ☐ Doctor's-professional practice

Prepared by

This survey component was prepared by:

○	Keyholder	○	SFA Contact	○	HR Contact
○	Finance Contact	○	Academic Library Contact	○	Other

Name: _____

Email: _____

How long did it take to prepare this survey component?	_____	hours	_____	minutes

The name of the preparer is being collected so that we can follow up with the appropriate person in the event that there are questions concerning the data. The Keyholder will be copied on all email correspondence to other preparers.

The time it took to prepare this component is being collected so that we can continue to improve our estimate of the reporting burden associated with IPEDS. Please include in your estimate the time it took for you to review instructions, query and search data sources, complete and review the component, and submit the data through the Data Collection System.

Thank you for your assistance.

IC Header Full Instructions for 4-yr degree-granting institutions

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Purpose of Survey

The primary purpose of the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics Header (IC-H) survey is to collect basic institutional data including control or affiliation, calendar system, and award levels. These data are key to accurate reporting as they are used to determine the reporting for other IPEDS surveys. Any errors in the IC-H survey can lead to further errors in the data reporting process, so please be very careful in reporting these data correctly, and contact the IPEDS Help Desk (877.225.2568) if you have any questions.

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Changes in reporting

The following changes were implemented for the 2016-17 data collection period:

- Open admission policy question added to “Part C – Other screening questions”.
- Library expenses question added to “Part C – Other screening questions”.

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General instructions

Reporting period covered

Institutional Characteristics Header (IC-H) covers data for the current year with two exceptions.

- Cohort data in B6 refer to a past cohort and are used to set the Graduation Rates component (GR).
- For new institutions, the question about prior year operation refers to the prior academic year and is used to determine the applicability of the 12-Month Enrollment (E12) component.

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Context Boxes

Context boxes are provided to allow institutions to provide more information regarding survey component items. Note that some context boxes are posted on the College Navigator Website, which is the college search tool offered by NCES. NCES will review entries in these context boxes for applicability and appropriateness before posting them on the College Navigator Website, however, institutions should check grammar and spelling of their entries. Inappropriate or repetitive contexts will be deleted.

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Coverage

Carefully read each question in the Institutional Characteristics Header survey to ensure you are reporting data for the appropriate students. The student groups for which data are collected vary throughout the IC-H survey (e.g., undergraduate and graduate). In general, for each group, ensure that the guidelines below are met.

A. Who to include

- Students enrolled in courses **creditable** toward a diploma, certificate, degree, or other formal award, **including** those enrolled in off-campus centers
- High school students taking regular college courses for credit
- Full-time students taking remedial courses **IF** the student is considered degree-seeking for the purpose of student financial aid determination
- Students from overseas enrolled in U.S. courses for credit (e.g., online students)
- Graduate students enrolled for thesis credits, even when zero credits are awarded, as these students are still enrolled and seeking their degree

B. Who NOT to include

- Students enrolled exclusively in courses **not creditable** toward a formal award
- Students enrolled exclusively in Continuing Education Units (CEUs)
- Students exclusively auditing classes
- Residents or interns in Doctor's - professional practice (previously first-professional), since they have already received their Doctor's degree
- Any student studying abroad (e.g., at a foreign university) if their enrollment at the 'home' institution is **only** an administrative record and the fee is nominal
- Students in any branch campus located in a foreign country

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Where to Get Help with Reporting

IPEDS Help Desk

Phone: 1-877-225-2568
Email: ipedshelp@rti.org

Web Tutorials

You can also consult the IPEDS Website Trainings & Outreach page which contains several tutorials on IPEDS data collection, a self-paced overview of IPEDS tools, and other valuable resources.

IPEDS Resource Page

The IPEDS Website Reporting Tools page contains frequently asked questions, a link to data tip sheets, tutorials, taxonomies, information centers (e.g., academic libraries, average net price, human resources, race/ethnicity, etc.), and other valuable information.

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Where the Data Will Appear

Data collected through IPEDS will be accessible at the institution- and aggregate-levels.
At the institution-level, data will appear in the:

- College Navigator Website (including the College Affordability and Transparency Center)
- IPEDS Data Center
- IPEDS Data Feedback Reports

At the aggregate-level, data will appear in:

- IPEDS First Looks
- IPEDS Table Library
- IPEDS Data Feedback Reports
- The Digest of Education Statistics
- The Condition of Education

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Reporting Directions

Part A - Educational Offerings

Responses on this screen verify inclusion of the institution on the NCES/IPEDS list of institutions and agencies that provide all types of postsecondary education. Postsecondary education is defined as the provision of a formal instructional program whose curriculum is designed primarily for students beyond the compulsory age for high school. This includes programs whose purpose is occupational, academic, or continuing professional education but excludes avocational and adult basic education programs.

If you select only avocational and/or adult basic education programs, you will be contacted by IPEDS to confirm your exemption from IPEDS reporting.

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Part B – Organization

Institutional Control or Affiliation

Indicate the appropriate control or affiliation under which the institution operates. If the institution has a religious affiliation, select the denomination from the list provided in the drop-down box. Public institutions must designate a primary control; identification of a secondary control is optional. If control of the institution differs from the prior year or requires a change, please contact the IPEDS Help Desk at 877.225.2568.

Correct reporting of control or affiliation is KEY to IPEDS reporting. Errors in reporting control or affiliation cause you to receive incorrect survey forms, misrepresents your institution to the public on College Navigator and other search tools that use IPEDS data, and places your institution in incorrect groups in IPEDS publications and on the College Affordability and Transparency Lists. If you do not know the control or affiliation of your institution, please call the Help Desk.

Award Levels

Check applicable award levels for all credit programs offered at the institution. Award levels are identified based on duration and/or awards.

- Report using the number of CONTACT or CREDIT hours, as is appropriate to your calendar system (e.g., semester or quarter).
    - References to length of study are the equivalent of full-time academic years; that is, at least 1 but less than 2 years refers to the number of credits or the course load that would normally be completed by a full-time student attending within the stated time period.
        - One academic year equals 900 contact or clock hours of instruction, 30 semester credit hours or its equivalent, or 45 quarter credit hours.
- Award levels 1, 2, and 4 differ by length of programs and refer to completions below the baccalaureate degree. Use the IPEDS designations, not institutionally defined designations, to describe these levels.
- Award levels 3, 5, 7, 17, 18 and 19 indicate degree levels for which the institution is authorized to make formal awards.
- Award levels 6 and 8 indicate certificate levels.
- If you cannot classify an award within the award levels indicated on the screen, check award level 12 (Other) and specify or describe the award in the context box. Because there are few programs that fall under 'Other' please contact the Help Desk if you are considering selecting Level 12.

NOTE: Even though Teacher Preparation certificate programs may require a bachelor's degree for admission, they are considered subbaccalaureate undergraduate programs. Check the applicable award level 1, 2, or 4, depending on the length of the Teacher Preparation program.

Calendar System

Indicate the **predominant** calendar system under which the institution operates. If programs are offered on more than one calendar, select the system under which most programs are offered. If there is no predominant calendar system at your institution, select the option that best characterizes your institution.

If your calendar system differs from the prior year or requires a change, please contact the IPEDS Help Desk at 877.225.2568.

Note: Calendar system selection determines reporting in many other IPEDS components. Be sure to choose the calendar system you select accurately represents your institution. Contact the IPEDS Help Desk if you are not sure which calendar system to select.

- **Standard academic terms** (semesters, quarters, trimesters, 4-1-4)

    - Use a **fall cohort** for Graduation Rates.
    - Report tuition and fees and cost information based on a **full academic year**.
    - Report Fall Enrollment using **students enrolled as of October 15, or the official fall reporting date used by the institution**. This fall enrollment cohort will be preloaded into the next year's Student Financial Aid component.
    - For Student Financial Aid, report aid for an **academic year**.
- **Program-by-program or continuous enrollment basis**
    - Use a **full-year cohort** for Graduation Rates.
    - Report tuition and fees and books and supplies information by program for the **entire length of the program**. For living expenses, report costs for **4 weeks (1 month)**. Note: Living expenses are only applicable to institutions with full-time, first-time students and are reported with the largest program.
    - Report Fall Enrollment using **students enrolled in the institution at any time between August 1 and October 31**.
    - For Student Financial Aid, report aid for the **largest program for an academic year**.

- **Hybrid academic calendar** (If you are considering selecting the 'Other academic calendar' option, please contact the Help Desk at 877.225.2568 so they can confirm the appropriateness of this calendar system for your institution.)
    - Use a **full-year cohort** for Graduation Rates.
    - Report Fall Enrollment using **students enrolled in the institution at any time between August 1 and October 31**.
    - Report tuition and fees and cost information based on a **full academic year**.
    - For Student Financial Aid, report aid for an **academic year**.

Student enrollment

Enrollment of full- and part-time students.
Indicate whether your institution enrolls any full-time or part-time students at the levels listed. Include all levels offered, even if there are not any students currently enrolled at that level.
Responses to those categories will determine the screens generated for reporting academic year tuition charges in the Institutional Characteristics survey during the Fall collection and enrollment data in the Fall Enrollment survey during the Spring collection.

- Make sure to check Yes for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students if applicable, as this determines that your institution will report cost information on Institutional Characteristics screens in Part D and Student Financial Aid information during the Winter collection.

Doctor's - professional practice
Indicate whether your institution offers any of the listed Doctor's - professional practice programs. If your institution offers Doctor's -professional practice programs but does not offer any of the listed programs, indicate no.
GRS cohort question.

- **4-year institutions.** Indicate if your institution had any full-time, first-time undergraduate students enrolled in programs at the baccalaureate level or below in the academic year indicated on the screen. If you indicate Yes, you must report Graduation Rates data in the Winter.
- **Less-than-4-year institutions.** Indicate if your institution had any full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students enrolled in the academic year indicated on the screen. If you check Yes, you must report Graduation Rates data in the Winter.

Multi-institution or Multi-campus Organization

If applicable, select from the provided list the multi-institution or multi-campus organization that owns, governs, or controls the institution. If you do not see your multi-institution or multi-organization listed, please contact the Help Desk.
A multi-institution or multi-campus organization includes organizations with two or more institutions or campuses. Non-postsecondary education agencies that govern or control institutions include, but are not limited to, public school districts, art organizations, hospitals and other medical/health organizations.
Do not include:

- coordinating systems
- single institution owner
- single institution corporate name
- single institution governing board
- consortia
- associations
- religious affiliation (requested in control question)

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Part C - Other Survey Screening Questions

Open admission policy

Check **Yes** if your institution has an open admission policy.
If your institution requires only a high school diploma/equivalent and/or Ability to Benefit (or similar) test, and few students are not admitted based on the test, your institution is still considered open admission. For example, if you have students take the ATB test and allow 98% of those students to enroll, you are likely open admission. The 2% that were not admitted had unusual circumstances that kept them from being admitted.
Note: IPEDS does not have a set percentage to determine open admission. Please review your institution's admission policy or talk to someone in the admissions office if you are not sure whether your institution is open admission, or contact the IPEDS Help Desk at 877.225.2568.

Library Access and Expenses

Indicate whether the institution has access to a library collection and/or the annual total library expenses at your institution were greater than zero for Fiscal Year 2016. Fiscal Year 2016 is defined as the most recent 12-month period that corresponds to your institution's fiscal year that ends before October 1, 2016.

A library collection is defined as "comprising documents held locally and remote resources for which permanent or temporary access rights have been acquired. Access rights may be acquired by the library itself, by a consortium and/or through external funding. Acquisition is to be understood as securing access rights and including it in the library catalog, other library databases or discovery systems."

Expenses include funds expended by the library (regardless of when received) from its regular budget and from all other known sources; e.g., research grants, special projects, gifts and endowments, and fees for services. Those libraries in consortia or those that share all their resources with another institution, please report whether the total annual library expenses at YOUR institution were greater than zero in Fiscal Year 2016.

If the institution does not have access to a library collection and the institution's library expenses are equal to 0, you will not be asked to complete the Academic Libraries (AL) component in the Spring.

Level of Enrollment

New institutions should indicate whether their institution was in operation during the prior academic year. If the response is 'Yes', they should also indicate the levels that were offered.

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Part D - Branch campus

For branch campuses, refer to the instructions on the appropriate screen.

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Glossary

date: 8/12/2016

Term	Definition
4-1-4 (calendar system)	The 4-1-4 calendar usually consists of 4 courses taken for 4 months, 1 course taken for 1 month, and 4 courses taken for 4 months. There may be an additional summer session.
Academic year	The period of time generally extending from September to June; usually equated to 2 semesters or trimesters, 3 quarters, or the period covered by a 4-1-4 calendar system.
Adult basic education	Courses designed primarily for students 16 years of age and older to improve basic skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic. These courses are not intended to be part of a program leading to a high school credential, nor are they part of any academic, occupational, or vocational program at the postsecondary level.
Associate's degree	An award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work.
Avocational programs	Instructional programs in personal interest and leisure categories whose expressed intent is not to produce postsecondary credits , nor to lead to a formal award or an academic degree, nor result in occupationally specific skills.
Bachelor's degree	An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education) that normally requires at least 4 but not more than 5 years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes all bachelor's degrees conferred in a 5-year cooperative (work-study) program. A cooperative plan provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government; thus, it allows students to combine actual work experience with their college studies. Also includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years.
Calendar system	The method by which an institution structures most of its courses for the academic year.
Certificate	A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program.
Cohort	A specific group of students established for tracking purposes.
Contact hour	A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. Also referred to as clock hour.
Continuing professional education	Programs and courses designed specifically for individuals who have completed a degree in a professional field (such as law, medicine, dentistry, education, or social work) to obtain additional training in their particular field of study.
Continuous basis	A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that allow students to enroll/start classes at any time during the year. For example, a cosmetology school or a word processing school might allow students to enroll and begin studies at various times, with no requirement that classes begin on a certain date.
Control (of institution)	A classification of whether an institution is operated by publicly elected or appointed officials (public control) or by privately elected or appointed officials and derives its major source of funds from private sources (private control).
Credit hour	A unit of measure representing the equivalent of an hour (50 minutes) of instruction per week over the entire term. It is applied toward the total number of credit hours needed for completing the requirements of a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.
Degree	An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies.
Differs by program (calendar system)	A calendar system classification that is used by institutions that have occupational/vocational programs of varying lengths. These schools may enroll students at specific times depending on the program desired. For example, a school might offer a 2-month program in January, March, May, September, and November; and a 3-month program in January, April, and October.
Doctor's degree-other	A doctor's degree that does not meet the definition of a doctor's degree - research/scholarship or a doctor's degree - professional practice.
Doctor's degree-professional practice	A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is awarded after a period of study such that the total time to the degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. Some of these degrees were formerly classified as first-professional and may include: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.); Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.); Law (J.D.); Medicine (M.D.); Optometry (O.D.); Osteopathic Medicine (D.O); Pharmacy (Pharm.D.); Podiatry (D.P.M., Pod.D., D.P.); or, Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), and others, as designated by the awarding institution.
Doctor's degree-research/scholarship	A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M, and others, as designated by the awarding institution.
Educational offerings	Educational programs offered by postsecondary institutions that are occupational, academic, or continuing professional that qualify as postsecondary education programs OR recreational or avocational, adult basic, remedial instruction, high school equivalency, or high school programs that are not deemed postsecondary.
Fall cohort	The group of students entering in the fall term established for tracking purposes. For the Graduation Rates component, this includes all students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students during the fall term of a given year. For the Outcome Measures component, all degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who enter an institution during the fall term of a given year must be placed in one of four cohorts: full-time, first-time; part-time, first-time; full-time, non-first-time; and part-time, non-first-time.
First-time student (undergraduate)	A student who has no prior postsecondary experience (except as noted below) attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. This includes students enrolled in academic or occupational programs. It also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).
Full-time student	

	Undergraduate: A student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term. Graduate: A student enrolled for 9 or more semester credits, or 9 or more quarter credits, or a student involved in thesis or dissertation preparation that is considered full-time by the institution. Doctor's degree - Professional practice - as defined by the institution.
Full-year cohort	The group of students entering at any time during the 12-month period September 1 through August 31 that is established for tracking and reporting Graduation Rate (GR) and Outcome Measures (OM) data for institutions that primarily offer occupational programs of varying lengths. Students must be full-time and first-time to be considered in the cohort. For OM component, undergraduate students must enter in one of four cohorts: full-time, first-time; part-time, first-time; full-time, non-first-time; and part-time, non-first-time.
Graduate student	A student who holds a bachelor's degree or above and is taking courses at the postbaccalaureate level. These students may or may not be enrolled in graduate programs.
Institutional affiliation	A classification that indicates whether a private not-for-profit institution is associated with a religious group or denomination. Private not-for-profit institutions may be either independent or religiously affiliated.
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)	The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), conducted by the NCES, began in 1986 and involves annual institution-level data collections. All postsecondary institutions that have a Program Participation Agreement with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), U.S. Department of Education (throughout IPEDS referred to as "Title IV") are required to report data using a web-based data collection system. IPEDS currently consists of the following components: Institutional Characteristics (IC); 12-month Enrollment (E12);Completions (C); Admissions (ADM); Student Financial Aid (SFA); Human Resources (HR) composed of Employees by Assigned Position, Fall Staff, and Salaries; Fall Enrollment (EF); Graduation Rates (GR); Outcome Measures (OM); Finance (F); and Academic Libraries (AL).
Less than 2-year institution	A postsecondary institution that offers programs of less than 2-years duration below the baccalaureate level. Includes occupational and vocational schools with programs that do not exceed 1800 contact hours .
Levels of offering	Information collected in the Institutional Characteristics component which indicates all applicable levels for all credit programs offered at an institution. Award levels are identified on the basis of recognition for their completion, duration, or a combination thereof. Degree-designated award levels indicate those degree levels for which the institution is authorized to make formal awards. Length of study is the equivalent of the number of full-time academic years. For example, at least 1 but less than 2 years refers to the number of credits or the course load that would normally be completed by a full-time student attending within the stated time period.
Library collections	Comprise of documents held locally and remote resources for which permanent or temporary access rights have been acquired. Access rights may be acquired by the library itself, by a consortium and/or through external funding. Acquisition is to be understood as securing access rights and including it in the library catalog, other library databases or discovery systems.
Library expenses	Funds expended by the library (regardless of when received) from its regular budget and from all other sources; e.g., research grants, special projects, gifts and endowments, and fees for services.
Master's degree	An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of at least the full-time equivalent of 1 but not more than 2 academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree. Some of these degrees, such as those in Theology (M.Div., M.H.L./Rav) that were formerly classified as "first-professional", may require more than two full-time equivalent academic years of work.
Occupational program	A program of study consisting of one or more courses, designed to provide the student with sufficient knowledge and skills to perform in a specific occupation.
Other academic calendar system	Category used to describe "non-traditional" calendar systems at 4-year and 2-year degree-granting institutions. These can include schools that offer primarily on-line courses or "one course at a time."
Part-time student	Undergraduate: A student enrolled for either less than 12 semester or quarter credits, or less than 24 contact hours a week each term. Graduate: A student enrolled for less than 9 semester or quarter credits.
Post-master's certificate	An award that requires completion of an organized program beyond the master's degree, but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctor's level.
Postbaccalaureate certificate	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the bachelor's. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree, but does not meet the requirements of a master's degree. NOTE: Even though Teacher Preparation certificate programs may require a bachelor's degree for admission, they are considered subbacalaureate undergraduate programs, and students in these programs are undergraduate students.
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (at least 1 but less than 2 academic years)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 1 but less than 2 full-time equivalent academic years , or designed for completion in at least 30 but less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 45 but less than 90 quarter credit hours, or in at least 900 but less than 1,800 contact or clock hours.
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (at least 2 but less than 4 academic years)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years , or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours, or in at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours, or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours.
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (less than 1 academic year)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in less than 1 academic year (2 semesters or 3 quarters), or designed for completion in less than 30 semester or trimester credit hours, or in less than 45 quarter credit hours, or in less than 900 contact or clock hours.
Private for-profit institution	A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives compensation other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk.
Private institution	An educational institution controlled by a private individual(s) or by a nongovernmental agency, usually supported primarily by other than public funds, and operated by other than publicly elected or appointed officials. These institutions may be either for-profit or not-for-profit.
Private not-for-profit institution	

	A private institution in which the individual(s) or agency in control receives no compensation, other than wages, rent, or other expenses for the assumption of risk. These include both independent not-for-profit schools and those affiliated with a religious organization.
Program	A combination of courses and related activities organized for the attainment of broad educational objectives as described by the institution.
Programs of at least 2 years but less than 4 years	Programs requiring at least 2 years but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college level work, including associate's degrees and programs that can be completed in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact hours to obtain a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.
Programs of at least 4 years	Programs designed to be completed in at least 8 semesters or 12 quarters to obtain a degree, diploma, or other formal award. Includes programs resulting in all bachelor's degrees and other baccalaureate level or equivalent degrees, as well as 5-year cooperative programs, and those programs in which the normal 4 years of work are designed to be completed in 3 years.
Programs of less than 2 years	Programs requiring less than 2 years of full-time equivalent college level work (4 semesters or 6 quarters) or less than 1,800 contact hours to obtain a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.
Public institution	An educational institution whose programs and activities are operated by publicly elected or appointed school officials and which is supported primarily by public funds.
Quarter (calendar system)	A calendar system in which the academic year consists of 3 sessions called quarters of about 12 weeks each. The range may be from 10 to 15 weeks as defined by the institution. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.
Semester (calendar system)	A calendar system that consists of two sessions called semesters during the academic year with about 15 weeks for each semester of instruction. There may be an additional summer session.
Title IV institution	An institution that has a written agreement with the Secretary of Education that allows the institution to participate in any of the Title IV federal student financial assistance programs (other than the State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG) and the National Early Intervention Scholarship and Partnership (NEISP) programs).
Trimester (calendar system)	An academic year consisting of 3 terms of about 15 weeks each.
Undergraduate	A student enrolled in a 4- or 5-year bachelor's degree program, an associate's degree program, or a vocational or technical program below the baccalaureate.

IC Header

Click one of the following questions to view the answer.

General

1) If my institution offers an award level but currently does not have any students enrolled at that level how should I report?
2) Can I change my Institutional Characteristics Header data during the winter or spring surveys if I made a mistake in the fall?
3) In what award level category should Teachers Preparation certificates be reported?
4) My institution has a system office. Does the system office need to complete an Institutional Characteristics - Header survey?

Answers:

General

1) If my institution offers an award level but currently does not have any students enrolled at that level how should I report?

You should indicate all levels of awards that your institution is authorized to grant.

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2) Can I change my Institutional Characteristics Header data during the winter or spring surveys if I made a mistake in the fall?

It is important to report IC Header data correctly the first time, as changes to this component affect all of the other surveys. If you made an error that impacts your ability to respond appropriately to other components, call the Help Desk at 877-225-2568, and they will change the necessary data. For example, if you indicated that you do not enroll any full-time, first-time students (thus no GRS or SFA surveys are generated), you may correct your answer so that you can complete this survey.

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3) In what award level category should Teachers Preparation certificates be reported?

Even though Teacher Preparation certificate programs may requie a bachelor's degree for admission, they are considered subbaccalaureate undergraduate programs, and students in these programs are undergraduate students.

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4) My institution has a system office. Does the system office need to complete an Institutional Characteristics - Header survey?

Any system or central office that employs 15 or more full-time staff OR has its own budget (and therefore must report IPEDS Finance data) must also complete the Institutional Characteristics - Header survey. The administrative office **must** indicate all types and levels of instruction and programs offered at all of the institutions in its system. This will ensure that each institution in the system is represented.

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