

## Graduation Rates for 2-year institutions reporting on a fall cohort (academic reporters)


### Overview

#### Graduation Rates Overview

Welcome to the IPEDS Graduation Rates (GR) survey component. The GR component collects data on the cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students and tracks their completion status at 150% of the normal time to complete all requirements of their program of study. This information is collected to assist institutions in complying with the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know Act.

#### Data Reporting Reminders

Once a student is in the cohort, they remain in the cohort, even if their status changes to part-time or they drop out or transfer out of the institution. However, adjustments can be made to the cohort for allowable exclusions, which include the death of a student, permanent disability, military deployment, or service on an official church mission or with a foreign aid service of the Federal government.

 When reporting award levels for sub-baccalaureate certificates, 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.

#### Resources:

The survey materials package for this component can be downloaded using the following link: [Survey Materials](#)  
To access your prior year data submission for this component: [Reported Data](#)

If you have questions about completing this survey, please contact the **IPEDS Help Desk at 1-877-225-2568**.

Graduation Rates - Establishing cohort

Based on your institution's response to the predominant calendar system question (B3) on the Institutional Characteristics Header survey component from the IPEDS Fall 2015 data collection, your institution must report graduation rates data using a:

Fall Cohort (Fall 2012)

A *fall cohort* is used by institutions with standard academic terms (semester, trimester, quarter, 4-1-4). A *full-year cohort* is used by institutions offering primarily occupational/vocational programs and operating on a continuous basis.

Cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students

- Report Hispanic/Latino individuals of any race as Hispanic/Latino
- Report race for non-Hispanic/Latino individuals only

Please review the data in the initial cohort column and re-enter the cohort data making any necessary corrections for omissions, erroneous reporting, or where better information regarding race/ethnicity or gender is available. Institutions must continue to report using the new race/ethnicity categories. For information and assistance with this, please visit the IPEDS Race/Ethnicity Information Center.

**Men**

Screen 1 of 4	Cohort year 2012	
	Initial cohort	Revised cohort
<u>Nonresident alien</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Hispanic/Latino</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>American Indian or Alaska Native</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Asian</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Black or African American</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>White</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Two or more races</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Race and ethnicity unknown</u>		<input type="text"/>
<b>Total men</b>		

**Women**

Screen 1 of 4	Cohort year 2012	
	Initial cohort	Revised cohort
<u>Nonresident alien</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Hispanic/Latino</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>American Indian or Alaska Native</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Asian</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Black or African American</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>White</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Two or more races</u>		<input type="text"/>
<u>Race and ethnicity unknown</u>		<input type="text"/>
<b>Total women</b>		

**Total men + women**

Graduation Rates - Completers within 150%

**Cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students**

In the columns below, report the status of the 2012 cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students listed in Column 10. Those who completed their program within 150% of normal time as of August 31, 2015 should be reported in either Column 11 or 12, depending on the length of the program completed.

- Report Hispanic/Latino individuals of any race as Hispanic/Latino
- Report race for non-Hispanic/Latino individuals only

**Men**

Screen 2 of 4		Cohort year 2012		
	Cohort  (Column 10)	Cohort students who completed their program within 150% of normal time to completion		Total completers within 150%  (Column 29)
		Completors of programs of less than 2 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 11)	Completors of programs of at least 2 but less than 4 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 12)	
Nonresident alien		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Hispanic/Latino		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
American Indian or Alaska Native		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Asian		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Black or African American		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
White		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Two or more races		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Race and ethnicity unknown		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<b>Total men</b>				

**Women**

Screen 2 of 4		Cohort year 2012		
	Cohort  (Column 10)	Cohort students who completed their program within 150% of normal time to completion		Total completers within 150%  (Column 29)
		Completors of programs of less than 2 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 11)	Completors of programs of at least 2 but less than 4 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 12)	
Nonresident alien		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Hispanic/Latino		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
American Indian or Alaska Native		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Asian		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Black or African American		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
White		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Two or more races		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
Race and ethnicity unknown		<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<b>Total women</b>				

**Total men + women**

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## Graduation Rates - Transfers/exclusions

- In the columns below, report the status of those students in the 2012 cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students listed in Column 10 who did not complete a program as of August 31, 2015.
- Report transfers-out who did not complete a program in Column 30. If the mission of your institution includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution WITHOUT having completed a program, you must report transfer-out data in Column 30. A school is required to report only on those students that the school knows have transferred to another eligible institution. A school must document that the student actually transferred. If it is not part of your mission, you may report transfer-out data if you wish.
- Report eligible exclusions from the cohort in Column 45. The ONLY allowable categories for this column are:  
 students who died or became permanently disabled  
 students who left school to serve in the armed forces (or have been called up to active duty)  
 students who left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government  
 students who left school to serve on an official church mission
- Column 52 [No longer enrolled] will be calculated for you. This includes students who have dropped out as well as those who completed in greater than 150% of normal time.
- If you do not have any values to report in either Column 30, 45, or 51, you must enter at least one zero in a field on this screen to continue.

### Cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students

- Report Hispanic/Latino individuals of any race as Hispanic/Latino
- Report race for non-Hispanic/Latino individuals only

#### Men

Screen 3 of 4

	Cohort year 2012					
	Cohort (Column 10)	Total completers within 150% (Column 29)	Total transfer-out students (Column 30)	Total exclusions (Column 45)	Still enrolled (Column 51)	No longer enrolled (Column 52)
<u>Nonresident alien</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Hispanic/Latino</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>American Indian or Alaska Native</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Asian</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Black or African American</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>White</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Two or more races</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Race and ethnicity unknown</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<b>Total men</b>						

#### Women

Screen 3 of 4

	Cohort year 2012					
	Cohort (Column 10)	Total completers within 150% (Column 29)	Total transfer-out students (Column 30)	Total exclusions (Column 45)	Still enrolled (Column 51)	No longer enrolled (Column 52)
<u>Nonresident alien</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Hispanic/Latino</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>American Indian or Alaska Native</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Asian</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Black or African American</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>White</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Two or more races</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	
<u>Race and ethnicity unknown</u>			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	

<b>Total women</b>							
<b>Total men + women</b>							
Total in prior year (men and women)							

### Graduation Rates - Completers within 100%

- In the columns below, report the status of those students in the 2012 cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who completed their program within 100% of normal time to completion.
- Those who completed their program within 100% of normal time should be reported in either Column 55 or 56, depending on the length of the program completed.

#### Cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students

Screen 4 of 4	Cohort year 2012				
	<u>Revised cohort</u>	<u>Exclusions</u>	Cohort students who completed their program within 100% of normal time to completion		Total completers within 100% (Column 55 + 56)
			? Completors of programs of less than 2 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 55)	? Completors of programs of at least 2 but less than 4 academic yrs (or equivalent) (Column 56)	
Total men + women			<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	



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## [Purpose of the Survey](#)

The purpose of the IPEDS Graduation Rates survey component is to track given cohorts of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students - as well as their completion status at 150% of the normal time to complete all requirements of their program of study - at postsecondary institutions. These data are collected to assist institutions in complying with the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know Act.

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## [Changes in Reporting](#)

There are no changes in reporting for 2015-16. However, clarifications have been made to screens and instructions to address respondent questions.

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## [General Instructions](#)

### [Reporting Period Covered](#)

This survey component collects data on the cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled in your institution either (1) as of October 15, 2012 (or the institution's official fall reporting date) for institutions that offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (e.g., semesters, trimesters, quarters, or 4-1-4 plan); or (2) during the period between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013 for institutions that do not offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms. Institutions are to report the status of these students as of August 31, 2015.

### [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](#); institutions should check grammar and spelling of their entries.

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### [Coverage](#)

## Who to Include in the Cohort

Include all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students entering the institution either during the fall term or during the 12-month period as described above. Include 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 graduating from high school).

For institutions that will report using a **full-year cohort**, count as entering students all those students who entered the institution between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013, and who were enrolled for at least 15 days in a program of up to and including one year in length; or 30 days in a program of greater than one year in length.

Include all students enrolled for credit toward a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award. Include students enrolled in courses that are part of a vocational or occupational program, INCLUDING those enrolled in off-campus centers and those enrolled in distance learning/home study programs.

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
- Obtained a student visa to enroll at a U.S. postsecondary institution

A student who is designated as a member of the cohort remains in the cohort, even if the student:

- Becomes a part-time student
- Transfers to another institution
- Drops out of the institution
- Stops out of the institution
- Has not fulfilled the institution's requirements to receive a degree or certificate

## Who to Exclude from the Cohort

Do NOT include students in the cohort who are:

- Enrolled exclusively in courses not creditable toward a formal award or the completion of a vocational program (i.e., non-degree/certificate-seeking students)
- Exclusively taking CEUs
- Exclusively auditing classes
- Studying abroad (e.g., at a foreign university) if their enrollment at the institution is only an administrative record
- Enrolled in any branch campus located in a foreign country
- Enrolled part-time
- Transfers into the institution

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## Where to Get Help with Reporting

### IPEDS Help Desk

Phone: 1-877-225-2568

Email: [ipedshelp@rti.org](mailto: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 Reported 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](#)
- [IPEDS Data Center](#)
- [IPEDS Data Feedback Reports](#)
- [College Affordability and Transparency Center Website](#)

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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## Uploading Files to the IPEDS Data Collection System

The *File Import/Upload* option is found under the Tools menu. In order to perform the upload you'll need to have a file formatted to specifications. Upload specifications are included with the survey materials found under the Help menu. There are three upload formats available for the Graduation Rates survey component:

- Fixed width file
- Key value file
- XML format

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## Reporting Instructions

### Reporting Persons by Racial/Ethnic Category (1997 OMB)

This information is being collected in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Sec. 421(a)(1) of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. These instructions correspond with the Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education, published in the Federal Register on October 19, 2007.

**Method of collection** - Institutions must collect race and ethnicity information using a 2-question format. The first question is whether the respondent is Hispanic/Latino. The second question is whether the respondent is from one or more races from the following list: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White. Institutions should allow students and staff to self-identify their race and ethnicity. For further details on the guidance for collecting these data, please see the full Federal Register notice.

**Method of reporting aggregate data** - Institutions must report aggregate data to the U.S. Department of Education using the NINE categories below. Racial/ethnic designations are requested only for United States citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible non-citizens.

- Hispanic or Latino, regardless of race

For Non-Hispanic/Latino individuals:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Two or more races

In addition, the following categories may be used:

- Nonresident alien
- Race and ethnicity unknown

**Racial/ethnic descriptions** - Racial/ethnic designations as used in this survey do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. The categories are:

- Hispanic or Latino- A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- American Indian or Alaska Native- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- Asian- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Black or African American- A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander- A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- White - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

### **Other descriptive categories**

- **Nonresident alien** - A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely. NOTE - Nonresident aliens are to be reported separately, in the boxes provided, rather than included in any of the seven racial/ethnic categories. Resident aliens and other eligible (for financial aid purposes) non-citizens who are not citizens or nationals of the United States and who have been admitted as legal immigrants for the purpose of obtaining permanent resident alien status (and who hold either an alien registration card (Form I-551 or I-151), a Temporary Resident Card (Form I-688), or an Arrival-Departure Record (Form I-94) with a notation that conveys legal immigrant status such as Section 207 Refugee, Section 208 Asylee, Conditional Entrant Parolee or Cuban-Haitian) are to be reported in the appropriate racial/ethnic categories along with United States citizens.
- **Race and ethnicity unknown** - This category is used only if the person did not select EITHER a racial or ethnic designation.

## Establishing Cohorts

The method used to report graduation rates data on this survey is predetermined by your institution's response to the predominant calendar system question (B3) on the IC Header component of the IPEDS Fall 2015 data collection, according to the following rules:

1. Institutions that offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (semesters, trimesters, quarters, or 4-1-4 plan) will report using a **fall cohort** of students. Institutions may use October 15, 2012 or the institution's official fall reporting date to determine the cohort. This should be the same reporting date used for the IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey.
2. Institutions that do not offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (as defined above) will report using a **full-year cohort**. These institutions must count as entering students all those students who entered the institution between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013, and who were enrolled for at least 15 days in a program of up to and including one year in length; or 30 days in a program of greater than one year in length.

### Report each student only once.

**Initial cohort** - If you are reporting on a fall cohort, the information reported on full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate student enrollment at your institution on the 2012 IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey will be preloaded in this column. If you did not respond to that survey, or if you are reporting on a full-year cohort, the column will be blank.

**Revised cohort** - Institutions have the option of revising their preloaded cohort if:

- there are eligible students who were omitted in the past
- students were reported who did not belong in the cohort (e.g., they were not actually first-time, or full-time)
- better information regarding race/ethnicity or gender is available for eligible students

Please review the data in the *Initial cohort* column (if applicable) and re-enter the cohort data in the *Revised cohort* column according to the 1997 racial/ethnic categories, making any necessary corrections for omissions, erroneous reporting, or where better information regarding race/ethnicity or gender is available. If your data do not appear in the *Initial cohort* column, please provide the enrollment data as requested in the *Revised cohort* column.

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## Completers within 150% of Normal Time to Completion

### Report each student only once.

Report the status of the 2012 cohort of degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students as of 150% of normal time to completion for their program or August 31, 2015 (whichever was earlier) in terms of the number of completers by type of program completed. Report all students by race/ethnicity and gender.

**Report only for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students.** Do NOT include part-time students or students who transferred into your institution.

**Count completers only once and indicate the highest award level attained.**

**SPECIAL NOTE:** In order to resolve a potential conflict between transfers-out and the mission of particular programs to prepare students for transfer to other institutions, institutions may count as completers those students who have successfully completed a transfer-preparatory program.

Transfer-preparatory program is defined in 34 CFR Student Assistance General Provisions, Section 668.8(b)(1)(ii) as "the successful completion of at least a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree and qualifies a student for admission into the third year of a bachelor's degree program." The Secretary considers this the equivalent of an associate's degree, thus completers of transfer-preparatory programs (although they do not receive a "formal award") should be counted as completers of an at least 2 but less than 4 year program.

Similarly, institutions may count as completers those students who have successfully completed the first three years of a 3-2 program and are eligible to enter another institution to complete the program (provided the program is acceptable for full credit towards a five-year bachelor's degree, and qualifies a student for admission into the fourth year of a five-year bachelor's degree program). As with a transfer-preparatory program, these students should be counted as completers of an at least 2 but less than 4 year program.

In order to calculate a graduation rate that complies with Student Right-to-Know regulations, institutions may count as completers only those students who received their degree/certificate (or completed a transfer-preparatory program) within 150% of the normal time for program completion (normal time to completion is the amount of time necessary to complete all requirements for a program according to the institution's catalog). **Do not count as completers students who receive their degree from another institution.**

Note that completers should be reported in terms of the type of program completed, as defined by award level. For programs that are defined in terms of contact or credit hours, the program type may not be indicative of the actual calendar time a program takes to complete. For more information on program types, please consult the IPEDS Glossary.

**Revised Cohort (Column 10)** – The data in this column are carried forward from the "Establishing Cohort" screen for your reference.

**Completers of programs of less than 2 academic years (or equivalent) (Column 11)** - Enter the number of students who completed programs of less than 2 full-time equivalent academic years within 150% of normal time to completion. This includes awards, certificates, or diplomas of less than one academic year and of at least one but less than two academic years; or designed for completion in less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours, less than 90 quarter credit hours, or less than 1,800 contact or clock hours.

**Completers of programs of at least 2 years but less than 4 academic years (or equivalent) (Column 12)** - Enter the number of students who completed programs of at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years within 150% of normal time to completion. This includes awards, certificates, or diplomas of at least two but less than four academic years - or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours, at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours, or at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours - and associate's degrees.

**Total completers within 150% (Column 29)** - This column is the sum of the previous two columns, and is calculated for you by the data collection system.

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## Non-completers

### Report each student only once.

Report the status of the non-completers from the 2012 cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students as of 150% of the normal time to completion for their program or August 31, 2015 (whichever was earlier). Report all students by race/ethnicity and gender.

**Report only for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students.** Do NOT include part-time students or students who transferred into your institution.

**Revised Cohort (Column 10)** – The data in this column are carried forward from the "Establishing Cohort" screen for your reference.

**Total completers within 150% (Column 29)** - The data in this column are carried forward from the "Completers within 150%" screen for your reference.

**Total transfer-out students (Column 30)** - If the mission of your institution includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution without having completed a program, you must report the total number of students who transferred out of your institution (without earning a degree/award) within 150% of normal time to completion. Include students who transferred out of your institution and subsequently re-enrolled at another eligible institution. If it is not part of your mission, you may still report transfer-out data if you wish.

**Total exclusions (Column 45)**- Indicate the total number of students who left your institution within 150% of normal time to completion for their program (and have neither graduated nor transferred to another institution) due to one of the following documented reasons:

1. The student is deceased or is totally and permanently disabled and thus unable to return to school.
2. The student left school to serve in the armed forces or was called up to active duty. (Do NOT include students already in the military who transfer to another duty station.)
3. The student left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government, such as the Peace Corps.
4. The student left school to serve on an official church mission.

**NOTE:** Students who leave the institution for one of the above reasons, but return prior to the status date of August 31, 2015, may still be subtracted/excluded from the cohort during the calculation of graduation rates.

**Still enrolled (Column 51)** - Enter the number of students who were still enrolled at your institution as of 150% of normal time to completion for their program (or August 31, 2015 if 150% of normal time to completion had not elapsed by that time).

**No longer enrolled (Column 52)** - This column represents the difference between the revised cohort (Column 10) and the sum of Columns 29, 30, 45, and 51. This column should include students who graduated from their program after 150% of normal time to completion elapsed.

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## Completers within 100% of Normal Time to Completion

### Report each student only once.

Report the status of the 2012 cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students who completed their program as of 100% of normal time to completion for their program or August 31, 2015 (whichever was earlier) in terms of the number of completers by type of program completed. Report all students by race/ethnicity and gender. **Note that this should be a subset of the students reported as completers within 150% of normal time reported earlier in this survey.**

**Report only for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students.** Do NOT include part-time students or students who transferred into your institution.

**Count completers only once and indicate the highest award level attained.**

**Revised Cohort (Column 10)** – The data in this column are carried forward from the "Establishing Cohort" screen for your reference.

**Exclusions** - The data in this column are carried forward from Column 45 – Total Exclusions of the "Transfers/Exclusions" screen for your reference.

**Cohort students who completed their program within 100% of normal time to completion (Columns 55 and 56)**

**Completers of programs of less than 2 academic years (or equivalent) (Column 55)** - Enter the number of students who completed programs of less than 2 full-time equivalent academic years within 100% of normal time to completion. This includes awards, certificates, or diplomas of less than one academic year and of at least one but less than two academic years; or designed for completion in less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours, less than 90 quarter credit hours, or less than 1,800 contact or clock hours.

**Completed a program of at least 2 years, but less than 4 years within 100% (Column 56)** - Enter the number of students who completed programs of at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years within 100% of normal time to completion. This includes awards, certificates, or diplomas of at least two but less than four academic years - or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours, at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours, or at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours - and associate's degrees.

**Total completers within 100% (Column 57)** - This column is the sum of the previous two columns and is calculated for you by the data collection system.

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## Calculation of Graduation and Transfer-out Rates

### Worksheets

Worksheets calculating the Student Right-To-Know and overall four-year average completion/graduation and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students for the 2012 student cohort are provided as a convenience to the institution. Data previously reported by the institution are preloaded for use in these calculations.

Note that certain information from these worksheets will be displayed on College Navigator, as noted. Additional information relevant to the calculated rates may be entered in the context box provided, and will also be displayed on College Navigator.

### Privacy Issue With Disclosure

Before using the worksheets for disclosure, please consider the following:

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 as amended (1998) (FERPA) requires that institutions not disclose information where students could be identified.

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Term	Definition
Adjusted cohort	The result of removing any allowable exclusions from a <u>cohort</u> (or subcohort). For the <u>Fall Enrollment component</u> , it is the cohort for calculating retention rate; for the <u>Graduation Rates component</u> , this is the cohort from which graduation and transfer-out rates are calculated; and for the <u>Outcome Measures component</u> , these are the four cohorts (full-time, first-time; part-time-first-time; full-time, non-first-time; and part-time, non-first-time) for which outcomes rates are calculated at 6 and 8 years.
American Indian or Alaska Native	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community attachment.
Asian	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
Associate's degree	An award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work.
Black or African American	A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
Cohort	A specific group of students established for tracking purposes.
Completers within 150% of normal time	Students who completed their <u>program</u> within 150% of the normal (or expected) time for completion.
Degree/certificate-seeking students	Students enrolled in courses for credit who are seeking a degree, certificate, or other formal award. This includes students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- received any type of federal financial aid, regardless of what courses they took at any time;</li> <li>- 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</li> <li>- obtained a student visa to study at a U.S. postsecondary institution</li> </ul> <p>High school students also enrolled in postsecondary courses for credit are not considered degree/certificate-seeking.</p>
Exclusions	Those students who may be removed (deleted) from a <u>cohort</u> (or <u>subcohort</u> ). For the <u>Graduation Rates</u> , <u>Outcome Measures</u> , and <u>Fall Enrollment retention rate reporting</u> , students may be removed from a cohort if they left the institution for one of the following reasons: death or total and permanent disability; service in the armed forces (including those called to active duty); service with a foreign aid service of the federal government, such as the Peace Corps; or service on official church missions.
Fall cohort	The group of students entering in the <u>fall term</u> established for tracking purposes. For the <u>Graduation Rates component</u> , this includes all students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time <u>degree</u> or <u>certificate-seeking undergraduate</u> students during the fall term of a given year. For the <u>Outcome Measures component</u> , 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 <u>undergraduate level</u> . This includes students enrolled in <u>academic</u> or <u>occupational programs</u> . It also includes students enrolled in the <u>fall term</u> who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing (college <u>credits</u> earned before graduation from high school).
Full-time student	Undergraduate: A student enrolled for 12 or more <u>semester credits</u> , or 12 or more <u>quarter credits</u> , or 24 or more <u>contact hours</u> 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. <u>Doctor's degree - Professional practice</u> - as defined by the institution.
Full-year cohort	The group of students entering at any time during the <u>12-month period</u> September 1 through August 31 that is established for tracking and reporting <u>Graduation Rate (GR)</u> and <u>Outcome Measures (OM)</u> data for institutions that primarily offer <u>occupational programs</u> of varying lengths. Students must be <u>full-time</u> and <u>first-time</u> to be considered in the <u>cohort</u> . 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.
Graduation rate	The rate required for disclosure and/or reporting purposes under <u>Student Right-to-Know Act</u> . This rate is calculated as the total number of <u>completers</u> within 150% of normal time divided by the revised <u>adjusted cohort</u> .
Graduation Rates (GR)	This annual component of <u>IPEDS</u> was added in 1997 to help institutions satisfy the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know legislation. Data are collected on the number of students entering the institution as full-time, first-time, degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students in a particular year (cohort), by race/ethnicity and gender; the number completing their program within 150 percent of normal time to completion; the number that transfer to other institutions if transfer is part of the institution's mission. Prior to 2007, institutions who offered athletically-related student aid were asked to report, by sport, the number of students receiving aid and whether they completed within 150 percent of normal time to completion. Now, these institutions only need to report a URL where the athletic data is located on their website, when available. GR automatically generates worksheets that calculate rates, including average rates over 4 years.
Hispanic/Latino	A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
Initial cohort	A specific group of individuals established for tracking purposes. For the <u>Graduation Rates (GR)</u> and <u>Outcome Measures (OM)</u> components of <u>IPEDS</u> , the <u>initial cohort</u> is defined as the enrollment count before removing revisions and exclusions of all <u>degree/certificate-seeking students</u> who enter in either (1) the <u>fall term</u> of a given <u>academic year</u> , or (2) between September 1st and August 31st of the following year. For the GR component of <u>IPEDS</u> , the initial cohort is only for full-time, first-time students. For OM, all undergraduates are placed in one of four initial cohorts: full-time, first-time; part-time, first-time; full-time, non-first-time; and part-time, non-first time.
Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)	

	The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), conducted by the <a href="#">NCES</a> , began in 1986 and involves annual institution-level data collections. All postsecondary institutions that have a <a href="#">Program Participation Agreement</a> 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 <a href="#">data collection system</a> . IPEDS currently consists of the following components: <a href="#">Institutional Characteristics (IC)</a> ; <a href="#">12-month Enrollment (E12)</a> ; <a href="#">Completions (C)</a> ; <a href="#">Admissions (ADM)</a> ; <a href="#">Student Financial Aid (SFA)</a> ; <a href="#">Human Resources (HR)</a> composed of <a href="#">Employees by Assigned Position</a> , <a href="#">Fall Staff</a> , and <a href="#">Salaries</a> ; <a href="#">Fall Enrollment (EF)</a> ; <a href="#">Graduation Rates (GR)</a> ; <a href="#">Outcome Measures (OM)</a> ; <a href="#">Finance (F)</a> ; and <a href="#">Academic Libraries (AL)</a> .
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
Nonresident alien	A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who is in this country on a visa or temporary basis and does not have the right to remain indefinitely.
Normal time to completion	The amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a <a href="#">degree</a> or <a href="#">certificate</a> according to the institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a <a href="#">bachelor's degree</a> in a standard term-based institution; 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an <a href="#">associate's degree</a> in a standard term-based institution; and the various scheduled times for <a href="#">certificate programs</a> .
Race and ethnicity unknown	The category used to report students or employees whose race and ethnicity are not known.
Race/ethnicity	Categories developed in 1997 by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that are used to describe groups to which individuals belong, identify with, or belong in the eyes of the community. The categories do not denote scientific definitions of anthropological origins. The designations are used to categorize U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible non-citizens.  Individuals are asked to first designate ethnicity as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Hispanic or Latino</a> or</li> <li>- Not Hispanic or Latino</li> </ul> Second, individuals are asked to indicate all races that apply among the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">American Indian or Alaska Native</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Asian</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Black or African American</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">White</a></li> </ul>
Revised cohort	Initial <a href="#">cohort</a> after revisions are made. Cohorts may be revised if an institution discovers that incorrect data were reported in an earlier year.
Student Right-to-Know Act	Also known as the "Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act" (P.L. 101-542), which was passed by Congress November 9, 1990. Title I, Section 103, requires institutions eligible for Title IV funding to calculate completion or <a href="#">graduation rates</a> of certificate- or degree-seeking, full-time students entering that institution, and to disclose these rates to all students and prospective students. Further, Section 104 requires each institution that participates in any Title IV program and is attended by students receiving athletically-related student aid to submit a report to the Secretary of Education annually. This report is to contain, among other things, graduation/completion rates of all students as well as students receiving athletically-related student aid by race/ethnicity and gender and by sport, and the average completion or graduation rate for the four most recent years. These data are also required to be disclosed to parents, coaches, and potential student athletes when the institution offers athletically-related student aid. The <a href="#">Graduation Rates</a> component of IPEDS was developed specifically to help institutions respond to these requirements. See <a href="#">Graduation Rates</a> for the current description of data collected.
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).
Transfer-out rate	Total number of students who are known to have transferred out of the reporting institution within 150% of <a href="#">normal time to completion</a> divided by the <a href="#">adjusted cohort</a> .
Transfer-out student	A student that leaves the reporting institution and enrolls at another institution.
Transfer-preparatory program	A <a href="#">program</a> designed specifically to provide a student with the basic knowledge needed to transfer into a higher level program. For example, this may be the first 2 years of a baccalaureate level program for which the institution does not offer an award, or 2 years of undergraduate study needed for entrance into a first-professional program, or 1 or more years of undergraduate study needed for entrance into health services fields.
Undergraduate	A student enrolled in a 4- or 5-year <a href="#">bachelor's degree</a> program, an <a href="#">associate's degree</a> program, or a vocational or technical <a href="#">program</a> below the baccalaureate.
White	A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.



## Graduation Rates for 2-year institutions

Click one of the following questions to view the answer.

### General

- 1) My institution has programs that operate on both a term basis AND a clock hour (continuing enrollment) basis. How do I choose which cohort to use for Graduation Rates (GR) reporting?
- 2) My institution does not have any information on the cohort you are requesting. Do I have to do anything this year?
- 3) When can I revise or adjust my cohort?
- 4) Do I need to track students every term?

### Cohort

- 1) What is a "first-time" student?
- 2) My institution has a very small cohort, sometimes only 4 or 5 students. Do I need to complete the GR survey?
- 3) How do I count a student who started in my original cohort, transferred to another institution (for which I have a confirmation of transfer), and then returned to my institution and is still enrolled?
- 4) Where do I place transfers INTO my institution?
- 5) How do I report students who are taking ESL (English as a Second Language) or developmental courses?
- 6) Are students in remedial courses included in the cohort?
- 7) If a student took only remedial courses last year and applies as a full-time degree/certificate-seeking student this fall, can I count the student as "first-time"?
- 8) What about non-credit enrollment, or students taking CEUs?
- 9) Are non-degree/certificate-seekers included?
- 10) How do I treat new entrants that receive credit for life experience?
- 11) Do I count students who have acquired credits through distance learning or correspondence as "first-time"?
- 12) How do I report students studying in consortium agreements?
- 13) Many of our students take courses during the summer at other schools; should these be considered transfers-out?
- 14) My initial cohort includes all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled as of October 15 - the same as on my IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey. Now what happens to: stop outs, drop outs, students who enroll part-time after the first semester, or students who change programs?
- 15) If a student in my cohort obtains two undergraduate level awards (e.g., certificate in cosmetology and an AA) within the 3-year period, can I count both completions?

### Normal Time and Calculation of 150% of Normal Time

- 1) How do I calculate 150% of normal time to completion?
- 2) How do I report a student who has switched programs since entering the cohort?
- 3) How do I calculate 150% for students who stop out, or drop out, and then return and complete the program?
- 4) According to the Technical Amendment to the SRK, I can count as completers within 150% of normal time students who complete their program through August 31 of the 6th year; but what if the student does not receive the degree until our December graduation? Does this mean I cannot count them as completers?

### Transfers-Out

- 1) Does my institution need to report transfers-out?
- 2) What kind of verification must I have to report a student as a transfer-out?
- 3) My school does not track transfers-out, and our limited budget does not allow us to set up a system to do so. Am I still in compliance with the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know Act, and am I still responsive to the GR survey, if I don't report transfers-out?

### Other

- 1) Exactly what must be disclosed in order to be in compliance with the Student Right-to-Know Act?
- 2) Will completing the IPEDS Graduation Rates survey satisfy all of my requirements for the Student Right-to-Know Act?
- 3) The number of students who could be considered for the adjustments to the cohort (allowable exclusions) at my institution is very small. Do I need to track these "leavers"?
- 4) What is a "transfer-preparatory program"?
- 5) My school enrolls students on a monthly basis, so we will be using a full-year cohort. If my longest program is 9 months, how do I calculate 150% of normal time; and which cohort should I use?
- 6) Can I report students as completers if they left the institution to get a job in their field of study, but did not finish their program?
- 7) There is a provision for excluding students who leave the institution to join the Armed Forces. Is there a similar provision for excluding students who are already in the military but are transferred to another duty station?

### Answers:

#### General

- 1) **My institution has programs that operate on both a term basis AND a clock hour (continuing enrollment) basis. How do I choose which cohort to use for Graduation Rates (GR) reporting?**



The Student Right-to-Know legislation states that institutions that offer a predominant number of programs based on a term basis (semester, quarter, or trimester) must calculate graduation and transfer-out rates using a fall cohort; otherwise, you must use a full-year cohort. The cohort used to report your institution's GR data is predetermined based on your response to the Calendar System question on the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics Header survey component.

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**2) My institution does not have any information on the cohort you are requesting. Do I have to do anything this year?**

Student Right-to-Know legislation states that graduation rates reporting is mandatory for institutions that enrolled full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students during the relevant cohort year. If you did not enroll this type of student, or your institution was not in operation during the relevant cohort year, please report this information on the Institutional Characteristics Header survey component.

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**3) When can I revise or adjust my cohort?**

There is a difference between revising and adjusting a cohort. **Revising** a cohort means modifying the cohort data to reflect better information that has become available since the cohort was first reported in the relevant Fall Enrollment survey (e.g., you may now have more complete racial/ethnic information on the cohort). *Fall* cohorts may be **revised** by entering new data in the *Revised cohort* column on the data collection screen. **Adjusting** a cohort means subtracting any allowable exclusions from the revised cohort to establish a denominator for graduation rate calculation. Both fall and full-year cohorts are **adjusted** for you on the worksheet screens when calculating graduation and transfer-out rates.

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**4) Do I need to track students every term?**

No. You can set up your system to identify your cohort upon entry, and then, at the end of 150% of normal time to complete all requirements of the longest program, look back to see the status of those in the cohort. You will need to know when students in the cohort completed, but it is not necessary to compare or track these students from term-to-term.

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**Cohort**

**1) What is a "first-time" student?**

According to the IPEDS Glossary, a first-time student is "A student who has no prior postsecondary experience attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level." This means that the student is first-time in terms of postsecondary education (or the student is not known to have attended another postsecondary institution). There are two exceptions: (1) students who attended any institution for the first time the summer prior to entering your institution in the fall term are to be counted as "first-time", as are (2) students who entered with advanced standing (college credits earned before graduation from high school).

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**2) My institution has a very small cohort, sometimes only 4 or 5 students. Do I need to complete the GR survey?**

Yes. You must **report** the data to NCES regardless of the cohort size. See the questions related to disclosure requirements under *Other* below for additional information.

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**3) How do I count a student who started in my original cohort, transferred to another institution (for which I have a confirmation of transfer), and then returned to my institution and is still enrolled?**

You should report the student as a transfer-out. For the purposes of the full-time, first-time cohort used for IPEDS graduation rates reporting, this action closes out their status in the cohort. Upon re-enrolling at your institution, the student would then be included in a subsequent, non-first-time cohort not collected through the IPEDS GR survey.

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**4) Where do I place transfers INTO my institution?**

The IPEDS GR survey does NOT collect information on transfers in. THESE STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN ANY GR COHORT.

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**5) How do I report students who are taking ESL (English as a Second Language) or developmental courses?**

These students are not included in the cohort if their courses are not part of a program of study that leads to a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award, and if they are not eligible for Title IV federal financial aid.

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**6) Are students in remedial courses included in the cohort?**

Use the same reasoning here that you use to determine who to report as degree/certificate-seeking in the IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey. If a student is degree/certificate-seeking for the purposes of qualifying for student financial aid, then they **must** be included in the GR cohort.

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**7) If a student took only remedial courses last year and applies as a full-time degree/certificate-seeking student this fall, can I count the student as "first-time"?**

No. The student does not qualify as "first-time" because they are known to have previously attended a postsecondary institution (yours or another school) even though they are entering with no credit.

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**8) What about non-credit enrollment, or students taking CEUs?**

Neither should be included in the cohort for graduation rates reporting.

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**9) Are non-degree/certificate-seekers included?**

Even though these students are enrolled for credit, if they are not seeking a degree/certificate, they should not be included in the cohort according to Student Right-to-Know regulations. Be sure to carefully review the definition of degree/certificate-seeking in the IPEDS Glossary.

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#### 10) How do I treat new entrants that receive credit for life experience?

If the student has never enrolled in a postsecondary institution, they should be counted as "first-time."

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#### 11) Do I count students who have acquired credits through distance learning or correspondence as "first-time"?

Since these students must have been previously enrolled in a postsecondary institution in order to obtain credit through correspondence or distance learning, they are not considered "first-time."

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#### 12) How do I report students studying in consortium agreements?

Use the same reasoning here that you use to determine who to report in the IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey. For additional information on this topic, please refer to the IPEDS Data Tip Sheet related to [Reporting Students for Institutions in Consortia](#).

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#### 13) Many of our students take courses during the summer at other schools; should these be considered transfers-out?

No. Keep the students in the cohort since they return in the fall and continue their programs of study.

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#### 14) My initial cohort includes all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled as of October 15 - the same as on my IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey. Now what happens to: stop outs, drop outs, students who enroll part-time after the first semester, or students who change programs?

It looks like your cohort is defined correctly. Remember YOUR COHORT NEVER CHANGES. Students who stop out or drop out do not leave the cohort. They remain in the count; and if they complete their most recent program within 150% of normal time they should be reported accordingly. Students who switch to part-time status or to another program are not given extra time to complete, nor are they removed from the cohort. Report their status as requested.

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#### 15) If a student in my cohort obtains two undergraduate level awards (e.g., certificate in cosmetology and an AA) within the 3-year period, can I count both completions?

No, you may only count one. NCES recommends that you report the highest degree attained, but it is your decision as to which one you prefer to report.

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### Normal Time and Calculation of 150% of Normal Time

#### 1) How do I calculate 150% of normal time to completion?

In order to calculate this, we must first define "normal time to completion". IPEDS has adopted the definition developed by the Joint Commission on Accountability Reporting (JCAR) as a definition of normal time. As such, "normal time to completion" is defined as *"the amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree or certificate according to the institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a bachelor's degree in a standard term-based institution; 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an associate's degree in a standard term-based institution; and the various scheduled times for certificate programs."* Let's look at some examples:

Many bachelor's degree programs are outlined as 4-year programs (8 semesters – typically fall and spring). Extending this to 150% (1.5 x 8) would be 12 semesters or **through the end of the spring term of the sixth year**.

Similarly, an associate's degree program that is advertised as a 2-year program (6 quarters - fall, winter, and spring, with no scheduled summer quarter) would extend to 9 quarters (1.5 x 6) or **through the end of the spring quarter of the third year**.

However, the Technical Amendment to the Student Right-to-Know Act redefined the cohort year to allow you to count completers through August 31 of the summer following the sixth year of a 4-year program (or the third year of a 2-year program).

Certificate programs must be handled somewhat differently. If a 900 contact hour course is advertised as taking 30 weeks to complete, the calculation of 1.5 x 30 equals 45 weeks **after the start date**. If the student completes within that 45-week period, they are within 150% of normal time.

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#### 2) How do I report a student who has switched programs since entering the cohort?

If a student has switched programs, you will calculate 150% of normal time to completion based on his or her most recent program for reporting outcomes. However, the student's "clock" does not reset once they switch programs. He or she must still graduate, transfer, or qualify as an exclusion within 150% of normal time to completion starting from the date he or she first entered the cohort.

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#### 3) How do I calculate 150% for students who stop out, or drop out, and then return and complete the program?

There is no difference in the calculation. The 150% of normal time calculation should be applied as of the student's initial start date, and is the same regardless of stop-out time. Some students may stop out for a term or two and still complete within 150% of normal time.

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#### 4) According to the Technical Amendment to the SRK, I can count as completers within 150% of normal time students who complete their program through August 31 of the 6th year; but what if the student does not receive the degree until our December graduation? Does this mean I cannot count them as completers?

Technically you cannot count the completion until the degree has been conferred. If you "award" the degree upon completion of the program (i.e., an award date of, or prior to, August 31 is noted in the student's record) and simply allow the student to "pick up" their degree at the December ceremony, then you should be able to count the student as having completed within 150% of normal time.

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## Transfers-Out

### 1) Does my institution need to report transfers-out?

The Student Right-to-Know legislation states that "An institution that determines that its mission includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution" must report transfers-out so that a transfer-out rate may be calculated for its full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students. Students to be reported as transfers are those who have NOT completed a program or graduated, so they cannot be counted as completers, but have subsequently enrolled in any program of an eligible institution for which the institution provided substantial preparation. If the institution does not have such a mission, reporting of transfers-out is optional.

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### 2) What kind of verification must I have to report a student as a transfer-out?

None. All verification requirements were dropped from the regulations.

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### 3) My school does not track transfers-out, and our limited budget does not allow us to set up a system to do so. Am I still in compliance with the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know Act, and am I still responsive to the GR survey, if I don't report transfers-out?

As long as your institution does not include providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution as part of its mission, you do not need to set up a system to track transfers-out. However, if your institution does have such a mission, you must be able to track and report on transfers-out.

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## Other

### 1) Exactly what must be disclosed in order to be in compliance with the Student Right-to-Know Act?

Student Right-to-Know Act regulations state that an institution must annually prepare the completion or graduation rates of its full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students; and for institutions that determine that their mission includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution, the transfer-out rate of these students. In calculating these rates, an institution must count any students who have completed or graduated by the end of the 12-month period ending August 31 during which 150% of the normal time for completion or graduation from their program has lapsed.

Therefore, at a minimum, you must report and disclose your graduation and transfer-out rates (as of August 31 of the prior year). The Secretary urges institutions to disclose as much additional information as warranted to help consumers understand institutional mission, etc. Thus you should consider disclosing additional rates as well, such as rates for part-time students and possibly rates 8 or 10 years out, if your students typically take longer to complete.

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### 2) Will completing the IPEDS Graduation Rates survey satisfy all of my requirements for the Student Right-to-Know Act?

NO! NO! and NO! The IPEDS GR survey provides institutions with instructions, definitions, and a format for calculating graduation rates and transfer-out rates. It also provides institutions with a methodology so that there is some level of consistency in the way the rates are calculated. However, the SRK requires disclosure of these rates to students and prospective students. In addition, for schools that offer athletically-related student aid there are additional disclosure and reporting requirements. By completing the GR survey, you will have the rates you need to disclose, but you still need to make them available. The GR survey satisfies the reporting requirements ONLY.

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### 3) The number of students who could be considered for the adjustments to the cohort (allowable exclusions) at my institution is very small. Do I need to track these "leavers"?

No. The allowable exclusions are provided for those institutions that may have a significant number of students who require longer to (or cannot) complete their programs for the reasons stated.

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### 4) What is a "transfer-preparatory program"?

This term is defined in 34 CFR Student Assistance General Provisions, Section 668.8(b)(1)(ii) as *"the successful completion of at least a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward a bachelor's degree and qualifies a student for admission into the third year of a bachelor's degree program."* The Secretary considers this the equivalent of an associate's degree, thus completers of transfer-preparatory programs (although they do not receive a "formal award") should be counted as completers.

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### 5) My school enrolls students on a monthly basis, so we will be using a full-year cohort. If my longest program is 9 months, how do I calculate 150% of normal time; and which cohort should I use?

Let's look at this one step at a time. First, schools with programs of less than 4 years are to report on the 2012 cohort. Therefore, you should look at those students who entered your institution between September 1, 2012 and August 31, 2013. Next, assuming the latest possible enrollment date would be August 31, 2013, 150% of 9 months following this date would extend to October 15, 2014 (13 1/2 months later). In order to complete the IPEDS GR survey, the first status date following this is August 31, 2015 and the report is due during the Winter 2015-16 data collection. So you are on track for reporting this cohort.

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### 6) Can I report students as completers if they left the institution to get a job in their field of study, but did not finish their program?

No, you may not report these students as completers since they left the institution prior to completing their program.

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### 7) There is a provision for excluding students who leave the institution to join the Armed Forces. Is there a similar provision for excluding students who are already in the military but are transferred to another duty station?

No, there is no such provision.

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**U.S. Department of Education**



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## Graduation Rates for 2-year institutions

### Edit specifications for the 2015-16 IPEDS Web-Based Data Collection

#### Graduation Rates (GR) Component

#### Applicable to 2-year institutions

NOTE: The specifications in this document apply to the institutions listed above. Some sections and parts may not apply to your particular institution. Please read the specifications carefully to determine which sections and/or parts apply to your institution.

*All screens must be completed in order to lock the survey.*

## Establishing Cohorts

### Cohort Data

### Worksheets

## Establishing Cohorts

You must first report on the cohort of first-time, full-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates. The screen shown will vary depending on whether your institution has a preloaded 2012 cohort. The values entered on this screen will be used to represent the **Cohort** on all subsequent screens.

For institutions with a preloaded **Initial cohort**, use the screen provided to enter the **Revised cohort** of students by race/ethnicity and gender to correct incorrect data that were reported in an earlier year.

For institutions with no preloaded cohort, use the screen provided to enter the 2012 **Cohort** (column 01) of students by race/ethnicity and gender.

The system will perform the following edits on the data entered:

- The calculated **Total men + women** in the cohort must be greater than 0.
- If no Initial cohort is preloaded, then the calculated **Total men + women** in the **Cohort** (column 01) must be less than or equal to the Unduplicated count of undergraduates reported in the same year's 12-month enrollment survey.
- If no Initial cohort is preloaded and the cohort reported in the prior year was greater than 25, then the calculated **Total men + women** in the **Cohort** (column 01) is expected to be within a 30% range of the **Total in prior year (men and women)** value.
- If an Initial cohort is preloaded, then the **Revised cohort** total must be within a certain range of the **Initial cohort** total, as outlined below:
  - If the number of **Total men + women** in the **Initial cohort** is between 1 and 25 students, then the **Total men + women** in the **Revised cohort** must be within plus 8 or minus 5 of that value.
  - If the number of **Total men + women** in the **Initial cohort** is between 26 and 100 students, then the **Total men + women** in the **Revised cohort** must be within a 30% range of that value.
  - If the number of **Total men + women** in the **Initial cohort** is between 101 and 500 students, then the **Total men + women** in the **Revised cohort** must be within a 20% range of that value.
  - If the number of **Total men + women** in the **Initial cohort** is greater than 500 students, then the **Total men + women** in the **Revised cohort** must be within a 10% range of that value.
- If the percent of **Total men + women** reported in the **Race and ethnicity unknown** category is between 20 percent and 80 percent, then an *explanation* is required.
- If the percent of **Total men + women** reported in the **Race and ethnicity unknown** category is greater than 80 percent, then a *fatal* error will occur.

- The current year racial/ethnic distribution of **Men** is expected to be within a 30% range of the prior year racial/ethnic distribution, otherwise an *explanation* must be provided.

**Note:** These distributions are calculated by finding the absolute value of the current year percentage for men minus the corresponding prior year percentage for men from each race/ethnicity category. If the sum of the absolute values across all race/ethnicity categories (excluding the **White** category) is greater than 30, then an *explanation* error will occur. For example, in *Table 1* (shown below) the sum of the **Current year minus prior year absolute values** across all applicable race/ethnicity categories is 40. Because this number is greater than 30, an *explanation* error will occur.

Table 1

Race/ethnicity	Current year percentage of men	Prior year percentage of men	Current year minus prior year absolute value
Nonresident Alien	6	14	8
Hispanic/Latino	10	9	1
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	3	2
Asian	8	6	2
Black or African American	25	10	15
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6	4	2
White	50	46	--
Two or more races	4	6	2
Race and ethnicity unknown	0	8	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>40</b>

- As with the distribution of Men explained previously, the current year racial/ethnic distribution of **Women** is expected to be within a 30% range of the prior year racial/ethnic distribution, otherwise an *explanation* must be provided.
- If the prior year **Adjusted cohort** (from the *Calculation of 4-year average rates: Cohort adjustment* worksheet) is greater than 0; AND the number of **Total Exclusions** is greater than 0; THEN:

**Total Completers within 150% \* 100**

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The **Cohort** (column 10) – the number of **Total Exclusions**

Should be within a 20% range of the following:

PY **Total Completers within 150%** (from the 4-year-average, part 2 worksheet) \* 100

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The PY **Adjusted cohort**

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## Cohort Data

Use these screens to report the status of full-time, first-time degree/certificate seeking students for Cohort year 2012. The following screens must be completed:

### Completers within 150%

On this screen, you must report the cohort of students who completed their program within 150% of normal time to completion, including: **Completers of programs of less than 2 years** (column 11) and **Completers of programs of at least two but less than four years** (column 12) by race/ethnicity and gender.

For each column, the system will calculate the **Total men + women** to determine the grand total number of completers by length of time to completion. The **Cohort** (column 10) is preloaded for your reference.

In addition, the system will calculate the sum of columns 11 and 12 to determine the number of **Total completers within 150%** (column 29) for each race/ethnicity and gender category.

The system will perform the following edits on the data entered:

- The number of **Total completers within 150%** (column 29) must be greater than 0. Otherwise, a *fatal* error will occur to prevent a graduation rate of 0.0% on your institution's College Navigator page.
- If the number of **Total Completers within 150%** is greater than 10; THEN, this value must be less than the **Cohort** (column 10) minus the number of **Total Exclusions** (from the *Transfers/Exclusions* screen). Otherwise, a *fatal* error will occur to prevent a graduation rate of 100% on your institution's College Navigator page.

## Transfers/Exclusions

On this screen, you must report the cohort of students who did not complete a program as of August 31, 2015, including: **Total transfer-out students** (column 30), **Total exclusions** (column 45), and the number of students **Still enrolled** (column 51) by race/ethnicity and gender.

For each column, the system will calculate the **Total men + women** to determine the grand total number of non-completers. The **Cohort** (column 10) and the **Total completers within 150%** (column 29) are preloaded for your reference.

In addition, the system will calculate the number of students **No longer enrolled** (column 52) for each race/ethnicity and gender category by subtracting columns 30, 45, 51 and 29 from the **Cohort** (column 10).  
The system will perform the following edits on the data entered:

- For each race/ethnicity and gender category, the calculated total number of students **No longer enrolled** (column 52) cannot be negative. To correct this value, the sum of **Total completers within 150%** (column 29), **Total transfer-out students** (column 30), **Total exclusions** (column 45), and Still enrolled (column 51) must be less than or equal to the number of students in the **Cohort** (column 10).
- If the number of **Total exclusions** (men + women) (column 45) is greater than 10, then this value is expected to be less than or equal to 10% of the total number of men and women in the **Cohort** (column 10).  
**Note:** Exclusions should ONLY include students who died or were permanently disabled; or who left school to join the military, to serve with a foreign aid service of the federal government, or to serve on an official church mission. Do NOT include all non-completers in this column.
- If your institution reported having more than 100 men and women in the **Cohort** (column 10); and your institution reported having more than 10 **Total transfer-out students** (column 30), then the number of students **No longer enrolled** (column 52) is expected to be greater than 0.  
**Note:** Please verify that non-completers were not reported erroneously as transfer-out students (column 30) or exclusions (column 45).
- If the number of **Total Transfer-out students** (column 30) is greater than 50; AND, the **Total in prior year (men and women)** value is greater than 0 for both **Total transfer-out students** and the **Cohort** (column 10); THEN, the number of **Total Transfer-out students** in the current year must be within a 25% range of the following:

The **Cohort** (column 10) \* the PY number of **Total transfer-out students**

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The PY Cohort

## Completers within 100%

On this screen, you must report the number of students in the cohort who completed their program within 100% of normal time to completion, including: **Completers of programs of less than 2 years** (column 55) and **Completers of programs of at least two but less than four years** (column 56). The **Revised cohort** and **Exclusions are** preloaded for your reference.

In addition, the system will calculate the sum of columns 55 and 56 to determine the **Total completers within 100%** (column 57).

The system will perform the following edit on the data entered:

- The number of **Total completers with 100%** (column 57) is expected to be greater than 0.
- The number of **Total completers within 100%** (column 57) should be less than or equal to the previously reported **Total completers within 150%** (from the **Completers within 150%** screen).

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## Worksheets

Additional worksheet screens are displayed at the end of the survey to provide your institution with a summary of the data entered in the current and prior years. Worksheets include:

- **Graduation and transfer-out rates**, including:
  - Graduation rate (men, women, total)
  - Transfer-out rate (men, women, total)
- **4-year average rates**, including:
  - Adjusted cohort (men, women, total)
  - Total completers within 150% (men, women, total)
  - Total transfer-out students (men, women, total)
  - 4-year average Student Right-to-Know completion or graduation calculation
  - 4-year average Student Right-to-Know transfer-out rate calculation

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