

FORM **IPEDS-GRS-3**
(10-1-97)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
ACTING AS COLLECTING AGENT FOR THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

**INTEGRATED POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM**

**GRADUATION RATE SURVEY
(FOR LESS THAN 2-YEAR
INSTITUTIONS)**

1997

NOTE - The completion of this survey, in a timely and accurate manner, is **MANDATORY** for all institutions which participate or are applicants for participation in any Federal financial assistance program authorized by Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended. The completion of this survey is mandated by 20 U.S.C. 1094(a)(17).

The collection and reporting of enrollment data on students with athletically-related student aid is mandatory for all institutions participating in any Title IV HEA program and is authorized by Section 485 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092), as amended.

For those institutions not required to complete this survey on the basis of the above requirements, the completion of this survey is voluntary and authorized by P.L. 103-382, National Education Statistics Act of 1994, Sec. 404(a).

Please correct any errors in the name, address, and ZIP Code.

Please read the accompanying instructions before completing this survey form. Report data **ONLY** for the institution in the address label. If data for any other institutions or branch campuses are included in this report because they **CANNOT** be reported separately, please provide a list of these schools.

If there are any questions about this form, contact a Bureau of the Census IPEDS representative at (800) 451-6235 or FAX number (301) 457-1542, 7:30 a.m.—4:30 p.m. EST.

RETURN TO

Date due: March 1, 1998

1. Name of respondent

2. Title of respondent

3. Telephone — Area code, number, extension

FAX number

4. E-Mail address

CERTIFICATION - I certify that the information given in this report is correct and true to the best of my knowledge and was prepared in accordance with accompanying instructions. Willfully false statements on this report are punishable by law, U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001.

5. Name (*Type or print*)

6. Title

7. Telephone (*Area code, number, ext.*)

8. Signature

9. Date

PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY

The Graduation Rate Survey (GRS), component of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, collects data on completion or graduation rates and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time certificate or degree-seeking undergraduate students. This survey will provide a new indicator in the National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) ongoing effort to report on the condition of postsecondary education in the United States.

These data will also help institutions satisfy the requirements of the Student Right-to-Know legislation. According to the Student Assistance General Provisions (Sec. 668.41, 668.46, 668.49), institutions that offer athletically-related student aid are required to report graduation and transfer-out rates to the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education. In addition, other institutions that participate in any student financial assistance program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, are required to disclose graduation rates to students and prospective students.

This survey is being conducted in compliance with the Center's mission "to collect, analyze, and disseminate statistics and other information related to education in the United States..." (P.L. 103-382, National Education Statistics Act of 1994, Sec. 404(a)).

USES OF THE DATA

These data will provide comparable graduation rate statistics for all postsecondary institutions in the nation. The data will also provide much needed information to researchers as an institutional outcome measure and it will offer insight into the relationship between the changing demographics of college-going cohorts within different types of institutions. The information collected in this form can also be used by institutions to partially satisfy the final regulations regarding the Student Right-to-Know Act.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0582. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 17.7 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, Information Management Team, Washington, DC 20202-4652. **If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form write directly to:**

**National Center for Education Statistics/IPEDS
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20208-5652**

The definitions and instructions for compiling GRS data have been designed to minimize comparability problems. However, postsecondary education institutions differ widely among themselves. As a result of these differences, comparisons of data provided by individual institutions may be misleading unless accompanied by additional information about the institution.

DO NOT RETURN INSTRUCTIONS

Before You Complete This Report ...

Please answer the following questions to determine whether you should complete the Graduation Rate Survey:

1. For academic year 1994–95, did your institution enroll any full-time, first-time students?

- Yes – **Complete this form** if you can report for a 1994 cohort.

If 1994 cohort data are **not available**, indicate the first year for which cohort data are (will be) available →

Year

- No – This institution did not enroll full-time, first-time students.
Complete the certification on the cover page and return the form.

2. Which method does your institution use to identify a cohort for reporting data on this survey? (See "Cohort Identification" on page 1 of the instructions.)

- Fall Cohort
- Full-Year Cohort (September 1, 1994 through August 31, 1995)

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SECTION III

1994 COHORT OF FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS

(NOTE: SECTIONS I AND II ARE NOT APPLICABLE TO THIS REPORT)

Section III – 1994 COHORT OF FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS

Part A – FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS

Line No.	Cohort year: 1994	Nonresident alien		Black, non-Hispanic		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Hispanic		White, non-Hispanic		Race/ethnicity unknown		TOTAL ALL STUDENTS	
		Men (1)	Women (2)	Men (3)	Women (4)	Men (5)	Women (6)	Men (7)	Women (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)	Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
10	Initial cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students* MAKE CORRECTIONS IF NEEDED AND EXPLAIN IN REMARKS																

On lines 11-23 report the status of the students reported on line 10 above as of August 31, 1997. **Report each student only once.**

11	Completers of programs of less than 2 years, total																
11A	Completed the program within 150% of normal time																
22	Noncompleters still enrolled																
23	Noncompleters not enrolled																

* If using a **fall cohort**, report enrollment as of the institution's official fall reporting date or October 15. This number should be as reported on line 01 of your **1994 IPEDS** Fall Enrollment (EF-2) or Consolidated (CN)-Part A report. If using a **full-year cohort**, this number should be an UNDUPLICATED count of all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates enrolled at anytime during the **entire** year (September 1, 1994 through August 31, 1995).

Edit Check: Be sure line 10 = lines 11 + 22 + 23.

REMARKS SECTION:

Section III – 1994 COHORT OF FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS – Continued

Part B – TRANSFER-OUT STUDENTS AND NONCOMPLETERS NOT ENROLLED

1. Does your institution have or receive data about students who transfer-out through a verification process as described in the instructions?

NOTE: Transfers must occur within 150% of normal time. Students may or may not have subsequently returned to your institution, but should not be reported here if they completed their program within 150% of normal time.

Yes – Only provide information for verified transfer-out students below.

Enter zero (0) in the TOTAL columns (columns 15 and 16) if your institution does not have transfer-out students from the 1994 cohort. Leave blank if data are not available.

No – SKIP to Item 2

Line No.	Cohort year: 1994	Nonresident alien		Black, non-Hispanic		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Hispanic		White, non-Hispanic		Race/ethnicity unknown		TOTAL ALL STUDENTS	
		Men (1)	Women (2)	Men (3)	Women (4)	Men (5)	Women (6)	Men (7)	Women (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)	Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
30	Transfer-out students (noncompleters) (at any time within 150% of normal time), total																
31	To a less than 2-year institution																
32	To a 2-year institution																
33	To a 4-year or higher institution																

Edit Check: Be sure line 30 = lines 31 + 32 + 33. Report each student only once.

Line No.	Cohort year: 1994	Nonresident alien		Black, non-Hispanic		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Hispanic		White, non-Hispanic		Race/ethnicity unknown		TOTAL ALL STUDENTS	
		Men (1)	Women (2)	Men (3)	Women (4)	Men (5)	Women (6)	Men (7)	Women (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)	Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
38	Of the students reported on line 30 above, how many returned and were still enrolled as of August 31, 1997																

2. Does your institution maintain data about students leaving for jobs in their field prior to completion of their program?

Yes – Provide information below.

Enter zero (0) in the TOTAL columns (columns 15 and 16) if your institution does not have students leaving for jobs in their field prior to completion of the program. Leave blank if data are not available.

No – SKIP to Part C

Line No.	Cohort year: 1994	Nonresident alien		Black, non-Hispanic		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Hispanic		White, non-Hispanic		Race/ethnicity unknown		TOTAL ALL STUDENTS	
		Men (1)	Women (2)	Men (3)	Women (4)	Men (5)	Women (6)	Men (7)	Women (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)	Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
40	Students leaving for jobs in their field prior to completion of their program																

Section III – 1994 COHORT OF FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS – Continued

Part C – CLARIFYING QUESTION

How many students in the initial cohort left your institution for one of the following reasons?

NOTE: Be sure these students are included in **line 10**. Students may or may not have subsequently returned to your institution (for example from church mission), but should not be reported here if they completed their program within 150% of normal time.

Enter zero (0) in the TOTAL columns (columns 15 and 16) if no students left for the reasons listed below. Leave blank if data are not available.

Line No.	Cohort year: 1994	Nonresident alien		Black, non-Hispanic		American Indian or Alaskan Native		Asian or Pacific Islander		Hispanic		White, non-Hispanic		Race/ethnicity unknown		TOTAL ALL STUDENTS	
		Men (1)	Women (2)	Men (3)	Women (4)	Men (5)	Women (6)	Men (7)	Women (8)	Men (9)	Women (10)	Men (11)	Women (12)	Men (13)	Women (14)	Men (15)	Women (16)
41	Students are deceased or are totally and permanently disabled																
42	Students left school to serve in the armed forces																
43	Students left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government, such as the Peace Corps																
44	Students left school to serve on official church missions																
45	TOTAL																

Edit Check: Be sure line 45 = lines 41 + 42 + 43 + 44. **Report each student only once.**

REMARKS SECTION:

WORKSHEET FOR CALCULATING GRADUATION AND TRANSFER-OUT RATES

This worksheet is provided for the institution's convenience and may be used to calculate graduation and transfer-out rates or other rates for disclosure or reporting purposes. Duplicate the worksheet if needed to calculate additional rates by race/ethnicity or other student characteristics.

WORKSHEET FOR CALCULATING STUDENT RIGHT-TO-KNOW COMPLETION OR GRADUATION AND TRANSFER-OUT RATES OF FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS FOR LESS THAN 2-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

This worksheet is provided for the institution's convenience and may be used to calculate Student Right-to-Know completion or graduation and transfer-out rates or other rates for disclosure or reporting purposes. Duplicate the worksheet if needed to calculate rates by race/ethnicity or other student characteristics.

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Cohort determination. Enter your initial cohort from Section III, Part A, line 10 and the number of allowable exclusions from Section III, Part C to determine your cohort for calculating graduation rates. | 2. Calculation of total completers. Enter the numbers of completers from Section III onto the worksheet as indicated. Enter "0" if appropriate. | 3. Calculations of total transfer-out students. Enter the numbers of transfer-out students from Section III onto the worksheet as indicated. Enter "0" if appropriate. |
|--|--|---|

Item Reference	Men (Col 15)	Women (Col 16)	TOTAL	Item Reference	Men (Col 15)	Women (Col 16)	TOTAL	Item Reference	Men (Col 15)	Women (Col 16)	TOTAL
a. Initial cohort Sec III, Part A, line 10				a. Completers of < 2-yr programs Sec III, Part A, line 11A				a. Transfer-out students Sec III, Part B, line 30			
b. Initial Cohort: Sum Item 1a (Cols 15 + 16) and enter total here →				b. Sum Item 2a (Cols 15 + 16) and enter total here →				b. Total transfer-out students: Sum Item 3a (Cols 15 + 16) and enter total here →			
c. Allowable exclusions Sec III, Part C, line 45											
d. Total Exclusions: Sum Item 1c (Cols 15 + 16) and enter total here →											
e. Final Cohort: Subtract the exclusions (Item 1d) from the initial cohort total (Item 1b) and enter the result here →											

- | | |
|---|--|
| 4. Student Right-to-Know Completion or Graduation Rate Calculation: Item 2b divided by Item 1e - enter result here → | |
| 5. Student Right-to-Know Transfer-Out Rate Calculation: Item 3b divided by Item 1e - enter result here → | |

**INTEGRATED POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA SYSTEM
GRADUATION RATE SURVEY (GRS)
GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS – GRS-3**

Please respond to each item on this report in the space provided. The Glossary provides definitions of terms used in this report.

INSTITUTIONAL IDENTIFICATION

In the space provided on the front page of this report, make any necessary corrections to the preprinted address information. Also, enter the name, title, telephone number, e-Mail address, and FAX number of the person responsible for completing the report and to whom questions may be directed.

PERIOD OF REPORT

This report requests data on a cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students enrolled in your institution either (1) as of October 15, 1994 or (2) during the period between September 1, 1994 and August 31, 1995. Institutions are to report the status of these students as of August 31, 1997.

BEFORE YOU COMPLETE THIS FORM ...

Please read these questions carefully. Your responses will help you determine whether or not you need to complete the survey. If you have cohort data available for 1994, you should complete the remainder of the survey form. If you have not established a 1994 cohort for tracking purposes, be sure to indicate the first year for which cohort data are available. After answering the questions, if you still are unsure about which sections need to be completed, please call the Census Bureau for clarification.

COHORT IDENTIFICATION

Indicate which method your institution is using to identify the cohort reported on this survey. You may indicate **either a fall cohort** or a **full-year cohort (12-month period)**.

When establishing a cohort, include **only** those full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students who entered the institution during one of the time periods described below:

- (1) Institutions that offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (semesters, trimesters, or quarters) should report using a **fall cohort** of students. Institutions may use a census date of October 15, or the end of the institution's drop-add period, or another official fall reporting date to determine the cohort. This should be the same reporting date established for your **1994 IPEDS Fall Enrollment (EF-2)** or **Consolidated (CN)-Part A** report.
- (2) Institutions that do not offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (as defined above) must count as entering students all those students who entered the institution between September 1, 1994 and August 31, 1995, and who attended at least 1 day of class.

WHO TO INCLUDE IN THE COHORT

Students included in cohort – Include all full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students entering the institution either during the **fall term** or during the **12-month period** as described above.

Students must be enrolled in courses creditable 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.

A student who is designated as a member of the 1994 cohort remains in the 1994 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 this cohort who are:

- Enrolled exclusively in courses not creditable toward a formal award or the completion of a vocational program (i.e., nondegree seeking).
- Taking CEU's unless they are also enrolled full time in courses creditable toward a degree or other formal award.
- Exclusively auditing classes.
- Studying abroad (e.g., at a foreign university) if their enrollment at this institution is only an administrative record and the fee is only nominal.
- In any branch campus located in a foreign country.
- Part time.
- Transfers into the institution.

CATEGORIZATION OF STUDENTS

The attached Glossary provides detailed definitions of specific terms and should be used to define students in the initial cohort. The Glossary should also be used to identify completers, noncompleters still enrolled, noncompleters not enrolled, and transfer-out students.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

The Glossary also provides detailed definitions of programs of less than 2 years.

REMOVE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE MAILING AND RETAIN FOR YOUR FILES

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS – GRS-3 – Continued

REPORTING STUDENTS BY RACIAL/ETHNIC CATEGORY AND SEX

Method of collection – The manner of collecting racial/ethnic information is left to the discretion of the institution provided that the system which is established results in reasonably accurate data, which may be replicated by others when the same documented system is utilized. One acceptable method is a properly controlled system of post-enrollment self-identification by students. If a self-identification method is utilized, a verification procedure to ascertain the completeness and accuracy of student submissions should be employed.

Assignment to categories – For the purpose of this report, a student may be included in the group to which he or she appears to belong, identifies with, or is regarded in the community as belonging. However, no person may be counted in more than one racial/ethnic group. Racial/ethnic designations are requested only for United States citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible noncitizens. (*See definitions below.*)

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

- **Black, non-Hispanic** – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).
- **American Indian or Alaskan Native** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- **Asian or Pacific Islander** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or Pacific Islands. This includes people from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, American Samoa, India, and Vietnam.
- **Hispanic** – A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central, or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **White, non-Hispanic** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa or the Middle East (except those of Hispanic origin).

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 columns provided, rather than in any of the five racial/ethnic categories described above. **Resident aliens** and other eligible (for financial aid purposes) noncitizens who are not citizens or nationals of the United States and who have been lawfully 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/ethnicity unknown** – This category is used ONLY if the student did not select a racial/ethnic designation, AND the postsecondary institution finds it impossible to place the student in one of the aforementioned racial/ethnic categories during established enrollment procedures or in any post-enrollment identification or verification process.

In columns 15 and 16, report the grand total of all students in the cohort regardless of race/ethnicity or citizenship.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA

The confidentiality of individuals will be preserved in accordance with Title V, Section 501(a) of the Education Amendments of 1974 (P.L. 93-380) which amends Part A of the General Education Provisions Act by adding at the end thereof a new Section 406 specifically referring to NCES. Section (d)(2) of the Act is cited below:

"The Center shall develop and enforce standards designed to protect the confidentiality of persons in the collection, reporting, and publication of data under this section. This subparagraph shall not be construed to protect the confidentiality of information about institutions, organizations, and agencies receiving grants from or having contracts with the Federal Government."

The freedom of Information Act requires that data retained by the Federal Government must be made available to the public so long as the rights to privacy of individuals are not violated. When requested, data collected in this survey will be made available to the public in the form of diskettes or via Internet. Data cells containing fewer than three individuals will be removed. The database will contain all of the data items on the report (except those which might identify individuals), as well as the names of institutions submitting the reports.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
THE GRADUATION RATE SURVEY GRS-3 REPORT FORM**

Enter zero (0) in the TOTAL columns (columns 15 and 16) if the reported data for an item number are "Not Applicable" or "None." Leave blank if the data are not available.

SECTIONS I and II are not applicable to this report.

**SECTION III – FULL-TIME, FIRST-TIME
DEGREE/CERTIFICATE-SEEKING STUDENTS**

REPORT EACH STUDENT ONLY ONCE.

PART A – Status of Students in this Cohort

Report the status of the 1994 cohort of degree/certificate-seeking students as of August 31, 1997 in terms of the total students in the cohort; the number of completers, by time to complete the program; the number of noncompleters still enrolled; and the number of noncompleters no longer enrolled, including students who transferred out of the institution. Report all degree/certificate-seeking students by race/ethnicity and sex.

Report only for full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students. DO NOT include students who transfer into your institution. (*See definition of degree-seeking students in the Glossary and be sure to include students in occupational and vocational programs.*)

Line 10: Initial Cohort – Enter the total number of students in your initial cohort according to their race/ethnicity and sex. If you are reporting on a **fall cohort**, this should be approximately the same information you reported on line 01 (full-time students) of your **1994** IPEDS Fall Enrollment (EF-2) or Consolidated (CN)-Part A report. If you responded to this survey, the information should be preprinted for you. Please review these data and make any necessary corrections for omissions or double counting. If there is a major difference in columns 15 and 16, please explain in the Remarks section. If you did not respond or your data do not appear on **line 10**, please provide the enrollment data as requested.

Status of Cohort as of August 31, 1997:

Count completers only once and indicate the highest degree level attained.

Line 11: Completers of programs of less than 2 years – Report all students in the cohort who completed programs of less than 2 years at any time during the 3-year period.

Line 11A: Completers within 150% of Normal Time – In order to calculate a graduation rate to comply with Student Right-to-Know regulations, institutions can only count as completers, those students who received their degree/certificate (or completed a transfer-preparatory program) within 150% of normal program time. *See Glossary for definition of normal time to completion.*

Enter the number of students reported on **line 11**, who completed programs of less than 2 years **within** 150% of normal time. For example, a student who completed a 6-month (or equivalent) program in 9 months or less would be reported on **line 11A**; those taking longer would only show on **line 11**. Note that the count on **line 11A** is a subset of those completers reported on **line 11**.

Line 22: Noncompleters Still Enrolled – All students (who have not completed a program) who re-enroll in the institution the fall term following the status date of August 31, 1997 are to be considered "still enrolled" and should be reported on **line 22**. Students must be "still enrolled" as of October 15, 1997 or the institution's official fall reporting date.

Line 23: Noncompleters Not Enrolled – Report on **line 23** all students not accounted for elsewhere in **SECTION III, Part A**. This will include such students as drop outs, stop outs, and those who transferred out of the reporting institution.

EDIT CHECK: Make sure that all students in the cohort are accounted for in this section. **Line 10** is the sum of **line 11 + line 22 + line 23**.

SECTION III – Part B – Transfer-out Students and Noncompleters Not Enrolled

Lines 30–38: Transfers Out of Your Institution

Check Box: If your institution receives any data about students who transfer to other institutions through a verification process as described below, check **YES** and complete **lines 30–38**. If you check **NO**, skip to **Item 2**.

Line 30: For those institutions that check **YES**, report the total number of students who transferred (without a degree/award) out of your institution within 150% of normal time to completion, if you can provide verification of that transfer by any one of the following means:

- a. A certification letter or document from the receiving institution stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- b. An electronic certification, such as SPEEDE/ ExPRESS, stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- c. Confirmation of enrollment data from a legally-authorized statewide or regional tracking system (or shared information from those systems) confirming that the student has enrolled at another institution.
- d. Institutional data exchange information confirming that the student has enrolled at another institution.
- e. An equivalent level of documentation. For example, transfer information supplied by the student (through surveys or other means) and maintained by the institution would be acceptable for counting individual students as having transferred out.

DO NOT consider requests for a transcript as a valid verification of a student's transfer to another institution.

Lines 31–33: Report transfer students according to the level of institution that received the student and by race/ethnicity and sex.

EDIT CHECK: Be sure line 30 = lines 31 + 32 + 33.

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
THE GRADUATION RATE SURVEY GRS-3 REPORT FORM – Continued**

NOTE: Students who are counted as transfers out in Part B should also be reported in Part A as either:
(a) "Noncompleters not enrolled" on **line 23** or
(b) "Noncompleters still enrolled" on **line 22**, if they subsequently re-enrolled at your institution after a successful transfer. These students should also be reported on **line 38** as indicated below.

Line 38: Report those students from **line 30** who transferred out of your institution and then subsequently re-enrolled during the period covered by this report. These students must be considered "still enrolled" as of the institution's official fall reporting date or October 15, 1997.

Line 40, ITEM 2: Students Leaving for Jobs in Their Field Prior to Completion of Their Program –

If your institution maintains any data about students who left your institution (prior to completion of their program) to work in a field related to their program of study, check **YES**. Report the number of these students on **line 40** if the 150% of normal time to program completion has not elapsed.

SECTION III – Part C – Clarifying Question

Lines 41–45, ITEM 1: Adjustments to Cohort – Referencing the cohort reported on **line 10**, indicate the number of students who left your institution (and have neither graduated/completed nor transferred to another institution) because of one of the following **documented** reasons:

- a. The student is deceased or is totally or permanently disabled and thus unable to return to school.
- b. The student left school to serve in the armed forces. (**DO NOT** include students already in the military who transfer to another duty station.)
- c. The student left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government, such as the Peace Corps.
- d. The student left school to serve on an official church mission.

EDIT CHECKS

Adding across rows:

Parts A, B, and C

- Column 15 should equal the sum of columns 01+03+05+07+09+11+13.
- Column 16 should equal the sum of columns 02+04+06+08+10+12+14.

Adding down columns:

Part A

- Line 10 should equal the sum of lines 11+22+23.

Part B

- Line 30 should equal the sum of lines 31+32+33.

Part C – Item 1

- Line 45 should equal the sum of lines 41+42+43+44.

GRADUATION RATE SURVEY (GRS) GLOSSARY – GRS-3

ACADEMIC PROGRAM – Instructional program leading toward an associate's, bachelor's, master's, doctor's, or first-professional degree or resulting in credits that can be applied to one of these degrees.

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 plan.

AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKAN NATIVE – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or Pacific Islands. This includes people from China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, American Samoa, India, and Vietnam.

BLACK, NON-HISPANIC – A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa (except those of Hispanic origin).

CERTIFICATE – A formal award certifying the satisfactory completion of a postsecondary education program.

CEU – Continuing education unit. One continuing education unit is normally defined as 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction, and qualified instruction.

COHORT – A specific group (of students) established for tracking purposes. [For this survey, the initial cohort is defined as all students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students during either (1) the fall term of a given year, or (2) between September 1 and August 31 of the same academic year. (See instructions for further clarification.)]

COMPLETER – A student who receives a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award. In order to be considered a completer, the degree/award must actually be conferred.

CONTINUOUSLY ENROLLED STUDENT – One who enrolls in successive regular academic terms with no break in attendance. (Regular academic terms do not include summer terms unless the summer term is specified in the catalog description as part of the regular program: e.g. during cooperative study programs.)

CREDIT – Recognition of attendance or performance in an instructional activity (course or program) that can be applied by a recipient toward the requirements for a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.

CREDIT COURSE – A course that, if successfully completed, can be applied toward the number of courses required for achieving 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.

DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS – Students enrolled in courses for credit who are recognized by the institution as seeking a degree or formal award. At the undergraduate level, this is intended to include students enrolled in vocational or occupational programs.

DIPLOMA – A formal document certifying the successful completion of a prescribed program of studies.

DROP OUT – A student who left the institution and did not return.

FALL TERM – The part of the academic year that begins between late August and November 1.

FIRST-TIME STUDENT – A student attending any institution for the first time at the level (undergraduate, graduate, or first professional) enrolled. Includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended a postsecondary institution for the first time at the same level in the prior summer term. Also includes students who entered with advanced standing (college credit earned before graduation from high school).

FULL-TIME STUDENT – At the undergraduate level, 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.

HISPANIC – A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

INITIAL COHORT – *See Cohort.*

NONCOMPLETERS NOT ENROLLED – A student from a given cohort who has not completed a program and is not enrolled as of October 15 or the institution's official fall reporting date (following the August 31 status date). The student may have left either formally or without notice.

NONCOMPLETERS STILL ENROLLED – A student from a given cohort who has not completed a program and is still enrolled at the institution as of October 15 or the institution's official fall reporting date (following the August 31 status date). Also known as persisters.

NONCREDIT COURSE – A course or activity having no credit applicable toward a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award.

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 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.

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.

**GRADUATION RATE SURVEY (GRS)
GLOSSARY – GRS-3 – Continued**

OFF-CAMPUS CENTERS (EXTENSION CENTERS) – Sites outside the confines of the parent institution where courses are offered that are part of an organized program at the parent institution. The sites are not considered to be temporary but may be rented or made available to the institution at no cost by another institution or an organization, agency, or firm.

OFFICIAL FALL REPORTING DATE – The date (in the fall) on which an institution must report fall enrollment data to either the state, its board of trustees or governing board, or some other external governing body.

POSTSECONDARY AWARD, CERTIFICATE, OR DIPLOMA (LESS THAN 1 ACADEMIC YEAR) – 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 in less than 900 contact hours by a student enrolled full-time.

POSTSECONDARY AWARD, CERTIFICATE, OR DIPLOMA (AT LEAST 1 BUT LESS THAN 2 ACADEMIC YEARS) 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 designated for completion in at least 30 but less than 60 credit hours, or at least 900 but less than 1,800 contact hours.

POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION – The provision of a formal instructional program whose curriculum is designed primarily for students who are beyond the compulsory age for high school. This includes programs whose purpose is academic, vocational, and continuing professional education, and excludes avocational (leisure) and adult basic education programs.

PROGRAM – A combination of courses and related activities organized for the attainment of broad educational objectives as described by the institution.

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.

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. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.

RACE/ETHNICITY – Categories 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. A person may be counted in only one group. The groups used to categorize U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and other eligible noncitizens are as follows:

- Black, non-Hispanic
- American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic
- White, non-Hispanic

RACE/ETHNICITY UNKNOWN – Category used to classify students or employees whose race/ethnicity is not known **and** institutions are unable to place them in one of the specified racial/ethnic categories.

REMEDIAL COURSES – Instructional courses designed for students deficient in the general competencies necessary for a regular postsecondary curriculum and educational setting.

RESIDENT ALIEN (and other eligible non-citizens) – A person who is not a citizen or national of the United States and who has been admitted as a legal immigrant for the purpose of obtaining permanent resident alien status (and who holds 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).

SEMESTER CALENDAR SYSTEM – A calendar system that consists of 2 semesters during the academic year with about 16 weeks for each semester of instruction. There may be an additional summer term.

STATUS DATE – August 31 of the reporting year; at which time institutions determine the status of their cohort.

STOP OUT – A student who left the institution and did not return.

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 disclose completion or graduation rates of certificate- or degree-seeking, full-time students entering an institution to all students and prospective students. Further, Section 104 requires each institution which participates in any Title IV program and is attended by students receiving athletically-related student aid to annually submit a report to the Secretary. This report is to contain, among other things, graduation/completion rates of students receiving athletically-related student aid by race/ethnicity and sex and by sport, and the average completion or graduation rates for the four most recent years. These data are also required to be disclosed to potential student athletes (and others) when the institution offers athletically-related student aid.

SUMMER SESSION – A summer session is shorter than a regular semester and not considered part of the academic year. It is not the third term of an institution operating on a trimester system or the fourth term of an institution operating on a quarter calendar system. The institution may have 2 or more sessions occurring in the summer months. Some schools, such as vocational and beauty schools, have year-round classes with no separate summer session.

TRANSCRIPT – An official record of student performance showing all schoolwork completed at a given school and the final mark or other evaluation received in each portion of the instruction. Transcripts often include an explanation of the marking scale used by the school.

**GRADUATION RATE SURVEY (GRS)
GLOSSARY – GRS-3– Continued**

TRANSFER-OUT STUDENT – A student that leaves the reporting institution and enrolls at another institution. (For this survey, certification of transfer must be documented and transfer must occur within 150% of normal time to completion of the student's program.)

TRANSFER VERIFICATION – Evidence of transfer as documented by:

- a. A certification letter or document from the registrar of the receiving institution that the student is enrolled in the receiving institution.
- b. An electronic certification, such as SPEEDE/EXPRESS or a secure e-mail message from the registrar of the receiving institution stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- c. Confirmation of enrollment data from a legally-authorized, statewide or regional tracking system (or shared information from those systems) confirming that the student has enrolled in another institution.
- d. Institutional data exchange information confirming that a student has enrolled in another institution.
- e. An equivalent level of documentation.

TRIMESTER CALENDAR SYSTEM – An academic year consisting of 3 terms of about 15 weeks each.

12-MONTH PERIOD – The 12-month period used by the institution for reporting a full year of activity. This time period should be consistent among all IPEDS surveys and from year-to-year. (The 12-month reporting period used for the purposes of the Graduation Rate Survey is September 1 to August 31.)

UNDERGRADUATE – A student enrolled in a 4-year or 5-year bachelor's degree program, an associate's degree program, or a vocational or technical program below the baccalaureate.

UNDUPLICATED COUNT – The sum of students enrolled for credit with each student counted only once during the reporting period, regardless of when the student enrolled.

WHITE, NON-HISPANIC – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East (except those of Hispanic origin).

GRADUATION RATE SURVEY (GRS-3) QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

GENERAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION: **My institution has programs that operate on both a term basis and a clock hour (continuing enrollment) basis. How do I choose my cohort?**

ANSWER: If most programs operate on a term basis (semester, quarter or trimester), use a fall entering cohort; otherwise you should use a full-year cohort. You must report completers according to the program they completed and calculate 150% based on the length of that program. When using a full-year cohort, the 150% time frames begin at the student's respective start date.

QUESTION: **My institution offers degrees/certificates for less than 2-year programs, but we do not have any information on a 1994 cohort. Do I have to do anything this year?**

ANSWER: Not much. You will need to answer the questions on page 3 where it says...**Before You Complete This Report...** so that NCES will know when you will be able to report graduation rate data. You should also complete the cover sheet and sign the form before returning it to NCES or your State Coordinator.

QUESTION: **I thought the cohort year was defined as July 1 through June 30, but the form says September 1 through August 31, which is it?**

ANSWER: Public Law 105-18 enacted on June 12, 1997 redefined the cohort year as September 1 through August 31.

QUESTION: **When can I adjust my cohort?**

ANSWER: For purposes of this survey, NCES recommends that you wait until you are ready to calculate your SRK completion and transfer-out rates. The worksheet provides a place to subtract the exclusions/adjustments from the cohort to establish a number for your denominator.

QUESTION: **Do I need to track students every term?**

ANSWER: No, you can set up your system to identify your cohort upon entry and then, at the end of 150% of normal time for the longest program, look back to see what happened to those in the cohort. You will need to know when they completed, but it is not necessary to compare or track from term-to-term or month-to-month.

COHORT QUESTIONS

QUESTION: **What is a "first-time" student?**

ANSWER: According to the IPEDS *Glossary*, a first-time student is "A student attending any institution for the first time at the level enrolled." By this we mean at the undergraduate level, graduate level, or first-professional level. Since the GRS is only interested in undergraduates, it means that the student is first time in postsecondary education (or the student is not known to have attended another postsecondary institution). There are two exceptions: (1) students who attended any institution 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).

REMOVE BEFORE MAILING AND RETAIN FOR YOUR FILES

COHORT QUESTIONS – Continued

QUESTION: **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?**

ANSWER: You should include the student on line 22 as a "noncompleter still enrolled." Also you should show that the student successfully transferred on lines 30–33 as appropriate, and on line 38, report the number of students who returned to the institution and were still enrolled as of August 31, 1997.

QUESTION: **Where do I place transfers into my institution?**

ANSWER: The IPEDS GRS does NOT collect information on transfers in. THESE STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE INCLUDED IN ANY COHORT.

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

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: **Are students in remedial courses included in the cohort?**

ANSWER: Use the same reasoning here that you use to determine who to report as degree/certificate-seeking on your IPEDS Fall Enrollment report. If they are degree/certificate-seeking for purposes of qualifying for student financial aid, then they must be included in the cohort.

QUESTION: **What about non-credit enrollment, or students taking CEU's?**

ANSWER: Neither should be included in your cohort.

QUESTION: **Are non-degree/certificate-seekers included?**

ANSWER: Even though these students are enrolled for credit, if they are not seeking a degree/certificate, they are not to be included in your cohort according to the SRK regulations. Be sure to carefully read the definition of degree-seeking in the *Glossary*.

QUESTION: **Do I count students who have acquired credits through distance learning or correspondence as "first-time"?**

ANSWER: Since these students must have been enrolled in an institution in order to obtain credit through correspondence or distance learning, they are not "first-time."

QUESTION: **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"?**

ANSWER: 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 enter with no credit.

QUESTION: **If a student in my cohort obtains two awards (certificate in cosmetology and certificate in word processing) within the 150% of normal time for the longest program (cosmetology), can I count both completions?**

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: **If I get a request for transcript, can I use that as verification of transfer for a student in the cohort?**

ANSWER: No, a request for transcript is not sufficient; however, should some follow up to the request for transcript indicate that the student has enrolled in another institution (e.g., confirmation from the receiving institution or postcard follow up with the student), that would be sufficient.

QUESTIONS ON NORMAL TIME AND CALCULATION OF 150% OF NORMAL TIME

QUESTION: **In our school, we contact students who have not re-enrolled the next semester and/or conduct exit interviews. The exit interview is done in person; the contact is done by telephone or through a postcard survey. Some students indicate to us that they are currently enrolled in another institution. Can we consider these students as verified "transfers out"?**

ANSWER: If you have written confirmation from a student as on the postcard survey or a note is made to the file during the exit interview or telephone call that **the student is attending another institution and the 150% of normal time has not elapsed**, then under the circumstances described above, you should consider these students as verified transfers out. However, if you only contact a sample of the students who have left, YOU MAY NOT EXTRAPOLATE THE DATA ON CONFIRMED TRANSFERS TO THE ENTIRE NUMBER OF LEAVERS.

QUESTION: **My school does not track transfers out and our limited budget does not allow us to set up a system to do this. Am I still in compliance with the requirements of SRK and am I still responsive to the GRS if I don't report transfers out?**

ANSWER: Yes. You are to report any transfers for which you have verification, but there is no requirement to set up expensive systems to track transfer students.

QUESTION: **How do I calculate 150% of normal time to completion?**

ANSWER: 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. Normal time is defined as *"the time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree or certificate according to an institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a bachelor's degree, 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an associate's degree, and the scheduled times for certificate programs."* Let's look at some examples:

Many associate's degree programs are outlined as 2-year programs – or 4 semesters – usually fall and spring. Extending this to 150% (1.5 x 4) would take 6 semesters or **through the end of the spring term of the third year.**

However, the Technical Amendments that redefine the cohort year allow you to count completers through August 31 of the summer following 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.

QUESTION: **How do I calculate 150% for students who stop out, or drop out, and then return and complete the program?**

ANSWER: There is no difference in the calculation. The 150% of normal time is applied to the 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.

OTHER QUESTIONS

QUESTION: **The number of students who could be considered for the adjustment to cohort (in the clarifying questions) is very small in my school. Do I need to try to track these "leavers"?**

ANSWER: 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.

QUESTION: **What is a "transfer-preparatory program"?**

ANSWER: 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") are to be counted as completers.

OTHER QUESTIONS – Continued

QUESTION: **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?**

ANSWER: No, you should report these students as "noncompleters not enrolled," since they left the institution prior to completion of their program. However, they can be reported in Part B, Item 2 as additional information.

QUESTION: **My institution has a job placement program. Can I include the number of students placed in jobs after they complete their program in Part B, Item 2?**

ANSWER: No, the IPEDS GRS does NOT collect information on job placement after program completion. THESE STUDENTS SHOULD BE COUNTED AS COMPLETERS ONLY.

QUESTION: **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?**

ANSWER: No, there is no such provision.

QUESTION: **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 do I use?**

ANSWER: Let's look at this one step at a time. First, schools with programs of less than 4 years are to report on a 1994 cohort; therefore, you should look at those students who entered your institution between September 1, 1994 and August 31, 1995. Next, assuming the latest enrollment date would be August 31, 1995 and 150% of 9 months following this date would extend to October 15, 1996 (13 ½ months later). In order to complete the IPEDS GRS, the first status date following this is August 31, 1997 and the report is due March 1, 1998, so you will be on track for reporting your initial cohort.

QUESTION: **Will the GRS satisfy all my requirements for SRK?**

ANSWER: NO! NO! and NO! The GRS 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 consistency in the way the rates are calculated.

SRK requires disclosure of these rates to students and prospective students. By completing the GRS, you now have the rates you need to disclose. But you need to make them available. The GRS satisfies the reporting requirements only.

QUESTION: **Exactly what must be disclosed in order to be in compliance with SRK?**

ANSWER: The regulations state that *"Beginning with the group of students who enter the institution between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997, [don't forget that there is a Technical Amendment that changes this to September 1, 1996 and August 31, 1997] an institution shall disclose its completion or graduation rate and transfer-out rate information no later than the January 1 immediately following the point in time that 150% of the normal time for completion or graduation has elapsed for all of the students in the groups on which the institution bases its completion or graduation rate and transfer-out rate calculations."*

Therefore, at a minimum, you must disclose (January 1) 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 additional rates as well, such as rates for part-time students; and possibly rates 8 or 10 years out if your students take longer to complete.