

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

#### Graduation rates

Based on your institution's response to the predominant calendar system question (B3) on the Institutional Characteristics Header survey from the IPEDS Fall 2012 Data Collection, your institution must report graduation rates data using a


#### Fall Cohort (Fall 2009)

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.

- In the columns below, report the status of the full-time, first-time students reported in the cohort in Column 10.
- The cumulative number of those students who completed their program within 150% of normal time as of August 31, 2012 should be reported in Column 11.
- 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 their programs, you should 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 school. 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 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
- Col 52 - No longer enrolled - will be calculated for you. This includes students who either dropped out or completed in greater than 150% of normal time.
- Column 55 - Completers within 100% - this is a subset of Column 11 (completers within 150%). These data are being requested so they can be preloaded into next year's Graduation Rate 200% survey form

#### Cohort of full-time, first-time students

| Screen 1 of 1                | Cohort year 2009     |                      |                      |                           |  |  |                             |                      |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
|                              | Initial cohort       | Revised cohort       | Total exclusions     | Adjusted cohort (10 - 45) | Completed program within 100% of normal time to completion | Completed program within 150% of normal time to completion | Total transfer-out students | Still enrolled       | No longer enrolled   |
|                              | (Column 10)          | (Column 11)          | (Column 45)          | (Column 50)               | (Column 55)  | (Column 11)  | (Column 30)                 | (Column 51)          | (Column 52)          |
| Total men + women            | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>      | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>        | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |
| Total men + women prior year | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>      | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>                                       | <input type="text"/>        | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> |

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

Prepared by

**This survey component was prepared by:**

|                                 |                                   |                                  |                                       |                             |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Keyholder | <input type="radio"/> SFA Contact | <input type="radio"/> HR Contact | <input type="radio"/> Finance Contact | <input type="radio"/> Other |
| Name:                           | <input type="text"/>              |                                  |                                       |                             |
| Email:                          | <input type="text"/>              |                                  |                                       |                             |

|  |                            |                              |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| How long did it take to prepare this survey component? | <input type="text"/> hours | <input type="text"/> minutes |
|--|----------------------------|------------------------------|

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

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

Thank you for your assistance.

## Graduation Rates Full Instructions - Less Than 2-Year Institutions

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#### [Purpose of Survey](#)

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

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## General Instructions

### **Reporting Period Covered**

This report requests data on a cohort of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates enrolled in your institution either (1) as of October 15, 2009 or (2) during the period between September 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010. Institutions are to report the status of these students as of August 31, 2012.

### **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. For institutions that will report using a **full-year cohort**, count as entering students all those students who entered the institution between September 1, 2009 and August 31, 2010, 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. 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 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., nondegree seeking).
- Taking CEUs 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.

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## **Where to Get Help**

### **IPEDS Data Collection Help Desk**

Phone: 1-877-225-2568

Email: [ipedshelp@rti.org](mailto:ipedshelp@rti.org)

### **AIR Website**

You can also consult the AIR website that contains several tutorials on IPEDS data collection, a self-paced overview of IPEDS tools and other valuable resources.

### **IPEDS Resources Page**

In addition, the [IPEDS Resources Page](#) contains frequently asked questions, a link to the glossary, data tip sheets, an archive of survey instruments, information on the new race/ethnicity categories and other relevant information.

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## **Where the Data Will Appear**

Data collected through IPEDS will be accessible at the institution- and aggregate-levels.

At the institution-level, data will appear in the:

- [College Navigator Website](#)
- [IPEDS Data Center](#)
- [IPEDS Data Feedback Reports](#)

At the aggregate-level, data will appear in:

- [IPEDS First Looks](#)
- [IPEDS Table Library](#)
- [IPEDS Data Feedback Reports](#)
- [The Digest of Education Statistics](#)
- [The Condition of Education](#)

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## **Reporting Instructions**

**The method used to establish the cohort reported on this survey has been predetermined by your institution's response to the predominant calendar system question (D1) on the IC Header component of the IPEDS Fall 2012 Data Collection, according to the following rules:**

- 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 a census date of October 15, 2009, 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 IPEDS Fall Enrollment report.

- 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, 2009 and August 31, 2010, 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.

### **Full-Time, First-Time Degree/Certificate-Seeking Students**

Report the status of the 2009 cohort of degree/certificate-seeking students **as of August 31, 2012** in terms of the number of completers within 150% of normal time to award, number of transfer-out students, and exclusions to the cohort. Report the combined total of men and women.

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

**Initial cohort** - If you are reporting on a fall cohort, the information you reported on line 01 of your 2009 IPEDS Fall Enrollment report 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.

**Institutions are permitted to make revisions to the initial cohort for the following reasons:**

- Cohort-eligible students were previously omitted from the initial cohort
- Students were reported who did not belong in the initial cohort
- Students were misclassified in the wrong gender or racial/ethnic category

**Revised cohort (Column 10)** -If revisions are needed, please make any necessary corrections for omissions or double counting. If your data do not appear in the initial cohort column, please provide the enrollment data as requested in the revised cohort column.

**Completed within 100% (Column 55)** - Institutions are asked to count as completers only those students who received their degree/certificate (or completed a transfer-preparatory program) within 100% of normal program time. See Glossary for definition of normal time to completion. Do not count as completers students who get their degree/certificate from another institution.

Enter the number of students who completed programs of less than 2 years within 100% of normal time. For example, a student who completed a 6-month (or equivalent) program in 6 months or less would be reported in column 55; those taking longer would not be reported in this column.

The number of students reported in Column 55 should be a subset of those reported in Column 11.

**Completed within 150% (Column 11)** - In order to calculate a graduation rate to comply with Student Right-to-Know regulations, institutions can count as completers, only 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. Do not count as completers students who get their degree/certificate from another institution.

Enter the number of students 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 in Column 11; those taking longer would not be reported.

The students reported in Column 11 should INCLUDE those reported in Column 55.

**Total transfer-out students (Column 30)** - If the mission of your institution includes providing substantial preparation for students to enroll in another eligible institution, and your institution has information on students who transfer out, report the total number of students who transferred out of your institution (without a degree/award) within 150% of normal time to completion. Include students who transferred out of your institution and subsequently re-enrolled. 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 (and have neither graduated nor transferred to another institution) because of 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 reasons noted in b, c, or d above, but return prior to the status date of August 31, 2011, may be subtracted from the cohort during the calculation of graduation rates.

**Still enrolled (Column 52)** - Report the number of students who are still enrolled at your institution as of the fall census date for the fall term following 150% of normal time to completion of their program.

**Report each student in only one outcome category (i.e., as completing a program, as a transfer, as an exclusion, or as still enrolled) with the exception of those students reported in Column 55, which are a subset of the students reported in Column 11.**

**Non-completers (Column 52)** - This column is calculated by subtracting from Column 10 the sum of Columns 11, 30, 45, and 51.

### **Calculation of Graduation and Transfer-out Rates**

## **Worksheets**

A worksheet calculating the Student Right-To-Know completion/graduation and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students for the 2008 student cohort is provided as a convenience to the institution.

Worksheets calculating the overall four-year average completion/graduation and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking students for the student cohort are also provided. Data previously reported by the institution have been preloaded to use in these calculations.

## **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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## **Calculation of Graduation and Transfer-out Rates, and 4-Year Average Rates**

### **Worksheets**

Worksheets calculating the Student Right-To-Know completion/graduation and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates for the 2009 student cohort are provided as a convenience to the institution.

Worksheets calculating the overall four-year average completion/graduation and transfer-out rates of full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduates for the student cohort are also provided. Data previously reported by the institution have been preloaded to use in these calculations.

Note that the information on these worksheets will NOT appear on College Navigator or on any of the IPEDS data tools.

| Term                                  | Definition  |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Adjusted cohort                       | The result of removing any allowable <u>exclusions</u> from a <u>cohort</u> (or <u>subcohort</u> ). For the <u>Graduation Rates</u> component, this is the cohort from which graduation and transfer-out rates are calculated; for the <u>Fall Enrollment</u> component, it is the cohort for calculating retention rate.   |
| 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.  |
| Exclusions                            | Those students who may be removed (deleted) from a <u>cohort</u> (or <u>subcohort</u> ). For the <u>Graduation Rates</u> and <u>Fall Enrollment</u> retention rate reporting, 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.   |
| 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</u> level. This includes students enrolled in <u>academic</u> or <u>occupational</u> programs. It also includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended college for the first time in the prior summer term, and students who entered with advanced standing ( <u>college credits earned before graduation from high school</u> ).   |
| Full-time student                     | Undergraduate: A student enrolled for 12 or more <u>semester credits</u> , or 12 or more <u>quarter</u> credits, 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> 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> .   |
| 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 IPEDS 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.  |
| Initial cohort                        | A specific group of individuals established for tracking purposes. For the <u>Graduation Rates</u> component of <u>IPEDS</u> , the <u>initial cohort</u> is defined as all students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time <u>degree/certificate-seeking</u> students during 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.   |
| Less than 2-year institution          | A postsecondary institution that offers <u>programs</u> of less than 2-years duration below the baccalaureate level. Includes occupational and vocational schools with programs that do not exceed 1800 <u>contact hours</u> .  |
| 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 <u>degree</u> or <u>certificate</u> according to the institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a <u>bachelor's degree</u> in a standard term-based institution; 2 years (4 semesters or trimesters, or 6 quarters, excluding summer terms) for an <u>associate's degree</u> in a standard term-based institution; and the various scheduled times for certificate <u>programs</u> .  |
| Revised cohort                        | Initial <u>cohort</u> 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 <u>graduation rates</u> 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 <u>Graduation Rates</u> component of IPEDS was developed specifically to help institutions respond to these requirements. See Graduation Rates for the current description of data collected. |
| Transfer-out rate                     | Total number of students who are known to have transferred out of the reporting institution within 150% of <u>normal time to completion</u> divided by the <u>adjusted cohort</u> .   |
| Transfer-out student                  | A student that leaves the reporting institution and enrolls at another institution.   |

Transfer-preparatory program

A program 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.



## Graduation Rates for Less than 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 my cohort?
- 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) I have a very small cohort, sometimes only 4 or 5 students. Do I need to report on the GRS?
- 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-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) Do I count students who have acquired credits through distance learning or correspondence as "first-time"?
- 11) If a student in my cohort obtains two awards (certificates in cosmetology and certificate in word processing) within the 150% of normal time for the longest program (cosmetology), 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) According to the Technical Amendment, I can count students who complete their program through August 31 of the 3rd year, but what if the student does not receive the degree until our December graduation? Does this mean I cannot count them as completers?
- 3) How do I calculate 150% for students who stop out, or drop out, and then return and complete the program?

### Transfer-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 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?

### Other

- 1) The number of students who could be considered for the adjustment to cohort (exclusions) is very small in my school. Do I need to try to track these "leavers"?
- 2) What is a "transfer-preparatory program"?
- 3) 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?
- 4) 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?
- 5) 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?
- 6) Will the GRS satisfy all my requirements for SRK?
- 7) Exactly what must be disclosed in order to be in compliance with SRK?

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 my cohort?**

If most programs operate on a term basis (semester, quarter or trimester), you must use a fall cohort; otherwise, you must use a full-year cohort. The cohort method you must use has been pre-determined by your answer to the Calendar System question on the IPEDS Institutional Characteristics survey.

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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 reporting is mandatory for institutions that did enroll full-time, first-time degree/certificate-seeking undergraduate students during the cohort year. If you did not enroll this type of student or your institution was not in operation during the cohort year, please report this information on the Institutional Characteristics survey.

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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 to change the cohort by taking into consideration better information that has become available since you first reported your cohort on the Fall Enrollment survey (e.g., you may now have more complete racial/ethnic information on the cohort). You can **revise** a fall cohort by entering new data in the Revised Cohort column on the data collection screen. **Adjusting** a cohort means to subtract the Exclusions from the Revised Cohort to establish a denominator for rate calculation. Both fall and full-year cohorts will be **adjusted** for you on the worksheet screens when graduation and transfer-out rates are calculated.

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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 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.

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## Cohort

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

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).

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### 2) I have a very small cohort, sometimes only 4 or 5 students. Do I need to report on the GRS?

Yes. You need to **report** the data to NCES regardless of the cohort size. See the questions on disclosure for further 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.

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

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

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### 7) If a student took only remedial courses last year and applies as a full-time degree-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 enter with no credit.

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

Neither should be included in your cohort.

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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 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.

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

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."

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**11) 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?**

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

Similarly, an associate's degree that is advertised as a 2-year program - 6 quarters (fall, winter, spring, with no scheduled summer quarter), would extend to (1.5 x 6) or 9 quarters **through the end of the spring quarter 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 sixth year of a 4-year program (or the third year for 2-year programs).

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) According to the Technical Amendment, I can count students who complete their program through August 31 of the 3rd 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 (i.e., an award date of, or prior to, August 31 is noted on the student's record), and just allow the student to "pick it up" at the December ceremony, then you should be able to count the student in your completions.

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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 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.

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## **Transfer-Out**

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

The November 1, 2000 regulations state 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 can be calculated. The students to be reported as transfers are those who have NOT completed a degree, certificate, or transfer preparatory program, so they cannot be counted as completers. 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 November 1, 2000 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 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?**

As long as your institution does not include the substantial preparation of 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 need to be able to track transfers out and report them.

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## Other

**1) The number of students who could be considered for the adjustment to cohort (exclusions) is very small in my school. Do I need to try 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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**2) 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") are to be counted as completers.

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**3) 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 completion of their program.

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**4) 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?**

Let's look at this one step at a time. First, schools with programs of less than 4 years are to report on a 2008cohort; therefore, you should look at those students who entered your institution between September 1, 2008 and August 31, 2009. Next, assuming the latest possible enrollment date would be August 31, 2009, 150% of 9 months following this date would extend to October 15, 2010 (13 1/2 months later). In order to complete the IPEDS GR, the first status date following this is August 31, 2011 and the report is due in the Spring 2012 data collection, so you are on track for reporting on this cohort.

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**5) 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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**6) Will the GRS satisfy all my requirements for SRK?**

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. For schools that offer athletically-related student aid, there are additional disclosure and reporting requirements. The GRS satisfies the reporting requirements only.

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**7) Exactly what must be disclosed in order to be in compliance with SRK?**

The regulations state that beginning with the group of students who enter the institution between September 1, 1999 and August 31, 2000, an institution shall disclose its completion or graduation rate and transfer-out rate information no later than the July 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 (July 1) your graduation and transfer-out rates (as of August 31 of the prior year). In addition, institutions for which transfer out is an important part of their mission must also disclose a transfer-out rate. 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. The SRK regulations state that if a category of students within an athletic subcohort contains 5 or fewer students, institutions need not disclose information on the category of students.

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## Graduation Rates for less-than-2-year institutions

Edit specifications for the 2012-13 IPEDS Web-Based Data Collection

Graduation Rates (GR) Component

*Applicable to less-than-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.*

Section III: Cohort Data  
Worksheet

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### Section III: Cohort Data

On this screen, report the status of the **Cohort of full-time, first-time students for Cohort year 2009**. This includes the **Revised cohort** (column 10) number of **Total exclusions** (column 45), the number of students who **Completed program within 100% of normal time to completion** (column 55), the number of students who **Completed program within 150% of normal time to completion** (column 11), the **Total transfer-out students** (column 30), and the number of students **Still enrolled** (column 51).

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

- The calculated **Total men + women** in the **Revised Cohort** (column 10) must be greater than 0.
- The calculated **Total men + women** in the **Revised cohort** (column 01) must be less than or equal to the Unduplicated count of undergraduates reported in the cohort year's 12-month enrollment survey.
- The **Revised Cohort** must be within a certain range of the **Initial cohort**, 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 a 50% range 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 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 the cohort (column 10) is greater than 20, then the number of **Total completers within 150%** (column 11) 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 cohort (column 10) is greater than 10, then the number of **Total completers within 150%** (column 11) must be less than the **Adjusted Cohort** (column 50). Otherwise, a *fatal* error will occur to prevent a graduation rate of 100% on your institution's College Navigator page.
- If the prior year **Adjusted Cohort** (found on the Worksheet screen) is greater than 0; AND the current year **Adjusted Cohort** (column 50) is greater than 0; THEN:

The number who **Completed program within 150% of normal time to completion** \* 100

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The **Adjusted cohort**

Should be within a 20% range of the following:

The PY **Total Completers within 150%** (found on the Worksheet screen) \* 100

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The PY **Adjusted cohort**

- The number of **Total completers within 100%** (column 55) should be less than or equal to the number of **Total completers within 150%** (column 11).
- If the number of **Total transfer-out students** is greater than 12, then the Revised cohort must be less than or equal to 25% of that value.
- The calculated total number of students **No longer enrolled** (column 52) must be greater than or equal to 0. To correct this value, the sum of **Total exclusions** (column 45), **Total completers within 150%** (column 29), **Total transfer-out students** (column 30), and **Still enrolled** (column 51) must be less than or equal to the cohort (column 10).

- An *explanation* must be provided if your institution reported having 0 students **No longer enrolled** (column 49); and your institution reported having more than 100 students in the **Cohort** (column 10); and your institution reported having more than 10 **Total transfer-out students** (column 30).

**Note:** Please verify that non-completers were not reported erroneously as transfer-out students (column 30) or exclusions (column 45).

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### **Worksheet**

Additional worksheet screens have been included at the end of the survey. These screens provide your institution with a summary of the data entered, along with prior year data. This includes: **Calculation of graduation and transfer-out rates** and **Calculation of 4-year average rates** tables.

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