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Understanding How IR and Public Policy Interact and How You Can Be a "Data Influencer"

Meet Your Presenters

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Learning Outcomes

1. Familiarity with the major pieces of federal legislation that impact data collection from postsecondary institutions.

2. Understand the different organizations that influence higher education data policy conversations at the federal level.

3. Familiarity with the federal government processes for gathering feedback on potential changes to data collection and how to engage.

4. Ability to take information about potential changes in data collection and use it to lead conversations on your campus.

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Agenda

- Key Federal Higher Education Policy Areas and Student aid legislation
- Washington Higher Education Policy Community
- How Data Impacts Policy and Policy Impacts Data
- IPEDS and Ways to Engage
- Real World Scenario
- Resources
- Q&A

Key Federal Higher Education Policy Areas and Legislation

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Examples of Key Federal Higher Education Policy Areas

- Student aid
  - Issues include (but not limited to):
    - Funding (Budget and Appropriations)
    - Data, Transparency, and Accountability
    - Aid Simplification (e.g., FAFSA)
    - Pell Grants
    - Campus-based Programs (FSEOG, Federal Work Study, and Perkins Loans)
    - Loan Programs (e.g., Direct vs FFEL, Student Debt, and Repayment Plans), Student Debt, and Repayment Plans
    - Program Integrity (e.g., Gainful Employment)

- Compliance/Reporting Requirements (e.g., IPEDS)

- Research funding

- Veterans Benefits (e.g., Post 9/11 GI Bill)

- Tax policy (e.g., Education Tax Benefits)

Key Student Aid Legislation

- The **Higher Education Act of 1965** (Pub. L. No. 89-329) was legislation signed into law on November 8, 1965 by President Lyndon Johnson.

- HEA forms basis for the current federal student aid system

- The law was intended "to strengthen the educational resources of our colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education." It increased federal money given to universities, created scholarships, gave low-interest loans for students, and established a National Teachers Corps.

- HEA was comprehensively reauthorized in 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1986, 1992, 1998, and 2008 (Higher Education Opportunity Act – HEOA)
    - Since then, the Higher Education Act has been amended in more piecemeal ways, for example:

    Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021
    - Several major changes to federal student aid policy became law in December 2020 as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021, the fiscal year 2021 Omnibus spending bill. Though the bill did not propose a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, it did include a number of significant higher education provisions including FAFSA simplification, the expansion of Pell Grant eligibility to incarcerated students, and the repeal of the limitation on lifetime subsidized loan eligibility'

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Washington Higher Education Policy Community

Congressional Actors: Key Committees

- Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP)
  - ➢ Chair: Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA)
  - ➢ Ranking Member: Sen. Burr (R-NC)
- House Committee on Education and the Workforce
  - ➢ Chair: Rep: Virginia Foxx (R-NC)
  - ➢ Ranking Member: Rep:. Bobby Scott (D-VA)

Other Congressional Actors

- **Congressional Budget Office** - Primary congressional agency charged with reviewing congressional budgets and other legislative initiatives with budgetary implications.

- **Government Accountability Office** - Investigative arm of Congress charged with examining matters relating to the receipt and payment of public funds.

- **Congressional Research Service** - Shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. CRS experts assist at every stage of the legislative process — from the early considerations that precede bill drafting, through committee hearings and floor debate, to the oversight of enacted laws and various agency activities.

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Executive/Administration Actors: White House Offices

- **Office of Management and Budget** (OMB) -- White House office responsible for devising and submitting the president's annual budget proposal to Congress. It also approves of data collections under the Paperwork Reduction Act.

- **Domestic Policy Council (DPC**) – Established by Executive Order in 1993, the *Domestic Policy Council* (DPC) coordinates the domestic policy-making process in the White House, ensures that domestic policy decisions and programs are consistent with the President's stated goals, and monitors implementation of the President's domestic policy agenda.

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U.S. Department of Education Offices Primarily Involved in Postsecondary Education Policymaking

Secretary: Dr. Miguel Cardona

- The **Office of the Under Secretary** (OUS) coordinates policies, programs, and activities related to vocational and adult education, postsecondary education, college grant aid, and the Federal Student Aid.

- The **Office of Postsecondary Education** (OPE) advises the Secretary on Departmental matters related to postsecondary education. The office directs, coordinates, and recommends policies for programs that are designed to:
  - Provide financial assistance to eligible students enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions.
  - Improve postsecondary educational facilities and programs through the provision of financial support to eligible institutions.
  - Recruit and prepare disadvantaged students for the successful completion of postsecondary educational programs.
  - Promote the domestic study of foreign languages and international affairs and support international educational research and exchange activities.

- The **Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development** (OPEPD) advises the Secretary on all matters relating to policy development, implementation, evaluation, and review, budget proposals and processes, data strategy and governance, and student privacy.

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"One Dupont" and the "Big Six"

- ACE – American Council on Education
- NAICU – National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
- AACC – American Association of Community Colleges
- AASCU – American Association of State Colleges and Universities
- APLU – American Public Land-grant Universities
- AAU – Association of American Universities

Source: Constance Ewing Cook, *Lobbying for Higher Education: How Colleges and Universities Influence Federal Policy*

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Relationship of the Big Six

In addition, many universities have their own government relationships offices in Washington, DC, to represent their individuals institutions as well.

AAU

NAICU   APLU

ACE

AACC   AASCU
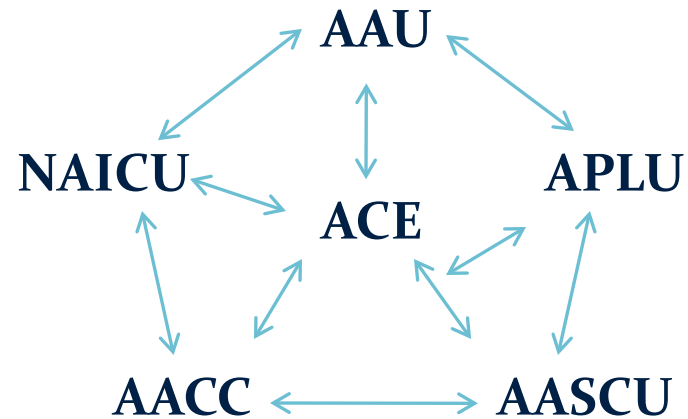
- **ACE – represents all these major presidential associations, as well as other more specialized higher education associations, and also every type of college and university**

- **NAICU – represents private, nonprofit institutions, both 2- and 4-year**

- **AACC – represents 2-year institutions**

- **AASCU – represents mostly public master's (comprehensive) universities**

- **APLU– represents land-grant and public institutions that range from research universities to 2-year colleges**

- **AAU – represents elite research universities, both public and private**

Source: Cook, *Lobbying for Higher Education*

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Examples of Professional Associations

Foundations, Think Thanks, and Advocacy Groups

Collaboratives and Coalitions on Specific Areas of Interest

- Examples:
  - ➤ Campus Cares
  - ➤ Postsecondary Data Collaborative

How Data Impacts Policy and Policy Impacts Data

Example 1:

The Proposal

- In 2001, Senators McCain and Bayh proposed "Call to Service" legislation that would raise the allocation of Federal Work Study funds that institutions must dedicate to community service jobs for students from 7 percent to 25 percent

- President George W. Bush followed with his own proposal in 2002 to raise it to 50 percent

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The Problem

- Many institutions were already struggling to meet 7 percent requirement; 200 institutions were falling below it

- At best, campuses were hitting 15-20 percent

- Lack of availability of community service groups to sponsor FWS positions

- Institutions in rural locations especially struggled

- Some institutions dependent on use of FWS workers for on-campus jobs

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The Solution

- McCain/Bayh and Bush staff were seemingly assuming that the FWS community service requirement was a measure of overall community service activity on campuses

- Show them it wasn't so using data and anecdotal evidence

- Coalition of higher education associations and groups joined together to create CampusCares

- Use web (CampusCares.org) to disseminate info, spread message that college students, faculty, staff are already very active in community service and in their communities in general

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- A broad coalition of national higher education associations launched CampusCares, a project created to identify, recognize, and encourage the involvement of those on America's college campuses—students, faculty, administration, and staff—who serve their community and contribute to its well-being.

- CampusCares.org
  - Had examples of volunteerism and community service activities happening on campuses throughout U.S.
  - Had statistics on student volunteerism (NPSAS) and other civic engagement (e.g., voting)

The Outcome

- FWS required allocation for community service jobs remains at 7 percent

- Argument for keeping such data in NPSAS

EXAMPLE 2

The Postsecondary Data Collaborative, better known as PostsecData, is an initiative created by the Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) that **advocates for high-quality postsecondary data**. Thoughtful use of higher education data has the power to:

- **Promote student success.** College administrators and faculty can use data to encourage learning, retention, completion, and successful post-college outcomes.

- **Evaluate and inform federal, state, and institutional policies.** With better data, decision-makers can assess public resources and target them to the postsecondary system's needs, with a focus on institutional improvement.

- **Empower college choices.** Students and families can use data to make educated decisions about where to attend college, how to pay for it, and what to study.

Knowledge Center

POSTSEC DATA
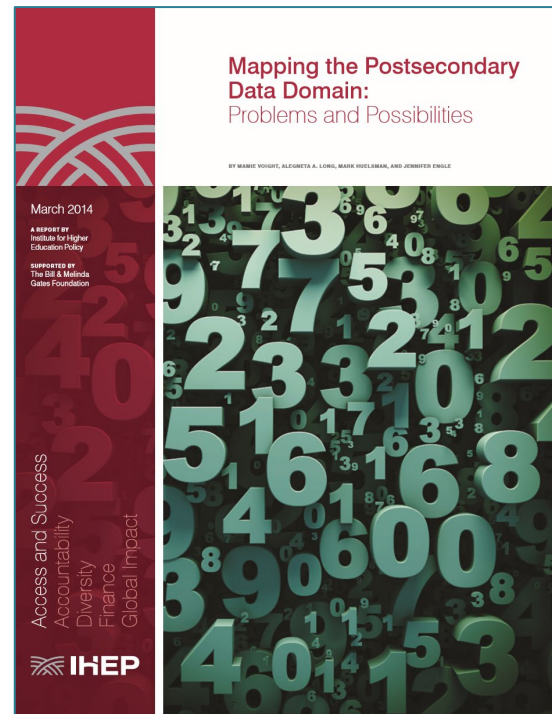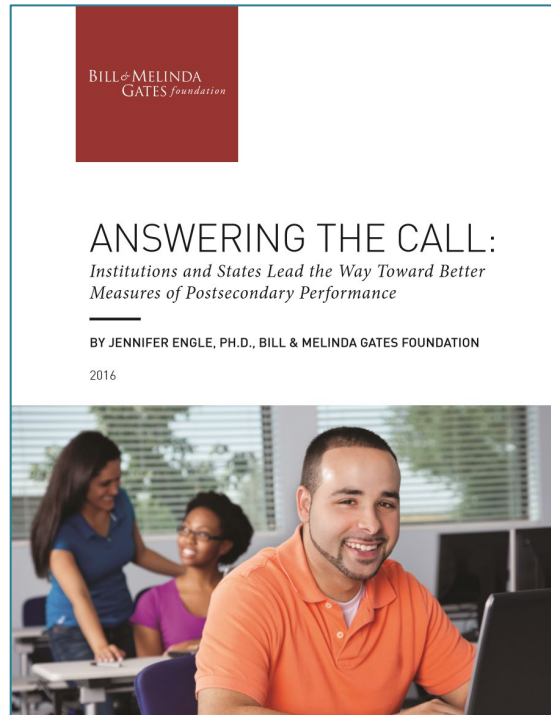
Coalition Building

Participants

- Achieving the Dream
- Advance CTE
- American Association of Community Colleges (AACC)
- American Institutes for Research (AIR)
- Association for Career and Technical Education
- Association of Community College Trustees
- Association for Institutional Research
- Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU)
- Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
- Center for American Progress
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
- Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness
- Complete College America
- Data Quality Campaign
- Education Commission of the States
- The Education Trust
- Excelencia! in Education
- Future of Privacy Forum
- George Washington Institute of Public Policy
- Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce
- HCM Strategists
- Institute for Higher Education Policy

- National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE)
- National Association of System Heads (NASH)
- National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
- National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS)
- National Council of La Raza
- National Governors Association
- National College Access Network (NCAN)
- National Skills Coalition
- New America
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Predictive Analytics Reporting (PAR) Framework
- State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO)
- The Institute for College Access and Success (TICAS)
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation
- The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE)
- Workforce Data Quality Campaign
- Workforce Enterprise Services
- Young Invincibles

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The Outcome: College Transparency Act (CTA)

- There was a ban on the creation of a student-level data system in the last comprehensive reauthorization of HEA in 2008 Higher Education Act after Spelling Commission on the Future of Higher Education recommended a student-level data system and NCES proposed replacing parts of IPEDS a student-level data collection

- Bipartisan, bicameral bill to remove ban on federal student unit record data system and address the current shortcomings of higher education information by:
  - Ensuring students and families have access to accurate and complete information on student outcomes, such as completion and employment outcomes across colleges and majors;
  - Providing actionable and customizable information to students and families so they, rather than government agencies, can make responsible choices about higher education; and
  - Streamlining reporting burdens on institutes of higher education by prioritizing information most helpful to students and families as well as institutional improvement.

- Originally introduced in 2017

- Most recently reintroduced in March 2021 by Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Tim Scott (R-SC), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Representatives Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), Steve Stivers (R-OH), Mikie Sherill (D-NJ), Joe Wilson (R-SC), Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR),and Bryan Steil (R-WI)

- Passed by the House in February 2022 (attached to the America COMPETES Act of 2020) but ultimately it did not pass the Senate and become law during the last Congress

- What will happen in the 118th Congress (2023-2024)???

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IPEDS: Ways to Engage

IPEDS and the Higher Education Act Reauthorizations

- **1992 reauthorization** of HEA (P.L. 102-325): Congress made IPEDS reporting mandatory for institutions that participated in Title IV federal student financial aid
- **1998 reauthorization** of HEA (P.L. 105-244):
  - ✓ Required that IPEDS be redesigned "to improve the usefulness and timeliness of the data collected…." NCES accomplished this requirement by transitioning from a paper-based data collection to a web-based system.
  - ✓ Also required that NCES make information on institutional price and student financial aid available in a format that would allow parents and students to make informed college choice decisions. NCES developed the College Opportunity Online Locator (COOL), the predecessor to College Navigator.
- **2008 reauthorization:** Congress passed the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) (P.L. 110-315), which included several requirements for new data to be added to IPEDS and made available on the College Navigator website. These additions included net price, information on students with disabilities, and graduation rates within 200 percent of normal time. Plus, it also established a Committee on Measures of Student Success, whose recommendations eventually led to the Outcomes Measures survey component in IPEDS.

You Don't Have to Lobby Congress to Be A Data Influencer!

Ways to Engage:

- **IPEDS Technical Review Process (TRP):** institutional researchers and other knowledgeable system users are invited to participate in the Technical Review Panel (TRP) process See: https://edsurveys.rti.org/IPEDS_TRP/

- **IPEDS OMB Clearance Package:** Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA) (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)), provides the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed, revised, and continuing collections of information. This helps the Department assess the impact of its information collection requirements and minimize the public's reporting burden. It also helps the public understand the Department's information collection requirements and provide the requested data in the desired format.

- **National Postsecondary Education Cooperative (NPEC):** established by NCES in 1995 as a voluntary organization that encompasses all sectors of the postsecondary education community including federal agencies, postsecondary institutions, associations and other organizations with a major interest in postsecondary education data collection. [R&D for IPEDS]

Technical Review Panel

Reports and Suggestions from Past IPEDS Technical Review Panels

TRP #66

Revisiting the Purpose of the Finance Survey Component

The Technical Review Panel discussed the extent to which the IPEDS Finance survey component meets existing informational needs and how to improve it. This summary provides feedback on how discussed potential changes to the survey component would affect data quality and reporting burden for institutions.

TRP #65

Incarcerated Students and Second Chance Pell: Data Collection Considerations

The Technical Review Panel discussed the recent legislative changes relating to the reinstatement of Pell Grant eligibility for incarcerated students, and considered the implications for the IPEDS data collection. This summary provides an overview of the information presented to the panel and the primary takeaways that emerged during the associated discussion.

TRP #64

Meeting the Moment: Modernizing the IPEDS Admissions Survey Component

The Technical Review Panel discussed ways in which the IPEDS Admissions survey component meets existing needs and how it might be improved. This summary provides feedback on how changes would affect data quality and reporting burden for institutions.

Upcoming and Recent TRP Meetings

Nov 16, 2022 - Nov 17, 2022
Nondegree Credentials

About IPEDS TRP Meetings

Meetings of the IPEDS Technical Review Panel (TRP) are conducted by RTI International to obtain peer review of IPEDS-related project plans and products, and to foster communications with potential users of the data. TRP meetings typically are held over a 2-day period and are conducted within the Washington, DC area. RTI selects a group of TRP panel members (approximately 30) to attend these meetings dependent on the particular topics being addressed. Additionally, NCES staff and staff from other federal agencies in the DC area may attend these meetings.

RTI always welcomes comments and suggestions from interested parties on IPEDS-related products and plans. At the completion of each TRP meeting, TRP suggestions are typically posted on this website and comments are solicited.

FEDERAL REGISTER
The Daily Journal of the United States Government

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

(N) Notice

Agency Information Collection Activities; Submission to the Office of Management and Budget for Review and Approval; Comment Request; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2022-23 Through 2024-25

NPEC

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Real World Scenario

Ripped From the Headlines:
What Might an Institutional Researcher Do?

Education Department Plans to Publish List of Low-Performing Programs

Unlike such efforts in the past, the list is expected to include many kinds of institutions, not just a focus on for-profits.

By Katherine Knott · Published January 13, 2023

FEDERAL REGISTER
The Daily Journal of the United States Government

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Ⓝ Notice

Request for Information Regarding Public Transparency for Low-Financial-Value Postsecondary Programs

Questions Out for Comment Deadline: February 10,2023

- **Measures and Metrics**
  - What program-level data and metrics would be most helpful to students to understand the financial (and other) consequences of attending a program?
  - What program-level data and metrics would be most helpful to understand whether public investments in the program are worthwhile? What data might be collected uniformly across all students who attend a program that would help assess the nonfinancial value created by the program?
  - In addition to the measures or metrics used to determine whether a program is placed on the low-financial-value program list, what other measures and metrics should be disclosed to improve the information provided by the list?

- **List Structure**
  - The Department intends to use the 6-digit Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code and the type of credential awarded to define programs at an institution. Should the Department publish information using the 4-digit CIP codes or some other type of aggregation in cases where we would not otherwise be able to report program data?5. Should the Department produce only a single low-financial-value program list, separate lists by credential level, or use some other breakdown, such as one for graduate and another for undergraduate programs?

- **Data Elements**
  - What additional data could the Department collect that would substantially improve our ability to provide accurate data for the public to help understand the value being created by the program? Please comment on the value of the new metrics relative to the burden institutions would face in reporting information to the Department.

- **Public Dissemination**
  - What are the best ways to make sure that institutions and students are aware of this information?

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What Would You Do?

- **As an institutional research at a college or university?**

- **As a data** strategist **for a state advocacy organization?**

Resources

- **Read**:
  - ➢ IHEP Data Collaborative Newsletter
  - ➢ IPEDS Communications
  - ➢ TRP summaries
  - ➢ Inside Higher Ed and the Chronicle
  - ➢ The Node e-newsletter

- **Follow:**

  @PostsecData

  @ipeds_nces

  @air4data and #IRwatercooler

  @NodeForIR

- **Attend:**
  - ➢ AIR Forum Sessions on IPEDS or Public Policy Issues

- **Volunteer:**
  - ➢ If you see an IPEDS TRP coming up for which you have an expertise, feel free to send an email and volunteer to participate. Not everyone may be invited, but it doesn't hurt to get your name out there. https://edsurveys.rti.org/ipeds_trp/

Resources

Higher Education Rulemaking: The Politics of Creating Regulatory Policy — Rebecca S. Natow

Reexamining the Federal Role in Higher Education: Politics and Policymaking in the Postsecondary Sector — Rebecca S. Natow

Lobbying for Higher Education: How Colleges and Universities Influence Federal Policy — Constance Ewing Cook

College Blackout: How the Higher Education Lobby Fought to Keep Students in the Dark — Clare McCann and Amy Laitinen
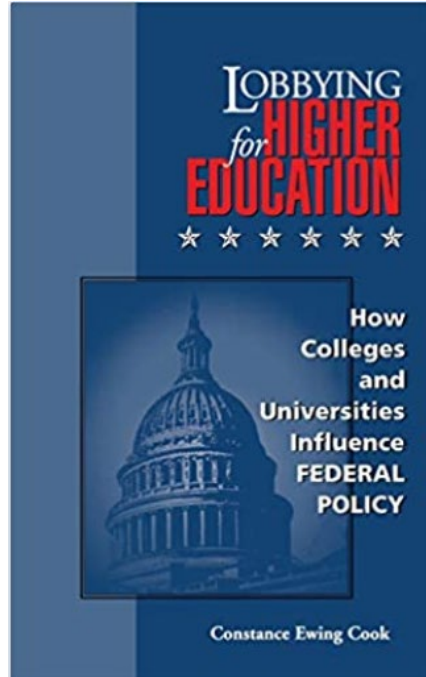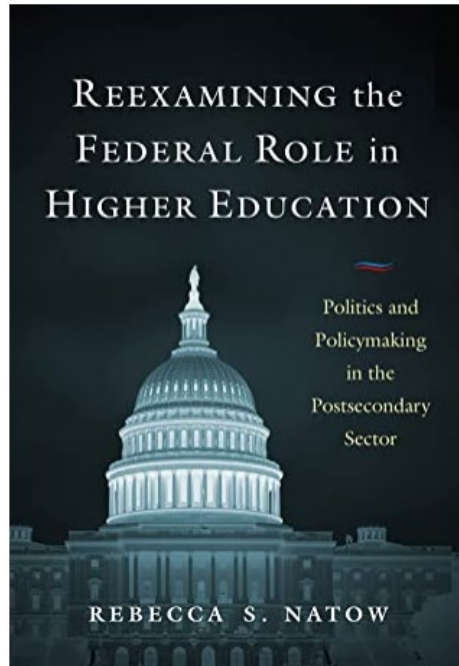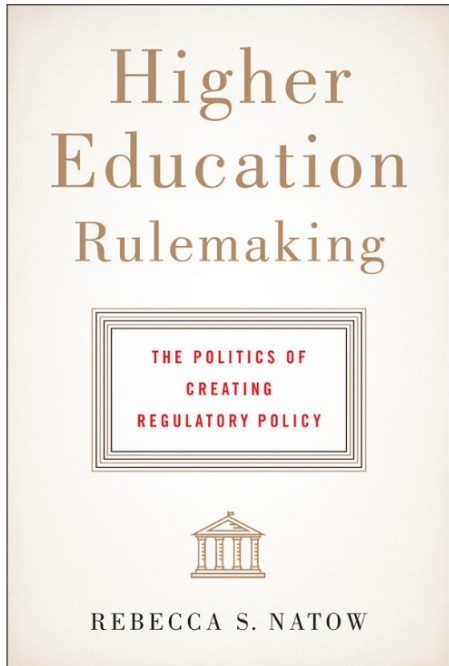
NEW DIRECTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

Research Article

The History and Evolution of IPEDS

Elise S. Miller, Jessica M. Shedd

First published: 25 November 2019 | https://doi.org/10.1002/ir.20297

Q&A

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