

Completions (C)

Overview of the IPEDS Completions Survey Tutorial Script 2023-24 Data Collection Cycle

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, NCES, and the Association for Institutional Research, AIR, welcome to this tutorial on the IPEDS Completions survey component.

The Completions component is part of the fall collection of IPEDS surveys, which opens in early September. Data entry must be completed and considered final by the end of the collection period in mid-October when the keyholder locks their data. IPEDS coordinators have an additional two weeks to review the data and lock the survey component.

Data collected through the IPEDS surveys provides a basis for postsecondary education analysis and consumer information. Any institution receiving Title IV federal financial aid is required to submit data to IPEDS, including the Completions component. NCES is required to annually provide the Office of Federal Student Aid, FSA, with a list of Title IV institutions that did not complete their IPEDS surveys. The FSA sends out fine letters and warnings to the non-compliant institutions. Non-compliance can result in warnings and costly fines, or even loss of Title IV funding. More information about fines can be found on the Statutory Requirements page (<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/ViewIPEDSStatutoryRequirement.aspx>).

It is important to ensure that data entered are accurate. Information submitted in the Completions component is compared with information in the prior year's Institutional Characteristics component. The Completions information is also compared with the total enrollment data submitted on the current year's 12-month Enrollment component. If the information reported does not match, errors will occur. For example, if institutions include award levels on the current year's Completions component that were not included on the prior year's Institutional Characteristics component, an error message will occur.

The purpose of the Completions component is to collect information on degrees and certificates awarded, called completions, and the people who received these awards, called completers. IPEDS keyholders should report degrees and certificates awarded by the institution from July 1st of the previous year through June 30th of the current year. All degrees and certificates will be reported regardless of level or type of program.

IPEDS collects information on the number of awards or degrees conferred by 6-digit Classification of Instruction Programs, or CIP, codes. Within each CIP, degrees and certificates are reported by award level, gender, and race/ethnicity.

On the “CIP Data” screens, report awards, not students. Students may be reported more than once if they have received more than one award. For example, if a student receives a master’s degree and post- baccalaureate certificate, each of these awards should be reported. If a student receives two master’s degrees, each of these awards should also be reported.

On the “All Completers” screen, enter the number of students who earned an award between July 1st and June 30th by gender and race/ethnicity. Count each student only once, regardless of how many awards he/she earned. The intent of this screen is to collect an unduplicated count of total number of completers.

On the “Completers by Level” screen, enter the number of students represented by those completions for each award level you have reported. The number of students who earned this award between July 1st and June 30th should be entered by gender, race/ethnicity, and by age.

For some items, context boxes are provided so keyholders may provide text to explain or clarify data entries. Notes from the context boxes may be displayed on College Navigator.

College Navigator was developed to provide comparable information to the public about postsecondary institutions and is used by students, parents, counselors, researchers and administrators from other institutions, and others.

The Use the Data portal contains frequently asked questions, a link to the glossary, data tip sheets, an archive of survey components, and other relevant information.

It is always a good idea to begin the IPEDS reporting cycle early and seek help, when needed, from the IPEDS Help Desk. The knowledgeable Help Desk staff is eager to help. Response time may be longer near the end of the collection cycle.