

**Colorado
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History

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
1987.
2. By whom?
Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE).
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
IPEDS uploads, tracking student retention/graduation and tracking students across institutions.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?
27 public institutions and two private institutions for Undergraduate Applicant, Enrollment, and Degree files. 27 public and 72 private for Financial Aid File. 48 pre-collegiate programs for pre-collegiate file. An assortment of the above in remedial, Teacher Education files.
2. Are any independent institutions included (number or percentage)? What about proprietary institutions? Are different kinds of data or different schedules for data collection used for any of these institutions?
Two private institutions that participate in Colorado Opportunity Fund ((COF) higher education funding structure) participate in all relevant Student Unit Record Data System (SURDS) files. Some requested data is not applicable for private institutions...72 private and proprietary institutions submit the Financial Aid file. The private and proprietary information is slightly different with regard to issues like funding and residency.
3. Are there plans to expand the system's coverage in terms of institutions? Please explain.
During the 2004-2005 legislative session, HB05-1057 passed requiring all pre-collegiate programs in the State to submit unit record data on students enrolled in their programs. We are in our first collection cycle with these programs.
4. When are data of which type collected (e.g. term/quarter/semester census date, annual, end of term, etc.)? Other reporting cycles?
We collect Undergraduate Applicant, Enrollment, Degree, and Teacher Education on a semester basis (including summer). Financial Aid and Pre-Collegiate information is collected annually.
5. Are there plans to collect data more frequently or on a different cycle?
We are planning to maintain the current collection cycle.

6. Is non-credit enrollment or instructional activity covered (e.g. ABE, ESL, GED, other job-related continuing education activity, etc.)? If so, is this in a separate database and what data elements are captured?

We collect enrollment information on Dual Credit/Postsecondary Education Option (PSEO) students at Community Colleges who attempt college classes. (Not technically what you are inquiring about because the courses are credit bearing, the student just doesn't get any and we still track the activity).

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?

The Director of Research & Information Management has the authority but does not change data elements or definitions without consulting with the Surds Advisory Committee (SAC) and discussing with the Data Advisory Group (DAG). Both groups are made up of Institutional Research staff from institutions in the State.

The Financial Aid Director works with the Financial Aid Advisory Committee (FAC) on changes to data elements or definitions in that file. Those changes are then sent to the Director of Research & Information Management for review before implementing.

2. Are SSNs used as a key link? If they are not, what is used instead? Are there immediate or long-range plans to discontinue use of the SSN as a key link?

SSN's are the key...there are numerous external changes putting pressure on us to come with alternative methods to track unit record data. Proposed legislation will require higher education institutions to add the K-12 state ID, called the SASID by 2009. HB03-1175 required institutions to move away from using SSN's as a primary identifier. We (SURDS) still require SSN's because it is the only way to track students across the state. Even after 2009, we will still have to use SSN's to track out of state students, and students attending private institutions...we use the SSN's in our database but no SSN's are used in reporting...all reports are aggregate.

3. Can campuses access datasets (unit records) themselves -- access in what terms (results, unit record data after it has been cleaned, unit-record data value added). If yes, who has access and how is this managed?

Campuses can only access reports generated from their submitted data. These reports are automatically generated after the file is clean. Campuses have individuals who are assigned user ID's and Passwords and the web site is available 24-7.

4. How do you handle privacy and FERPA issues? Do you have an explicit privacy policy and/or policies governing the use of SUR data by third parties such as institutions and researchers?

We have a privacy policy up on our web site...we use data perturbation, and suppression on the public web site for many of our reports. The Director of Research & Information Management is continually educating staff on privacy and security issues with data.

5. Have any FERPA or privacy issues come up recently in your state? If so, how have they affected your ability to use student record information?
Recent losses of hard drives and laptops and hacking incidences which in all cases contained personally identifiable information has raised the bar significantly on this issue. Proposed legislation will require an Information Technology Security Plan for all higher education institutions by July 2007. The CIOs of the public higher education institutions will be meeting monthly to discuss IT security issues. The CISO for the State has been asked to administer a survey addressing privacy issues which will be completed by all state agencies and higher education institutions. The objective of the privacy survey is to establish a baseline of where the State of Colorado is in terms of protecting the privacy of its Citizens.
6. Do you link SUR data within your state to other databases?
On our web site we provide a link to the CDE web site for information on school codes so that users can have access to that particular information. The user is responsible for the match and there are no restrictions to the data. However, if the user attempts to use incorrect school code information on a SURDS file, an error will be recorded. We have had limited conversations about sharing data with the Colorado Department of Education. Nothing has come of it.
7. Have you cooperated with other state higher education agencies to share data? If so, please explain.
No.

Reporting and Use of Data

1. What kinds of statistics and reports are generated regularly using SUR data?
Check out our web site for a sample: www.state.co.us/cche/I&r/index.html
2. If graduation and retention statistics are generated for institutions (or for the state or system as a whole), how are they calculated (e.g. IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey method, other methods)?
We use the IPEDS method....and historically with QIS we have used a derivation when comparing across institutions...to accommodate for differences in size, proportion of full time/part time students, high school GPA, etc. We allow transfer students who are completers to be considered as part of the graduation rate....we don't reduce the cohort based on transfer outs with this method...
3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?
See the web site at: www.state.co.us/cche/I&r/index.html
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
Lack of time to do analysis...and lack of reliability of some institutions data.

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR system since 2002?
All SURDS files are submitted to a web site....available 24-7 to users. The process of getting a clean file is almost totally a user driven process...
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
Legislation is currently addressing the use of (or not using) SSN.