

**Massachusetts
Meg Rowan**

History

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
1985.
2. By whom?
Massachusetts Board of Higher Education (BHE).
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
System research and planning.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?

Berkshire Community College	Bridgewater State College
Bristol Community College	Fitchburg State College
Bunker Hill Community College	Framingham State College
Cape Cod Community College	Massachusetts College of Art
Greenfield Community College	Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts
Holyoke Community College	Massachusetts Maritime Academy
Mass Bay Community College	Salem State College
Massasoit Community College	Westfield State College
Middlesex Community College	Worcester State College
Mt. Wachusett Community College	University of Massachusetts
North Shore Community College	Amherst
Northern Essex Community College	University of Massachusetts Boston
Quinsigamond Community College	University of Massachusetts
Roxbury Community College	Dartmouth
Springfield Technical Community College	University of Massachusetts Lowell
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?

The following independent and proprietary schools are newly included in our student unit record system. They are ONLY included for the financial aid data collection which we recently initiated. No enrollment, admissions or degree information is collected for the following schools. They are on the same schedule as the public colleges for the financial aid data collection. In some limited cases, the difference in this collection between the

independent and public institutions is that not all independent institutions supply student unit data for institutional financial aid awards.

Ailano School of Cosmetology	Gordon College
American International College	Hallmark Institute of Photography
Amherst College	Hampshire College
Anna Maria College	Harvard College
Assabet Valley Reg. Vocational Sch.	Harvard Extension School
Assumption College	Hebrew College
Atlantic Union College	Henri`s School Of Hair Design
Babson College	Holy Cross College
Bay Path College	Jolie Hair and Beauty Academy
Bay State Junior College	Katharine Gibbs School
Bay State School of Technology	Kay Harvey Hairdressing School
Becker College/Worcester	Labaron Hair Academy
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology	Laboure College
Bentley College	Lasell College
Berklee College of Music	Lawrence Memorial Hospital
Blaine The Beauty Career Sch-Lowell	Lesley College
Blaine The Beauty Career Schools-Malden	Longy School Of Music
Boston Arch Center	Mansfield Beauty-Quincy
Boston Baptist College	Mansfield Beauty-Springfield
Boston College	Marian Court Junior College
Boston Conservatory of Music	Massachusetts School of Barbering
Boston University	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy
Brandeis University	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Brockton Hospital	Merrimack College
Bryman Institute	Montachusett Reg Vocational Tech
Butera School Art	Montserrat College of Art
Cambridge College	Mount Holyoke College
Career Education Institute	Mount Ida College
Catherine Hinds Institute	Museum Fine Arts Sch
Clark University	N.Brkshre Mccann Tec
College Of Our Lady of Elms	New England Hair Academy
Curry College	New England Inst. Of Art & Comm
Dean College	New England School of Photography
Diman Regional Technical Institute	Newbury College
Eastern Nazarene College	Nichols College
Emerson College	North Bennet Street School
Emmanuel College	Northeastern University
Endicott College	Pine Manor College
Fisher College	Porter and Chester Institute
Funeral Institute of the North East	Quincy College
	R E T S
	Regis College

Rob Roy Academy-Fall River
Campus
Rob Roy Academy-New Bedford
Rob Roy Academy-Taunton Campus
Rob Roy Beauty-Worcester
Shawsheen Valley Technical
Institute
Simmons College
Simons Rock
Smith College
Southeastern Regional Technical Inst
Springfield College
Stonehill College

Suffolk University
The New England Conservatory
The Salter School
Tufts University
Urban College Of Boston
Wellesley College
Wentworth Institute
Western New England College
Wheaton College
Wheelock College
Williams College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Wyo Tech

3. Are there plans to expand the system's coverage in terms of institutions? Please explain.
Not at this time.
4. When are data of which type collected (e.g. term/quarter/semester census date, annual, end of term, etc.)? Other reporting cycles?
Fall Data (Enrollment, Admissions, Course) collected in December as of the institution's freeze date (typically within 2 weeks of add/drop).
Annual Data (Enrollment, Course) collected in August as of the end of term (fiscal year collection).
Degree/Completions Data collected in October as of the end of the fiscal year.
Financial Aid Data collected in September/October as of the end of the fiscal year.
5. Are there plans to collect data more frequently or on a different cycle?
Currently, there are only some initial plans to possibly collect an additional spring file as of the institution's freeze date. We are only in the initial phases of discussion regarding this possibility.
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?
Non-credit course enrollment data is collected in our Annual File collection which takes place in August of each year. There are a few non-credit course data elements that are included in our overall data dictionary. They include:

Course Type – required field for all courses

1. Credit
2. Non-Credit
3. CEU/PDP, etc. (courses offering Continuing Education Units or Professional Development Points)

Non-Credit Course Type – Required for all non-credit courses (Course Type = 2)

1. Personal Growth/Enrichment/Recreation/Leisure
2. Workforce Development (Job Skills-related, Licensure, Technical, etc.)
3. Not Applicable (University and State Colleges only)

Definition: Personal growth/enrichment/recreation/leisure not-for-credit courses address the personal and leisure interests of students. A not-for-credit Workforce Development/Job Skills Training course is a college-sponsored job/occupational skills related training activity under the leadership of a qualified instructor **for which the college maintains a record of participation**. Examples would be: CISCO Licensure, Oracle Licensure, Workplace Literacy, Computer Applications courses, etc.

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?
BHE Research and Planning, specifically Meg Rowan, Director of Data Systems in conjunction with Jonathan Keller, Associate Vice Chancellor of Research and Planning have authority to make changes. Changes to data elements and definitions are made with input from the BHE Database Manager and Database Administrator. Changes are also typically made after consulting with the Institutional Research user group, consisting of institutional researchers on the campuses.
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?
Random identification codes are assigned to each student; however SSNs are currently used to identify a student from one year to another and from one college to another. SSN will continue to be an important identifier since we match student data from the National Student Clearinghouse by SSN.
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?
No, colleges cannot access unit record data themselves.
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 take privacy and FERPA issues very seriously. Any request for student unit record data is treated individually. Our legal counsel is always involved in these situations.
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?
We are currently working with the Massachusetts Department of Education (DOE) to determine ways to institute a data-sharing agreement that will be in strict compliance with FERPA.

6. Do you link SUR data within your state to other databases?
As mentioned above, we are in the process of determining ways to link DOE data with BHE data.
7. Have you cooperated with other state higher education agencies to share data? If so, please explain.
Not yet.

Reporting and Use of Data

1. What kinds of statistics and reports are generated regularly using SUR data? How can we access or obtain copies?
Many, many reports and analyses are completed by the research and planning office for both internal and external use. An annual performance measurement report is produced by our office, using SUR data, as well as outside data. A link the report is given below. In addition, an annual Degrees Conferred report is produced using SUR data, as well as a Year-End summary, System At-a-Glance Linear Trend Reports. Statistics and reports are produced from our student record system for various task forces and board meetings throughout the year. Many of these are on an ad-hoc basis.

2004 Performance Measurement Report:
http://www.mass.edu/p_p/includes/ir/2004PerformanceMeasurement.pdf

2005 Performance Measurement Report:
http://www.mass.edu/p_p/home.asp?id=3&iid=3.20
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)?
Graduation Rate reports are currently produced from the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey. Retention rates are calculated from our system using the IPEDS method, as described on the IPEDS website.
3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?
The BHE has most recently been involved in research related to student financial aid and community college retention and graduation rates. The recent research is currently intended for internal policy purposes and has not yet been published.
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
A frequent challenge we face is staff resource and lack of available time for all the analysis which we would ideally be able to do. The data configuration and staff skills are there while the time, unfortunately, is not always.

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR since 2002?
We redesigned our database in 2002, so, since then, we have not run into too many issues. We added the financial aid file data submission in 2004 and added the independent institutions' data to the database in 2005. Most of those issues had to do with definitions and processes. Prior to 2002, the BHE had an agreement with the Division of Employment and Training to match student records with UI wage records. After the database redesign and the concurrent end of an agency that used to assist with that matching, the BHE has had difficulty re-establishing processes to facilitate UI wage record matching. Part of that has to do with clarifications in FERPA law since 2002. We hope to resolve these issues in the future so that UI wage records can again be part of our database and analyses.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
We are in the process of updating our data element dictionary – we will send it to you at a later date... this summer 2006