

Minnesota
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History

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
1983.
2. By whom?
Minnesota Legislature.
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
Enrollment and degree databases facilitate: analyzing current and future higher education needs, comparing enrollment or graduation patterns among Minnesota institutions and others, describing student characteristics, producing degree awards, and allocating campus-based financial aid.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?
All public institutions in the state. All private institutions which are eligible to participate in any Minnesota student financial aid program. This includes all private degree granting institutions.
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?
Private proprietary institutions that participate in Minnesota financial aid are included. This is about 75 institutions. Total student enrollment captured is about 40,000 students, which includes two large online institutions located in Minnesota, Capella and Walden.
3. Are there plans to expand the system's coverage in terms of institutions? Please explain.
No expansion is planned. Last year our state made the reporting mandatory if an institution is eligible to participate in a Minnesota financial aid program.
4. When are data of which type collected (e.g. term/quarter/semester census date, annual, end of term, etc.)? Other reporting cycles?
Data are collected only for fall term.
5. Are there plans to collect data more frequently or on a different cycle?
No plans to expand, although the system is designed to include other terms if there is an expansion in the future.

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?

No, we only request enrollment for students in credit-based courses.

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?
The Minnesota Office of Higher Education.
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?
SSNs are the key link.
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.
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 nondisclosure agreement. (Copy of agreement is included in the Manual).
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?
No.
6. Do you link SUR data within your state to other databases?
No. However, there is a preliminary proposal to link higher education data with the K-12 student data, but this is just a proposal.
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?

This is the only fact book that is prepared:
<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?PageID=427>

Otherwise, the data is posted on our Web site under various categories:
<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=409>

We also have a search function so users can retrieve their own cross tab tables:
<http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/sPagesOHE/SERDB5.cfm>

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)?
None generated.
3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?
We prepare e-newsletters with a single focus. See:
http://www.ohe.state.mn.us/mPg.cfm?pageID=480&1534-D83A_1933715A=692cbb1d56f97903
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
Nothing significant.

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR since 2002?
This summer we will implement a system where institutions can submit data using an encrypted Web site.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
No.