

**North Carolina (University System)
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History

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
In 1980.
2. By whom?
University of North Carolina (UNC) General Administration.
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
All of the above.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?
All 16 UNC institutions are included.
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 senior institutions are included in fall enrollment data. All data elements are not reported by these institutions. Reporting is voluntary and schedules typically differ from UNC collection dates.
3. Are there plans to expand the system's coverage in terms of institutions? Please explain.
No.
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 each fall, spring and summer term for: on-campus and distance education enrollments, student course data, course description data. Data are collected once annually for student financial aid. Data are collected at the end of the term for student grades.
5. Are there plans to collect data more frequently or on a different cycle?
No.
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.

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?
Data elements and definitions may be changed by staff at UNC General Administration in collaboration with campus Directors of Institutional Research (DIRs) or other affected campus personnel.
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?
Yes, SSNs are used. Because of the need to link to other databases, no plans have been made to discontinue use of SSNs.
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?
DIRs have access to their own data with SSNs, but only to other campus data without SSNs.
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?
Third parties must sign an agreement for using data which is consistent with FERPA guidelines. Additionally, unless necessary, SSNs are not provided. Lawyers typically prepare special data sharing agreements.
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?
Data are regularly linked with community college data. The community college system office provides data to the university system for linking with university system data. Enrollment statistics, performance measures and retention reports are generated and reported to the community college system.

By state requirement, data are annually provided to the State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee SOICC for linking with employment data and reporting. For other special projects, data may be linked with wage records, in which case data are provided to the Employment Securities Commission, linked and returned.
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?
An annual statistical abstract is generated. Additionally IPEDS reports, annual surveys, reports to the governing board for the system, annual reports and many ad hoc reports are generated. Please see web site at:

<http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/assessment/reports/reports.htm>

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)?
Up to 10 years of retention, graduation and persistence reporting is done. Follow-up reports include “within institution” and “within system” tracking. Rates calculated include retention, graduation and persistence for all first-time full-time freshmen. Rates are also calculated for key subgroups (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, age, residence status, etc.).

3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources (can we have a copy or the URL)?
Data from the SUR for UNC and NC Community College System were used by consultants to look at needs for academic programs in light of NC’s changing economy. (<http://intranet.northcarolina.edu/docs/aa/reports/economy/StepAhead.pdf>)

Data from SUR are used to look at retention and graduation trends to help focus on improving student success.

(<http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/aa/planning/retention/retention.htm>)

Data are also used for enrollment models and workforce projection models used to determine the role of university to solve workforce issues such as the teacher and nursing shortages.

4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
One challenge is the need for staff resources to do analysis.

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR system since 2002?
The web is used for data cleansing and reporting.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
No.