

**South Dakota
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History

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
South Dakota has been using the current Colleague (Datatel) database since fall 1998. Before that, South Dakota used SCT's ISIS database, beginning in 1987.
2. By whom?
The South Dakota Board of Regents (BOR), Regents Information Systems (RIS).
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
South Dakota uses the database for all record keeping, tracking and reporting purposes related to public higher education in the state, including all the purposes you mention above.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?
All six public universities: Black Hills State University, Dakota State University, Northern State University, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, South Dakota State University and the University of South Dakota.
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?
No private colleges/universities are included.
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?
The database is "live" since we collect data daily in the form of new prospects, applicants, students, course registrations and so on. We extract data from the database on the BOR identified census date in fall and spring semesters, at the midterm of each fall semester (for IPEDS reporting), and at the end of each semester (fall, spring, and summer). The field definitions that we delivered to you represent the information included in these extracts.
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?

Non-credit activity is not tracked.

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?
A statewide committee with at least one representative from each university has regulated change in data elements and definitions based on BOR reporting needs. The oversight agency is the Board's Regents Information Systems staff. The ultimate authority lies with the Board's councils and the Board.
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 often used to link records between the student and finance systems and of course are necessary for financial aid purposes. A student ID is the primary identifier of a student for the student information system.
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?
Each university has access to its own extracts (and, obviously, to its own live data). A Colleague Security Coordinator at each university regulates and grants access to specific portions of the data.
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?
The only use of individual student record information is for administrative and management purposes of the institutions and not shared with third parties or researchers.

Where research is sanctioned within the system, general student data is shared with researchers. We have also shared data with associated third parties to conduct studies and research sanctioned by the system. The Colleague Security Coordinator at each university considers privacy and data integrity issues in making decisions about who requires access to each portion of the data. Colleague software allows South Dakota to regulate distribution of each student's information based on the student's instructions.

Registrars and other campus officials regulate all distribution of student information.

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?
We currently do not. We are working on a project to import high school transcripts into our student data base. We do link information in the Student database to separate financial and personnel systems.
7. Have you cooperated with other state higher education agencies to share data? If so, please explain.
We of course provide student record information as necessary for transfers and other necessary student needs. We currently do not share data with other state higher education agencies.

Reporting and Use of Data

1. What kinds of statistics and reports are generated regularly using SUR data?
South Dakota produces many standard reports and ad hoc reports in response to BOR needs.
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)?
The retention calculations simply look at student cohorts over a five year period and determine if students are retained at the same university or within the system.
3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?
We recently completed a retention study.
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
Because we operate out of a single system the data structure is not a problem. Staff resources and programming personnel are the biggest constraints.

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR system since 2002?
We converted from six different databases to a single STUDENT database. Students within the public university system today have a single record regardless of how many of the six public universities they are taking courses from.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
No response.