

**Wyoming (Community College Commission)**  
**Nicole Novotny**

**History**

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?  
April 2000.
2. By whom?  
Following legislative mandate, the WCCC staff established the database.
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?  
It is a statutory requirement to allow for state-level review and reporting.

**Coverage**

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?  
Casper College, Central Wyoming College, Eastern Wyoming College, Laramie County Community College, Northwest College, Sheridan College, and Western Wyoming College.

The Wyoming Community College Commission Policy Analyst also serves as the IPEDS State Coordinator. The Policy Analyst is responsible for the aforementioned colleges and the University of Wyoming as they enter information into the IPEDS database.

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.
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?  
Semester and Annual.
5. Are there plans to collect data more frequently or on a different cycle?  
No. Data collections are mandated and organized by the MIS process.

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/community service contact hours are collected by each community college (not including the University of Wyoming) and are reported to the Wyoming Community College Commission every semester.

The Wyoming Community College Commission does not currently collect ABE/GED contact hours because the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services monitors ABE/GED programs. However, on July 1, 2006, the Commission will acquire administrative responsibility for ABE/GED programs.

### **Data Management and Manipulation**

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?  
The Wyoming Community College Commission can approve changes to data elements and definitions upon recommendation from appropriate institutional representatives.
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 not used as key links on the Commission level of data collection and reporting. The community colleges might individually use social security numbers to track student progress, identify students, run queries, etc. The commission steers clear of any of this information; instead, when a report is due the colleges each send us aggregate information from their institution. For example, when we do the enrollment, the colleges track it and then send us the data:
  - a. CC - Reports 1,000 full time students
  - b. LCCC - Reports 1,500 full time students
3. Can campuses access datasets themselves? If yes, who has access and how is this managed?  
Yes. Each community college maintains individual datasets. Institutional programmers and researchers have access to datasets for queries and reports. Staff members follow predetermined processes (i.e. MIS Handbook) to modify datasets.
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 Wyoming Community College Commission does not deal explicitly with privacy issues relating to FERPA. Each community college has adopted appropriate measures for meeting privacy needs; thus, any information sent to the Commission on a regular basis is FERPA compliant. Special information requests that contain student information are organized through an MOU that engage FERPA regulations.

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?  
No. There are no direct links between the databases. Information can be shared among databases but none are physically linked together.
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?  
All of the reporting conducted by the Wyoming Community College Commission contains aggregate data. Our agency never requests or receives SUR data. All reports created by the Commission are available via the website:  
<http://communitycolleges.wy.edu/>
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)?  
Persistence and Graduation rates are calculated with information from each institution and information from the IPEDS database. Simple averages are used to create an aggregate average for the state as a whole.
3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?  
The Wyoming Community College Commission has not conducted any additional projects.
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?  
Staffing issues are always an issue of concern since each college only has one institutional researcher and sometimes workloads can be a bit heavy for that one individual.

### **Overview**

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR system since 2002?  
Nothing to report.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?  
No.