

Wyoming (University)
Sue Koller

History – missing data, sent email

1. When was the student unit-record (SUR) system established?
The unit record system is just for the University of Wyoming – we had a computer system beginning in the 1970s which had unit record data.
2. By whom?
It was established by the University of Wyoming.
3. For what purpose (e.g., resource allocation/funding formula, IPEDS, tracking student retention/ graduation, tracking students across institutions)?
The purpose of the system was business reporting – admissions, grades, degrees, IPEDS, and retention/graduations.

Coverage

1. What institutions are included in your SUR system?
Just the University of Wyoming
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?
Once per term (3 times per year). We do collect transcript level data.
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 – we only collect academic (credit based) courses.

Data Management and Manipulation

1. Who has authority over changing data elements and definitions?
This is a collaborative process between the IR office and the registrar's office.

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, but we are the process of moving toward an alternative ID by fall of 2006. We are switching to the Banner system and with our new system we sill still collect the social security number, but it will no longer be 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?
N/A
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?
Yes we do have a privacy policy (please see our web site). We take FERPA very seriously and use the guidelines outlined in FERPA.
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 do link with the National Clearinghouse and to some extent the Community Colleges and High School records – but we do this with matching names, not with IDs. In reality we are checking our records against what the other agencies send us to give feedback to the high schools and community colleges in terms of who has left their institutions and come to ours.
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?
We do all sorts of reports and generate statistics, see our web site for a full list.
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)?
Yes we do generate graduation and retention statistics for the University of Wyoming and we do use the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey Method.

3. What kinds of research projects have recently been undertaken by the state or system using SUR data resources?
Recently we have been working on the Hathaway Scholarship Program (we have run projections, reporting level of funding, etc.).
4. What are the biggest challenges you face with respect to using SUR data resources for analysis and reporting?
Well, concerns for security and privacy are always a concern – also switching to Banner has been a real challenge (lots of work).

Overview

1. Have there been any significant developments in regards to your SUR system since 2002?
In the last few years we have started to think about sharing more data with the high schools and the community colleges – this is still in the works, but it looks as if we will start doing more once we switch over to Banner.
2. Is there anything that you would like to add that we have not addressed?
No.