

Statement Regarding Use of HEDS Data

This policy is written in the spirit of HEDS data-sharing and is intended to encourage research based on comparative data while ensuring responsible use of other institutions' sensitive information.

Policy

HEDS reports are intended for planning, assessment and management purposes. Data about other specific institutions available only from HEDS should be treated confidentially. They should be shared only with campus entities requiring them for institutional decision-making. A statement to this effect should accompany all reports distributed by member institutions to campus constituents, cautioning against further distribution of these reports and any data contained therein. Summary statistical information about groups of institutions may be more widely distributed on campus provided no information for specific schools may be deduced.

Guidelines

Information about specific HEDS institutions may not be identified in campus reports of HEDS data except under the following conditions:

1. Offices providing data for HEDS reports may receive institution-identifying information, as may other campus decision-makers, including trustees, senior staff, deans, department heads and faculty or administrative committees, if the information is required for institutional decision-making. A statement restricting the further use of these data should accompany all such presentations.
2. After public release of third-party surveys (AAUP and NACUBO, for example), HEDS reports of the same data with other schools identified may be more widely distributed on campus. Ratios and other statistics calculated by HEDS using only this publicly available information may also be distributed to other groups on campus.
3. In general, HEDS reports of IPEDS data may be distributed on campus as soon as the data are available to the public via NCES.
4. HEDS reports of the Common Data Set (CDS) information may also be widely distributed on campus unless a specific school has requested that its information not be disseminated. The reason for this exception is that the CDS is intended to be a presentation of information to the public through publishers of guide books.

There is a distinction between IPEDS and other non-HEDS surveys that are summarized and reported by HEDS and HEDS-specific data collected as supplements to these other surveys. Examples of the HEDS-specific data are the HEDS supplements to the IPEDS Finance Survey and the AAUP faculty compensation survey. The data from the external surveys and any HEDS calculations of ratios and other summary statistics based solely on those data may be distributed as in points 2 and 3 in the previous paragraph. The distribution of portions of reports that rely in whole or in part on the HEDS-specific supplements should be limited as in point 1.

Summary statistics (first and third quartiles, means, medians, etc.) about groups of institutions and the names of the institutions in those groups may be shared at any time with groups on campus deemed appropriate by the HEDS primary contact. The minimum number of institutions in a group should be large enough to assure that the data for no individual institution can be deduced.

HEDS reports and the information about specific institutions in the reports should not be shared with the news media or posted in a publicly accessible manner unless the user has received the express consent of each institution included.

Exceptions to this policy and these guidelines must be approved in advance by the HEDS Board of Directors.