

**PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENT GRADUATION RATE SURVEY 2009-2010  
(4-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES)  
INSTRUCTIONS**

Please respond to each item on this report in the space provided. The Glossary provides definitions of terms used in this report.

**PURPOSE OF THE SURVEY**

The purpose of this survey, as outlined in Act 88, is to collect data from Pennsylvania's 4-year public and private (not for profit) colleges and universities of the number and rate of first-time, full-time students who are enrolled in bachelor's or equivalent degree programs in 4 years or less, or 5 years or less for approved 5-year programs. Only students who are Pennsylvania residents are to be reported.

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Photocopy the completed form and retain the copy for your records. The completed original **must be mailed by November 19, 2010** to:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Division of Higher Education  
333 Market Street 12<sup>th</sup> floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333  
Attn: Dr. Rod Niner

Phone: (717) 772-3623  
Fax: (717) 772-3622  
TTY: (717) 783-8445

**INSTITUTIONAL IDENTIFICATION**

In the space provided on the front page of this report, record the institution's name and address information. Also, enter the name, title, telephone number, e-mail address, and FAX number of the person responsible for completing the report and to whom questions may be directed.

**CERTIFICATION**

The Chief Executive Officer or their designee must sign this report.

**PERIOD OF REPORT**

This report requests data on a cohort of full-time, first-time degree-seeking undergraduates enrolled in your institution as of October 15, 2006 for 4-year programs and October 15, 2005 for 5-year programs.

**BEFORE YOU COMPLETE THIS FORM . . .**

**Questions 1-2.** Please read these questions carefully. Your responses will help you determine whether or not you need to complete the survey and which parts to complete. If you are unsure about which sections need to be completed, please call the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Division of Higher Education.

**Question 3.** If your institution receives any data about students who transfer to other institutions through one of the verification processes listed below check "YES" and be sure to complete Part A, line 4 (a) for 4-year and 5-year programs as appropriate. You must use one of the following means:

- a. A certification letter or document from the receiving institution stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- b. An electronic certification, such as SPEEDE/ExPRESS, stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- c. Confirmation of enrollment data from a legally authorized statewide or regional tracking system (or shared information from those systems) confirming that the student has enrolled at another institution.
- d. Institutional data exchange information confirming that the student has enrolled at another institution.
- e. An equivalent level of documentation. For example, transfer information supplied by the student (through surveys or other means) and maintained by the institution would be acceptable for counting individual students as having transferred out.

**DO NOT** consider requests for a transcript as a valid verification of a student's transfer to another institution.

**COHORT IDENTIFICATION**

When establishing a cohort, include **only** those full-time, first-time degree-seeking undergraduates who entered the institution during the fall of the cohort year (2006 for 4-year programs and 2005 for 5-year programs). This may include students enrolled in a program designed specifically to provide a student with the basic knowledge needed to transfer into a higher-level program.

Institutions that offer a predominant number of programs based on standard academic terms (semesters, trimesters, or quarters) will report using a **fall cohort** of students. Institutions may use a census date of October 15, or the end of the institution's drop-add period, or another official fall reporting date to determine the cohort. This should be the same reporting date established for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Fall Enrollment (EF-1) report.

**WHO TO INCLUDE IN THE COHORT**

**Students included in cohort** - Include all full-time, first-time degree-seeking undergraduate students entering the institution during the **fall term**.

Students must be enrolled in courses creditable toward a bachelor's or equivalent degree. Be sure to include full-time students taking remedial courses if the student is considered new degree-seeking for the purpose of student financial aid determination.

**Report data for multi-campus institutions as a single entity. Include students enrolled in 4- or 5-year programs at branch campuses on the report for the main campus.**

**REMOVE INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE MAILING AND RETAIN FOR YOUR FILES**

A student who is designated as a member of the 2006 (4-year programs) or 2005 (5-year programs) cohort remains in the 2006 or 2005 cohort, even if the student:

- Becomes a part-time student.
- Stops out of the institution.
- Drops out of the institution.
- Has not fulfilled the institution's requirements to receive a degree or certificate.

#### **WHO TO EXCLUDE FROM THE COHORT**

**DO NOT** include students in this cohort who are:

- Enrolled exclusively in courses not creditable toward a formal award or the completion of a vocational program (i.e., nondegree seeking).
- Taking CEU's unless they are also enrolled full time in courses creditable toward a degree or other formal award.
- Exclusively auditing classes.
- Studying abroad (e.g., at a foreign university) if their enrollment at this institution is only an administrative record and the fee is only nominal.
- In any branch campus located in a foreign country.
- Part time.
- Transfers into the institution.

#### **CATEGORIZATION OF STUDENTS**

The attached Glossary provides detailed definitions of specific terms and should be used to define students in the initial cohort. The Glossary should also be used to identify completers.

#### **PART A: PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENT COHORT DETERMINATION**

**Line 1 - Initial Cohort** - Report total number of full-time, first-time students seeking a bachelor's or equivalent degree in the initial cohort (2006 for 4-year programs, 2005 for 5-year programs).

**Line 2** - Of the initial cohort (line 1), indicate how many students declared intent to seek the bachelor's or equivalent degree upon entry. This should also include all seeking bachelor's degree or any students whose intent was not known. **DO NOT** include students who transfer into your institution.

**Line 3** - Of line 2, indicate how many students were Pennsylvania residents (see definition of Pennsylvania resident in glossary).

#### **Line 4 - Exclusions from Line 3 (Pennsylvania resident)**

Referencing the cohort reported on **line 3**, indicate the number of Pennsylvania resident students who left your institution and have not graduated because of one of the following **documented** reasons:

- a. The student transferred-out to another 4-year institution as verified by criteria outlined in the instructions as well as the glossary.
- b. The student is deceased or is totally and permanently disabled and thus unable to return to school.
- c. The student left school to serve with a foreign aid service of the Federal Government, such as the Peace Corps.
- d. The student left school to serve in the armed forces. (**DO NOT** include students already in the military who transfer to another duty station.)
- e. The student left school to serve on an official church mission.

#### **PART B: TOTAL PENNSYLVANIA COMPLETERS**

**Completers of bachelor's or equivalent degrees** - Report all Pennsylvania resident students in the cohort who are completers of a bachelor's or equivalent degree by the end of the spring semester/quarter.

#### **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR INSTITUTIONS WITH 5-YEAR PROGRAMS**

Institutions with 5-year undergraduate programs are to report students from those programs from the fall 2005 cohort. Students in 4-year undergraduate programs are to be reported from the fall 2006 cohort.

#### **PART C: PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENT GRADUATION RATE**

Divide the Pennsylvania Total Completers (Part B, line 2) by the total Pennsylvania Cohort (Part A, line 7) and multiply by 100. Report as a percent rounded to two decimal places.

**PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENT GRADUATION RATE SURVEY 2009-2010  
GLOSSARY**

**ACADEMIC YEAR** - The period of time generally extending from September to June; usually equated to 2 semesters or trimesters, 3 quarters, or the period covered by a 4-1-4 plan. If the program requires summer study in the final year, the time period is extended to August.

**BACHELOR'S DEGREE** - An award (baccalaureate or equivalent degree, as determined by the Secretary, U.S. Department of Education) that normally requires at least 4 but not more than 5 years of full-time equivalent college-level work. This includes ALL bachelor's degrees conferred in a 5-year COOPERATIVE (WORK STUDY) PROGRAM. A cooperative plan provides for alternate class attendance and employment in business, industry, or government; thus it allows students to combine actual work experience with their college studies. Also includes bachelor's degrees in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years.

**CEU** – Continuing education unit. One continuing education unit is normally defined as 10 contact hours of participation in an organized continuing education experience under responsible sponsorship, capable direction and qualified instruction.

**COHORT** - A specific group (of students) established for tracking purposes. For this survey, the initial cohort is defined as all students who enter an institution as full-time, first-time degree seeking undergraduate students during the fall term of a given year.

**COMPLETER** - A student who receives a degree or other formal award. In order to be considered a completer, the degree/award must actually be conferred.

**DEGREE** - An award conferred by a college, university, or other postsecondary education institution as official recognition for the successful completion of a program of studies.

**DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS** - Students enrolled in courses for credit that are recognized by the institution as seeking a degree or formal award.

**FALL TERM** -The part of the academic year that begins between late August and November 1.

**FIRST-TIME STUDENT** - A student attending any institution for the first time at the undergraduate level. Includes students enrolled in the fall term who attended a postsecondary institution for the first time at the same level in the prior summer term. Also includes students who entered with advanced standing (college credit earned before graduation from high school).

**5-YEAR PROGRAM** - A program offered by an institution that is *defined in the catalog* as requiring a student to take courses over a 5-year period in order to attain a bachelor's degree. These include, but are not limited to, 5-year cooperative programs which alternate class attendance with employment.

**FOUR-ONE-FOUR PLAN** – The 4-1-4 calendar consists of 4 courses taken for 4 months, 1 course taken for 1 month, and 4 courses taken for 4 months. There may be an additional summer session.

**FULL-TIME STUDENT** - At the undergraduate level, a student enrolled for 12 or more semester credits, or 12 or more quarter credits, or 24 or more contact hours a week each term.

**INITIAL COHORT** - *See Cohort.*

**NORMAL TIME TO COMPLETION** - The amount of time necessary for a student to complete all requirements for a degree according to the institution's catalog. This is typically 4 years (8 semesters or trimesters, or 12 quarters, excluding summer terms) for a bachelor's degree in a standard term-based institution. If summer study is listed in the institution's catalog as a requirement for program completion, that student is to be included in the cohort.

**OFFICIAL FALL REPORTING DATE** - The date (in the fall) on which an institution must report fall enrollment data to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

**PENNSYLVANIA RESIDENT** – A student identifying Pennsylvania as his/her permanent address at the time of application to the institution. For entering freshmen, this may be the legal residence of a parent or guardian or the state in which a student has a driver's license or is registered to vote. It is not necessarily the state in which the student's high school is located.

**PROGRAMS OF AT LEAST 4 YEARS** - Programs designed to be completed in at least 8 semesters or 12 quarters to obtain a degree, diploma, or other formal award. Includes programs resulting in all bachelor's degrees and other baccalaureate level or equivalent degrees, as well as 5-year cooperative programs, and those programs in which the normal 4 years of work are completed in 3 years.

**QUARTER CALENDAR SYSTEM** - A calendar system in which the academic year consists of 3 sessions called quarters of about 12 weeks each. The range may be from 10 to 15 weeks. There may be an additional quarter in the summer.

**SEMESTER CALENDAR SYSTEM** - A calendar system that consists of 2 semesters during the academic year with about 16 weeks for each semester of instruction. There may be an additional summer term.

**TRANSFER-OUT STUDENT** - A student that leaves the reporting institution and enrolls at another institution. For this survey, transfer must be documented as specified in "Transfer Verification."

**TRANSFER-PREPARATORY PROGRAM** - A program designed specifically to provide a student with the basic knowledge needed to transfer into a higher-level program. For example, this may be the first 2 years of a baccalaureate level program for which the institution does not offer an award.

**TRANSFER VERIFICATION** - Evidence of transfer as documented by:

- a. A certification letter or document from the registrar of the receiving institution that the student is enrolled in the receiving institution.
- b. An electronic certification, such as SPEEDE/ExPRESS or a secure e-mail message from the registrar of the receiving institution stating that the student is enrolled at that institution.
- c. Confirmation of enrollment data from a legally authorized, statewide or regional tracking system (or shared information from those systems) confirming that the student has enrolled in another institution.
- d. Institutional data exchange information confirming that a student has enrolled in another institution.
- e. An equivalent level of documentation.

**TRIMESTER CALENDAR SYSTEM** - An academic year consisting of 3 terms of about 15 weeks each.

**UNDERGRADUATE** - For this survey, a student enrolled in a 4-year or 5-year bachelor's degree program.