



ANNUAL INSTITUTIONAL UPDATE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

2023.05

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Data FAQs

Which year’s data should be reported in the Annual Institutional Update?

Because MSCHE is importing most of the data from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the Annual Institutional Update (AIU) data will follow the reporting years used by IPEDS that are publicly available each April.

Section	Subsection	Source Year
General Information	General Information	Academic year 2021-22
	Catalog	Most Recent Catalog Available
Enrollment²	Fall Enrollment Headcounts	Academic year 2021-22
	Fall Enrollment Race-Ethnicity Percentages	Academic year 2021-22
	Fall Enrollment Age Percentages	Academic year 2021-22
	12-Month Enrollment	July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021
	Distance Education Headcounts ¹	Academic year 2021-22
	Programs Offered	July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021
Student Achievement	Retention Rates	Academic year 2021-22
	First-Time Full-Time Enrollment	Academic year 2021-22
	Graduation Rates 150%	Status of student as of August 31, 2021
	Graduation Rates 200%	Status of student as of August 31, 2021
	Graduation Rate by Gender	Status of student as of August 31, 2021
	Graduation Rate by Race / Ethnicity	Status of student as of August 31, 2021
Finance – IPEDS Source Year	General	Fiscal year 2020-21
	Financial Results	Fiscal year 2020-21
	Education and General Expenses	Fiscal year 2020-21
Finance – Most Recent	General	Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
	Financial Results	Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
	Education and General Expenses	Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
Finance – For Dues	Total Expenses and Deductions	Fiscal year 2020-21
Uploads	Most Recent Financial Audit Metrics	Most Recent Audited Financial Statement
	Financial Documents to Upload	Most Recent Audited Financial Statement

¹ With the exception of “Programs Offered via distance education,” for which institutions should report data from July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

² With the following exceptions:

- “Percent FT-FT receiving Pell” and “Percent of all undergrads receiving Pell,” for which institutions should report data from July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.
- “Default Rate” is populated by data from College Scorecard “MERGED2020_21_PP.csv” datafile

General FAQs

What is the Annual Institutional Update and Why is this required?

In accordance with the Accreditation Review Cycle and Monitoring policy, the Commission shall assign institutions to an accreditation review cycle. Each institution shall be reevaluated and monitored on a regular and consistent basis in accordance with the assigned accreditation review cycle. The accreditation review cycle shall be continuous, and accreditation does not expire. The institution's assigned cycle can only be altered by the Commission under extraordinary circumstances or in accordance with Commission policy and procedures. The AIU is the mechanism for ongoing monitoring used by the Commission. During this process, institutions submit and verify key data indicators and upload required documents on an annual basis.

Where do I access the AIU?

The AIU is part of your institution's portal. To access it you should login to your portal page and select the Annual Update tab.

Who has access? – How do I get access?

The AIU is part of your institution's portal. There are four Key Contacts that are granted access by MSCHE. These are the President, CAO, CFO, and Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). These Key Contacts can grant access to one other individual known as the "Portal Delegate."

What will peer evaluators see from my AIU submission?

Data collected during the AIU is associated with other accreditation processes. Evaluators are provided all uploaded materials in the AIU.

- The AIU page, visible on the Institution Portal, is *only* visible to the institution. Peer reviewers do not actually see the Institution's Portal, or the institution's AIU page.

Why am I not receiving emails about the AIU?

The AIU is part of your institution's portal and per policy the individual primarily responsible for completing the AIU is your institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO). All communications regarding the AIU are sent to the President and ALO. It is the responsibility of the ALO to pass along MSCHE communications to appropriate individuals at the institution.

Is the AIU required?

Yes, the AIU is required as contained in the Accreditation *Review Cycle and Monitoring* policy.

Failure to complete the AIU on time will result in a Commission action requiring immediate additional reporting and a finding of non-compliance with Commission policy and procedures.

Are institutions exempt from the AIU during other Accreditation activities like Self-Study?

No, institutions are not exempt. The AIU is collected every year from each candidate and accredited institution regardless of other accreditation processes.

Who should be involved in identifying and gathering the AIU information?

The AIU is not only a collection of data fields, but it is an annual collection of key performance metrics and contextual information that will be viewed by Commission representatives during accreditation processes. The Commission recommends that senior administration consider an appropriate team of individuals who should be responsible for validating data, providing context for the data, and determining the appropriate supporting documentation.

How will this information be used by the Commission?

Following completion of the AIU submission by institutions, staff will conduct an analysis of each submission based on the indicators and metrics that can be found on the MSCHE website. One important change, already shared during the spring, is the analysis for student achievement, which is now based on different indicators and metrics. As a reminder, the student achievement indicator for institutions that will inform the analyses shifted to account for and analyze institutions that fall below 40% graduation rates for four-year institutions and 23% graduation rates for two-year institutions using 150% of normal time. Note that any institution with a moderate or serious concern following the staff analysis in any of the three indicators (student achievement, viability and capacity, and financial health) will receive a supplement information report (SIR) request for additional context and information from the Commission.

What is the best way to prepare for the AIU?

Each institution will determine its own approach to preparing for the AIU but should consider the following:

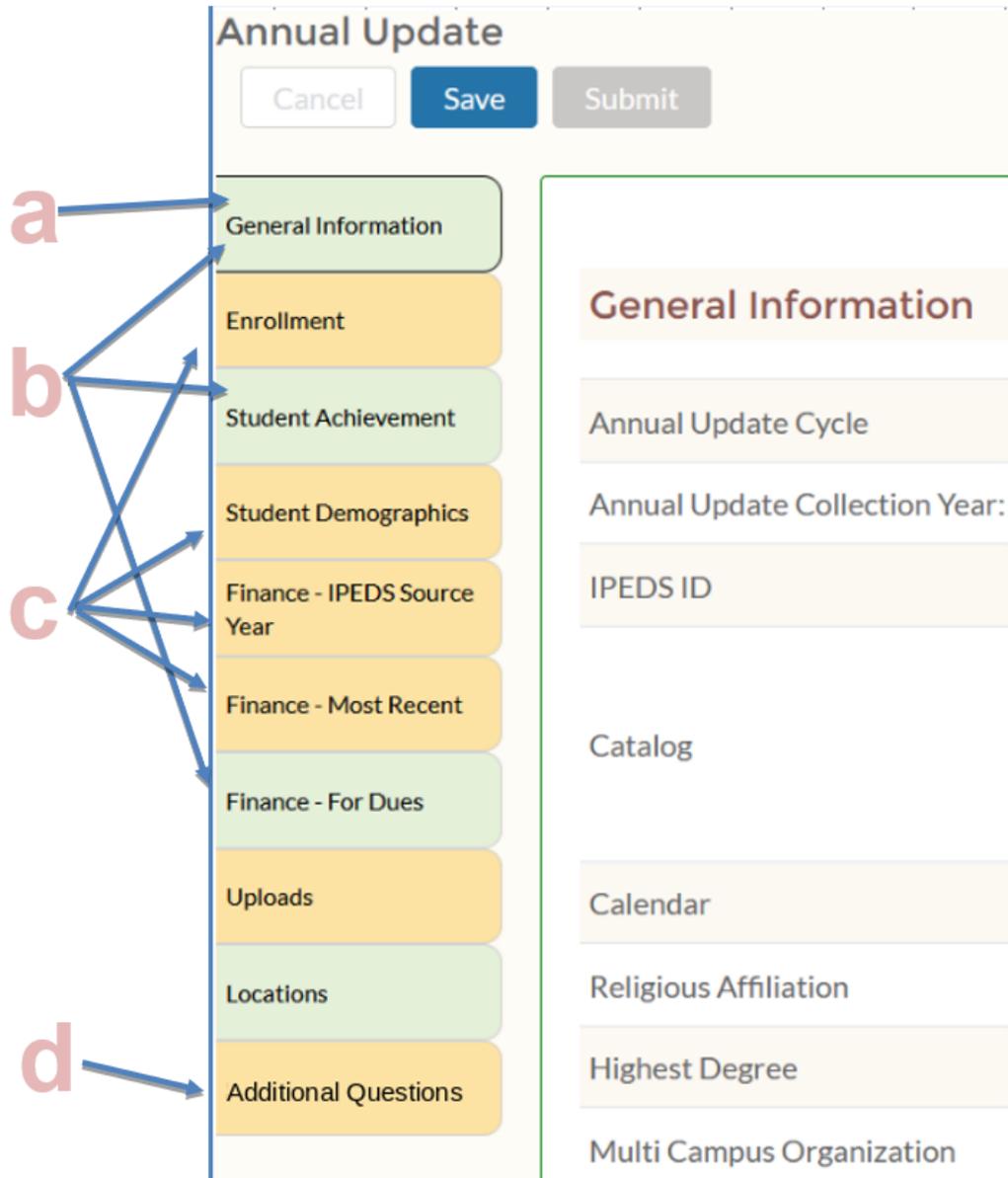
- 1 The AIU is only open for a short period of time and late submissions or extensions will not be granted. The expectation is that institutions are preparing their materials in the weeks leading up to the AIU launch.
- 2 Be certain your Key Contacts in the Institution Portal are up to date so that all messages are being received by appropriate individuals at the institution.
- 3 Senior Administration should identify those who need to be involved in the AIU validation, collection, and submission processes.

- 4 Use the dictionary for your institution's control type and prepare the necessary data for entry.
- 5 Determine whether the Student Achievement data being provided in the AIU appropriately reflects the achievement of your students. If the data does not appropriately demonstrate how students are achieving at your institution, then what additional data uploads will be submitted to provide an alternative view of your student's achievement.
- 6 Gather the necessary uploads (e.g., Catalog(s), audited financial statement, etc.)
- 7 If your institution is responding to Recommendation Responses, these should be written and vetted prior to the opening of the AIU.

Layout

Your current Annual Update collection can be found under the "Current" drop-down when selecting the "Annual Update" tab. The layout for the AIU now contains several tabs on the side of the data entry portal. This breaks up the former one-page layout into easily navigable sections. The tabs themselves will be yellow when there are items that still require your attention and will turn green when all required information has been filled.

- (a) A block solid box indicates the tab you are currently viewing
- (b) A green colored tab indicates that all required information has been filled.
- (c) A yellow colored tab indicates that required information is still needed.
- (d) A separate tab for additional questions related to the AIU



Locations Tab

Previously, upon submission an additional prompt was given to validate/update the locations for the Institution., The AIU now contains a **Locations** tab which displays only when viewing the Main Campus IPEDS ID, where the user can update the Name (except for the name of the Main Campus), and Headcount of the location. The address cannot be updated within the AIU itself. To update the address of a location, or to update the name of the Main Campus, please contact Substantive Change (substantivechange@msche.org).

Required Fields

The AIU only requires fields that your Institution must provide. If you feel as though you are required to fill out information that your Institution cannot provide, please contact research@msche.org.

Comment Boxes

In previous collections, the AIU required comments on significant variances that were observed Year over Year. The Institution is no longer required to provide comments on significant variances observed Year over Year.

Why do I not see the previous year's data?

To streamline the AIU submission, the AIU no longer displays the previous Collection Year's data in the current Collection Year. The submission view is not the appropriate way to view Historical Data. Instead, the data submitted in previous Collection Years can be viewed by selecting "Historical" from the drop-down menu when selecting the "Annual Update" tab, and then selecting the desired Collection Year.



Data Dictionaries

Where do I access definitions?

Definitions are available in two places for the AIU. The complete data dictionaries in PDF format are available on our website <http://go.msche.org/AIU>. These same definitions are also available on the AIU page in-line with the items being defined. Simply click on the  to get the complete definition for that item

How do I use the AIU data dictionaries?

Many of the AIU metrics are from IPEDS, and indeed most member institutions are not entering data but merely verifying the uploaded data. The data dictionaries provides the following information: Source, Input by, Variable/Calculation and Definition:

Source – The source of the data informs institutions where prepopulated data came from. In the below example this field is pre-populated from the IPEDS Fall Enrollment survey, Part A. A complete list of IPEDS materials can be found on the NCES website along with the forms, definitions, and additional information regarding exactly what this metric is and is not.

Input by – Identifies whether this piece of data should be uploaded by MSCHE for IPEDS institutions, or whether this is a field that must be inserted by the institution.

Variable/Calculation: Over the years the names and locations of IPEDS fields have sometimes changed, but the variable name, has always been consistent. If you are unable to locate the exact metric, or you are uncertain exactly which metric from Fall Enrollment, Part A is the number in the AIU, then you can track back to the exact variable in IPEDS. The IPEDS data sets are available on the NCES website including actual data files and documentation with the list of variable names and definitions.

Definition: Finally, the definition explaining the metric is included. For metrics coming directly from IPEDS, there is always additional information on the NCES website providing much more detail regarding what should be included and what should not for each data point collected in IPEDS. This additional information may be useful to institution's who do not use IPEDS.

Example:

Part-time enrollment <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Source: IPEDS Fall Enrollment, Part A• Input by: MSCHE uploads data from source (where available)• Variable/Calculation: ENRPT Definition: ...

How do I find the finance numbers?

Each definition provides information that will direct you to the metric that is used. In addition to what is referenced above, the finance metrics provide you with the exact location of each piece of data.

For the below example the Variable/Calculation is **F1A17**.

F1 – refers to the control (Public), F2 for non-Profit, and F3 for for-Profit

A – is the part of the form where this metric will be found

17 – is the item number

Going to your institution's reported data forms will take you exactly to the exact item for the finance area.

Finance Example

Total unrestricted net assets

- Source: IPEDS Finance, Part A, Line 17
- Input by: MSCHE uploads data from source (where available)
- Variable/Calculation: F1A17

Definition (Public): Unrestricted net assets are net assets held by the institution upon which no restrictions have been placed by the donor or other party external to the institution.

Part A - Statement of Net Position Page 1

Most recent fiscal year ending before October 2018

If your institution is a parent institution then the amounts reported in Parts A and D should include ALL of your child institutions

Line no.		Current year amount	Prior year amount
	Assets		
01	Total <u>current assets</u>		
31	Depreciable <u>capital assets</u> , net of depreciation		
04	<u>Other noncurrent assets</u>		
16	<u>Restricted-nonexpendable</u>		
17	<u>Unrestricted</u>		
	CV=[A18-(A14+A15+A16)]		
18	Net position		
	CV=[(A06+A19)-(A13+A20)]		

Institutional Context FAQs

Will we be able to compare our institution's performance with that of our peers?

No, institutions only have access to their own data, not any aggregated data from other MSCHE member institutions.

How should different degree levels be defined?

Refer to the following table of definitions:

Term	Definition
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (less than 1 academic year)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in less than 1 academic year (2 semesters or 3 quarters) or designed for completion in less than 30 semester or trimester credit hours, or in less than 45 quarter credit hours, or in less than 900 contact or clock hours.
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (at least 1 but less than 2 academic years)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 1 but less than 2 full-time equivalent academic years; or designed for completion in at least 30 but less than 60 semester or trimester credit hours; or in at least 45 but less than 90 quarter credit hours; or in at least 900 but less than 1,800 contact or clock hours.
Postsecondary award, certificate, or diploma (at least 2 but less than 4 academic years)	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study at the postsecondary level (below the baccalaureate degree) in at least 2 but less than 4 full-time equivalent academic years; or designed for completion in at least 60 but less than 120 semester or trimester credit hours; or in at least 90 but less than 180 quarter credit hours; or in at least 1,800 but less than 3,600 contact or clock hours.
Associate's degree	An award that normally requires at least 2 but less than 4 years of full-time equivalent college work.
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.
Postbaccalaureate certificate	An award that requires completion of an organized program of study beyond the bachelor's. It is designed for persons who have completed a baccalaureate degree but does not meet the requirements of a master's degree. NOTE: Even though Teacher Preparation certificate programs may require a bachelor's degree for admission, they are considered sub-baccalaureate undergraduate programs, and students in these programs are undergraduate students.
Master's degree	An award that requires the successful completion of a program of study of at least the full-time equivalent of 1 but not more than 2 academic years of work beyond the bachelor's degree.
Post-master's certificate	An award that requires completion of an organized program beyond the master's degree but does not meet the requirements of academic degrees at the doctor's level.
Doctor's degree	The highest award a student can earn for graduate study. The doctor's degree classification includes such degrees as Doctor of Education, Doctor of Juridical Science, Doctor of Public Health, and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in any field such as agronomy, food technology, education, engineering, public administration, ophthalmology, or radiology.
Doctor's degree-professional practice	A doctor's degree that is conferred upon completion of a program providing the knowledge and skills for the recognition, credential, or license required for professional practice. The degree is awarded after a period of study such that the total time to the degree, including both pre-professional and professional preparation, equals at least six full-time equivalent academic years. Some of these degrees were formerly classified as first-professional and may include: Chiropractic (D.C. or D.C.M.); Dentistry (D.D.S. or D.M.D.); Law (J.D.); Medicine (M.D.); Optometry (O.D.); Osteopathic Medicine (D.O); Pharmacy (Pharm.D.); Podiatry (D.P.M., Pod.D., D.P.); or, Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), and others, as designated by the awarding institution.
Doctor's degree-research/scholarship	A Ph.D. or other doctor's degree that requires advanced work beyond the master's level, including the preparation and defense of a dissertation based on original research, or the planning and execution of an original project demonstrating substantial artistic or scholarly

	achievement. Some examples of this type of degree may include Ed.D., D.M.A., D.B.A., D.Sc., D.A., or D.M, and others, as designated by the awarding institution.
Doctor's degree-other	A doctor's degree that does not meet the definition of a doctor's degree - research/scholarship or a doctor's degree - professional practice.

Student Achievement FAQs

What types of files should be uploaded for the Context of Performance Uploads?

An institution may upload up to **three** documents containing data to provide additional context for the institution's Student Achievement. For some institutions, the data in the AIU appropriately demonstrate the performance of your student population. In other cases, these data represent a small portion of the student body. If the data does not represent your students' performance, it is important that you upload alternative data reports so that peer evaluators can better understand the achievement of your students.

Institutions which have no reported Student Achievement data (e.g., 150% Graduation Rate) within IPEDS, will be required to upload at least **one** Context of Performance Upload. This is required so that peer evaluators can gain better context of the achievement of your students. The uploaded materials will be visible and utilized during Self-Study process and other accreditation processes to evaluate your Institution's Student Achievement.

Do the Context of Performance Uploads need to be the same every year?

No, the Context of Performance uploads do not have to be identical every year. However, bear in mind that some level of consistency will make reviewing the data easier for peer evaluators.

Recommendation Responses FAQs

How should I submit a Recommendation Response in the AIU?

We have created a companion document on responding to the Recommendation Responses for the AIU. The document can be viewed [here](https://www.msche.org/accreditation/annual-institutional-update/how-to-submit-recommendation-responses-in-the-aiu/) or <https://www.msche.org/accreditation/annual-institutional-update/how-to-submit-recommendation-responses-in-the-aiu/>.

Common Questions

Browser preference / difficulty saving / upload and save error message

Safari and Internet Explorer do not work well with our system and the uploading and saving of the AIU in the Institution Portal. Please try to work on the AIU in Google Chrome.

Can we print the AIU?

Yes, there is a Print button on the top right of the AIU page in the institution portal, for both current and historic AIU submissions. You may download a .csv of your institution's current AIU data by clicking the Export to .CSV button, also on the top right of the current AIU's page.

Who receives information about the AIU?

Your institution's Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) receives all MSCHE communications regarding the AIU, as the ALO is the individual directly responsible for ensuring completion of the AIU.

Why is the data we reported to IPEDS different than the data in our AIU?

If you observe that there are discrepancies between what is reported in the AIU and what you have reported to IPEDS, we ask you to do the following:

1. Please confirm that this discrepancy exists between the AIU and your IPEDS Submission. This can be confirmed by searching for your institution in the IPEDS Data Center: <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data/> Click on "Look Up an Institution" and then search for your institution. All submissions can be seen in the "Reported Data" sub-section
2. If there is a discrepancy between what has been reported to IPEDS, and what is appearing in your institution's AIU portal, please provide a screenshot of the IPEDS submission data, and the AIU portal data that is not in alignment in an email to research@msche.org.

How can I correct prior year data?

Currently there is no mechanism to go back and alter data that has already been validated and certified by the institution. If reviewers ask about discrepancies in data, the institution will have an opportunity to explain the error at that time.

What if our Institution's Carnegie Classification is incorrect or out-of-date?

We pull your Institution's Carnegie Classification directly from The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Please ensure that your

Carnegie classification matches the most recently available data:
(<https://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/>).

What if we have two or more institution catalogs?

Please do one of the following: either merge all of your catalogs into one PDF and submit them as a single upload, or upload a PDF document with links to each of the catalogs.

Why can't we update a location's headcount?

We ask our member institutions to keep their locations up to date year-round, via the Institution Portal. During the AIU, we ask that you approve the accuracy of the data in the Institution Portal, via the tab on the left column of the AIU screen. The headcount numbers should reflect the most recent data your institution has available internally. We ask that you please update and confirm the headcounts and names for Additional locations and other instructional sites. If you need to close, open, or change the address of a location, please do so by initiating a Substantive Change request in the portal.

Why is the "Percent First Generation" field empty?

College Scorecard used to capture the percent of First Generation students. However, it has discontinued this information. Starting with the MERGED_2017-18 data file the field is NULL. While the "FIRST_GEN" field included in the "Most-Recent-Cohorts-Institution" data file has values in it, the values are populated from older pooled cohorts, namely *NSLDS AY2015-16, AY2016-17 pooled cohorts*. The Commission decided to retain this field in the data collection as an empty field. Therefore, no action on the part of the institution is required for this field.