National Student Clearinghouse Resource Guide
Curated by the University of Chicago To&Through Project

To&Through Data Collaborative Presentation: Working with NSC Data

This presentation provides an overview of NSC data, a walkthrough of example decision rules, and working group activities.

Tracking Two-Year College Outcomes: Comparing National Student Clearinghouse and Illinois Community College Board as Sources of Two-Year College Data

In this technical paper, we compare NSC data with two-year college data obtained through Illinois Longitudinal Data System (ILDS) and summarize key insights for users of these data.

Resources from the NSC Research Center

REPORTS

Considerations in Using StudentTracker for High Schools Reports

An overview of NSC data that covers how the NSC gets the data, the matching process, the implications of blocked records, and differences that can result from different reporting requests. **Read our notes on this report**.

NSC as an Integral Part of the National Postsecondary Data Infrastructure

Overviews NSC's model and role in the national postsecondary data infrastructure, and makes recommendations for improving its utility. **Read our notes on this report**.

Reporting of NSC Additional Data Elements

Reports the frequency with which non-mandatory additional data elements were provided for students who attended participating schools, disaggregated by institutional sector. **Read our notes on this report**.

Gender Imputation

This report provides an explanation of how NSC imputes gender for records that do not contain gender information. **Read our notes on this report**.

Impact of Directory Information Blocks on StudentTracker Results

Description of what institutional and individual blocks mean and the degree to which these block rates affect different institution types, student demographic groups, states, and institutions. **Read our notes on this report**.

Formatting Pull Queries

Step by step instructions on how to format your Excel sheet when making a data pull request to NSC.

LOOKUP TABLES/CROSSWALKS

- **Enrollment Coverage Workbook**: Documents coverage rates by institution type and by state from 2003 to present
- **FERPA Block Rate Details**: National and State-level block rates by institution type as well as a list of institutions with block rates of >10%
- **CIP Code Lookup Table**: Table for standardizing program of study descriptions
- **Credential Level Lookup Table**: Table for standardizing free-text degree/credential types
- **IPEDS Unit ID Crosswalk**: Crosswalk between NSC institution code and IPEDS
- **List of institutions reporting to NSC** and when they started reporting to NSC
  - » As of 2/4, when you download the participation list csv, every institution is marked as having started participating in December of 1969. You can copy and paste the web page into a csv in order to get the correct participation dates.

External Resources

Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education: A Status Report

[from the website] This report examines over 200 indicators, looking at who gains access to a host of educational environments and experiences, and how these trajectories differ, by race and ethnicity. In addition, invited scholarly essays provide further context around race and ethnicity in higher education that data alone cannot tell. **Read our notes on this report**.

The Missing Manual - Using National Student Clearinghouse Data to Track Postsecondary Outcomes

Abstract: This article explores the promises and pitfalls of using National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) data to measure a variety of postsecondary outcomes. We first describe the history of the NSC, the basic structure of its data, and recent research interest in using NSC data. Second, using information from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), we calculate enrollment coverage rates for NSC data over time, by state, institution type, and demographic student subgroups. We find that coverage is highest among public institutions and lowest (but growing) among for-profit colleges. Across students, enrollment coverage is lower for minorities but similar for males and females. We also explore two potentially less salient sources of non-coverage: suppressed student records due to privacy laws and matching errors due to typographic inaccuracies in student names. To illustrate how this collection of measurement errors may affect estimates of the levels and gaps in postsecondary attendance and persistence, we perform several case-study analyses using administrative transcript data from Michigan public colleges. We close with a discussion of practical issues for program evaluators using NSC data.

Notes from To&Through Call with NSC

These are our notes from our call with the National Student Clearinghouse, which covers topics such as:

- NSC coverage rates over time
- Identifying summer terms
- Identifying quarter system schools
- Handling missing data
- Data Quality questions

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