**Frequently Asked External Credit System (ECS) Questions**

**Please note that this file should be reported only for those students who earn degrees reported in the corresponding DIS collection and who have received transfer credit toward that degree. (One way to identify students who should be included in ECS would be to look at DIS and identify those students for whom "Cumulative Degree Credit Hours Awarded" [DD114] is greater than "Cumulative Native Credits Earned" [DD44].)**

Q1:     ECS file.  There is some confusion here.  Is this per student per source of credit… Repeated per term?

A:      An ECS record should be submitted only for undergraduate students student receiving degrees or awards.  The record should not be repeated per term but reported only in the term the student earns the degree.  In addition, there should be a DIS record.  If the "cumulative degree credit hours awarded" toward the degree is less than the "credit hours required for the award" then an ECS record must be present.

Or only included in the term that the institution is aware of the credit?  For example, if I had 3 credits from MC in fall 2010 and 6 credits from HCC in Spring 2011; I transferred in fall 2011.  Do I report both sources of credits every term?  Or, do I report only one time as to prevent duplicates?

Please see response above.

Q1:     Should this collection include a record per student per source of credit repeated per term?

A:      An ECS record should be submitted only for undergraduate students receiving degrees or awards.  The record should be reported only in the term the student earns the degree or award.  There should also be an associated DIS record.  If the "cumulative Native degree credit hours awarded" toward the degree is less than the "credit hours required for the award" then an ECS record must also be present.

Q2:     To report ECS, what should we do for FICE codes for institutions that either do not have FICE codes or for which we are unable to find FICE codes?

A:      Additional codes have been added to the Data Dictionary Reference (DD3).  An Excel sheet of US OPEID codes will be posted on the MHEC Secure Data web site for you to download. There will also be a search link provided on the web-site.

Q3:     If a student has 3 credits from one institution in fall 2010 and 6 credits from another in Spring 2011 and transferred in fall 2011.  Should both sources of credits every term be reported?  Or, do I report only one time as to prevent duplicates?

A:      Please see response above in Q1

[6/3/2013] **NOT SURE HOW TO FORMAT (NJ)**

- In the FAQ in the **ECS** section it says - *if the **"cumulative degree credit hours"** awarded toward the degree is less than the "credit hours required for the award" then and ECS record should be present*– should that be "cumulative **NATIVE** credit hours earned"?

1. Regarding the response to the ECS questions in MHEC's FAQ's, Q1, we want to clarify that a separate record will be created for each student **for each source of external credit**. So a student can appear in this file multiple times if the student is transferring credits from several different institutions.

2. Also ECS, Q2: For some students we might not be able to identify a FICE code for the sending institution. Please clarify how those situations are to be handled.

The early definitions indicated that we should report all External Credits input during the Collection-Term for all students. Now, you only want External Credits for Collection-Term Graduates? Do you want All External Credits, no matter when they were entered into our systems, or only those credits entered during the Collection-Term?

The ECS system is a sister to the DIS system. If there is no DIS record then there should not be an ECS record.

ECS should include one record per undergraduate student per source of credit. An ECS record should be submitted only for undergraduate students receiving degrees or awards. The record(s) should not be repeated each term but reported only in the term the student earns the degree. In addition, there should be a DIS record for the same term. If the "cumulative degree credit hours awarded" toward the degree is less than the "credit hours required for the award" then an ECS record should be available. All external credits toward the degree should be submitted in the ECS file.

Q:      The ECS file is giving us an error because we do not have the SASID. Can we submit the file without the SASID?

A:      FYI: MHEC is working with MSDE in a separate process to acquire SASIDs. A file layout will be provided to institutions so that MHEC can collect demographic student data to be matched with MSDE records for existing SASIDs or if there is not an existing record, a SASID will be assigned. MHEC will in turn send the file containing the SASID back to institutions. This process will continue as needed until institutions are able to participate in sending and receiving electronic transcripts from which the SASID can be captured. More information on this will be forthcoming.

Q:      If a student receives an Associate award in the Summer, and the same student receives another Associate award in the Fall, should there be two March ECS records for that same student ?

A:    Yes

        If Yes, the two records will be exactly the same, except for the associated Grad-Term.

        Correct.

Q:    We have no way of determining which or how many Transfer-In credits were actually applied to a specific award.  If the student has Transfer-In credits from 4 different sources, then a Yes to the 1st question would result in 4 pairs of identical records reported in March.

A:    Under this circumstance, it is correct that there will be four pairs of identical records with differing terms.  From an analytical perspective we are interested in the volume of external records and trust that the institution will apply credits appropriately to each award.