MdAIR Fall Conference
October 19, 2013
MAC Course Information System (CIS) and Student Registration System (SRS) Session Notes
Speaker:  Doug Nutter

Data Dictionary
MHEC will be finalizing a data dictionary next week with added clarifications to help guide institutional researchers.  No new data elements will be added.  No significant changes to existing data elements will be made.

General Process Recommendations
Doug Nutter, Director of Institutional Research from Bowie State University and pilot participant recommended institutions start submitting "sample" files, using fall or spring term files.  The timeframe it took to submit files was more than anticipated with one dedicated programmer.

MHEC supported this recommendation clarifying that files could be small and not complete and that this would be a beneficial exercise to prepare for reporting deadlines.

MHEC stated that institutions are allowed to submit files early; months in advance of the reporting deadlines.  MHEC requested that institutions adhere to reporting deadlines and ensure files are submitted before the reporting deadline.

Researchers from the System of Maryland Data System announced that they have created their own edit check system.

Additional Process Clarifications:
1.  The website where you submit the files collects enough information that institutions can use their own naming conventions for labeling files to be uploaded.  The responses from the drop down boxes become variables that are saved for the file upload.
2.  EIS is the only file with a 20% run date.  Many institutions are setting internal census dates for the CIS and SRS files.
3.  When an institution uploads a file through MHEC edit system, the individual file edit system will first examine the file for fatal errors and warnings within the individual file.  After all term files are uploaded, MHEC will then cross check files for errors.  MHEC stated that this will be a second phase to cross check files once all files are received.  Institutions should perform preliminary cross checking prior to uploading their own files.
4.  If institutions want an additional count or frequency for a specific field within the term file as part of the edit report, MHEC would consider requests.
5.  MHEC stated that basic edit checks are in record layout files and updated data dictionary.
6.  Researchers noted that they had timing concerns as to when files are cleared through MHEC and when data is released internally on campus.  The current process does not allow for sufficient and timely edit checks prior to the data being released internally on campuses.  MHEC will work with institutions on timing and validation of data prior to MHEC's release of data.
7.  The EIS presents the official enrollment figures and the DIS presents the official award figures.  The other data will be extra information to do educational research.  Files may not match one-to-one (e.g. EIS and EOTS).
8.  For planning purposes, campuses should think about how submitted files will be maintained within data systems on campus.

9. Institutional Research Offices should talk to other offices (Admissions, Registration, Financial Aid, Human Resources) to ensure data integrity processes are in place.

Reporting Clarifications
1. EIS clarification: For students registered in an interim session within the fall term, student information from both sessions should be combined into one line especially if both are before the freeze date.
2. If an undergraduate student takes a graduate course, do not include in the Student Registration file.
3. For the CIS file, when you have a team of teachers teaching a class, you will only report the primary teacher. Researchers noted that no additional information is collected to identify what courses are taught by a team of teachers.
4. For the CIS file, initial date of employment should be used. Researchers noted concern for adjunct faculty, who may not consistently work from the date of initial employment.
5. MHEC reported that SASIDs will not be reported in the upcoming file submission, so blanks in SASIDs will not give a fatal error.