

MARYLAND HIGHER EDUCATION COMMISSION

MARYLAND IPEDS GRS MANUAL

Information Systems
Revised January 13, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE	3
WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS	3
USING COMMISSION FACSIMILE	4
USING COMMISSION SUPPORTING DATA FILE	6
IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE	7

APPENDICES

- A. State SRK/GRS Workgroup Recommendations**
- B. Comparison of GRS to Commission Facsimile**

MARYLAND IPEDS GRS MANUAL

Purpose

With the final passage of Student Right to Know (SRK) federal regulations in late 1996 and the related March 1, 1998 implementation of national IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) form, it became apparent that the Commission would need to provide assistance to Maryland colleges and universities in meeting this new reporting burden. The benefit to the State is a tremendous cost savings (estimated to approach one million dollars) to the public institutions by eliminating the need for each to implement and maintain tracking systems that meet SRK/GRS requirements. A statewide workgroup of Commission, segment and institution representatives was created in early 1997 to begin work on this task. The workgroup met several times during 1997 as the U.S. Department of Education was developing the reporting format and associated instructions. The workgroup's discussions and initial recommendations provided guidance for this project.

This manual is to provide public colleges and universities in Maryland a reference for completing the IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey (GRS). Institutions are mandated by the federal SRK law to comply with reporting (GRS) and disclosure requirements. Both the general and specific athletic disclosure requirements are in the federal regulations for the Student Right To Know (34 CFR Part 668).

As of the 2004-2005 IPEDS Collection cycle, the GRS data is no longer used by the NCAA for Division I institution reporting. NCAA now collects their data directly from institutions. GRS is still required for IPEDS for Title IV federal student aid participating institutions.

As of the 2011-2012 IPEDS Collection cycle, the GRS data is required to be reported using the new race and ethnicity categories. MHEC maps the original cohort race/ethnicity to the new race and ethnicity categories for reporting purposes.

Workgroup Recommendations

The Workgroup's initial recommendations are attached in Appendix A. These covered seven major areas:

- GRS Reporting Alternatives - institution has final and only authority in determining disclosure and reporting compliance
- Commission Assistance Role - Commission will provide assistance to institutions to complete GRS

- Transfer Track Participation - Commission and workgroup will examine potential benefits with a pilot project
- Social Security Identification Changes - the Commission will put into place mechanisms and optional collection form for institution's to manage these changes
- Enrollment Information System (EIS) - institutions will have to review and insure proper identification of concurrently enrolled high school students in this system
- Annual Degree Period - the Commission will stay with the existing Degree Information System (DIS) period of 7/1-6/30 but through GRS supporting data those institutions who wish to can adjust to 9/1-8/31 period.
- Longitudinal Study File Tracking Methodology - the Commission will modify this system to track students in a manner necessary for GRS methodology

Using Commission Facsimile

The Commission will provide the public colleges and universities with a completed GRS facsimile (1998 original full version of GRS). This will contain data from the Commission's longitudinal study system. The completed facsimile will provide the best available data based upon the Commission's student record collection systems. A complete comparison of the Commission provided GRS data to the federal rules are contained in Appendix C.

In general, the Commission's facsimile can provide most of the GRS data especially the critical graduation rate. There are some limitations, the major are indicated below.

- Transfer-out tracking (part B of sections 2, 3 and 4) is limited to within the Maryland public system and starting with 2004 fall enrollment Maryland resident students at independent colleges. Institutions can track outside this limitation by using Commission supporting data file.
- Clarifying Questions (part C of sections) and some other lines of form (which are usually optional) cannot be provided by Commission's system.

When completing the IPEDS GRS web form from the facsimile, careful attention must be paid to whether a cell is completed with a blank or zero. BLANK AND ZERO MAY NOT HAVE THE SAME MEANING. Blank is used for unknown or unavailable data and lines that do not apply. Zero means the answer for cell is actually zero. If a line has any cell with number, there should be no blank cells on line.

In the spring of 2001, IPEDS migrated from a paper form collection mechanism to a web based collection. At that time the 1998 original full version of the GRS was greatly reduced to the 2001 shorter version. There were many changes limiting what was collected but it was built upon the 1998 version. Section and line numbers were preserved from the original version with few changes.

The following table relates the lines on the 1998 original full version to the new shorter web version (using 2011).

Line Definition	2011 Web based GRS Section and Line	1998 full version GRS Section and Line MHEC facsimile	IPEDS / GRS Notes
Initial Cohort of all full-time first-time degree seeking UG	I-01	I-01	
Initial Cohort of full-time first-time bachelor degree seeking UG	I-02	I-02	
Completers of programs of less than 2 years within 150% time	II-11	II-11A	
Completers of programs of at least 2 years but <4 years within 150% time	II-12	II-12A	
Completers of programs at least 4 years within 150% time	II-18	II-18A	
Completed program in 4 years or less	II-19	II-19	
Completed program in 5 years	II-20	II-20	
Transfer-out students (noncompleters) within 150% of normal time	II-30	II-30	
TOTAL students to be excluded from cohort	II-45	II-45	MHEC does not provide but institution can
Students still enrolled as of the 150% of the normal time to completion of program.	II-51	II-22	
SECTION III lines map the same as	See above	See above	

Using Commission Supporting Data File

In addition to the completed GRS facsimile, the Commission will provide a supporting data file. Based upon the workgroup's recommendation, this file is supplied to allow institutions to enhance the data on the GRS facsimile. This supporting data file contains information on how each student was counted in the facsimile. The file is simple in nature and contains a record for each time a student was counted on a line. A student can be traced through the entire facsimile using this file.

The file can be loaded and manipulated in the pc application of the completer's choice. It has been designed to be used in word processing (as table/database format), spreadsheet or even data base applications. The file is a DOS text file which is comma delimited enabling its utility. By using the appropriate functions of your software, you can load, import or insert this data file. Once this is accomplished, the data can be easily manipulated for your desired use. For example, by sorting or searching on the SSN field you have tracking of each student through the lines of the GRS. If you sort or search on section and then line numbers, you will have a list of all students counted on each GRS line.

The format of this file is as follows.

Positions	Data Field	Data Type	Notes
1-9	SSN	numeric	as submitted in original cohort year EIS or as changed by SSN change form in subsequent years
10	Comma	text	comma delimiter
11	GRS Section Number	numeric	corresponds to GRS form
12	Comma	text	comma delimiter
13-15	GRS Line Number	text	corresponds to GRS form, format NNX, for example line1=01, line 23=23, line 11A=11A
16	Comma	text	comma delimiter
17-18	GRS Column	numeric	corresponds to GRS form,(columns 01-14 for cohorts before 2010) (columns 01-18 for cohorts 2010 and after)
19	Comma	text	comma delimiter
20	Student Dropped Indicator	text	field contains an "X" only for line 23 when student is lost in tracking

The student dropped indicator is used to identify those students included on line 23 who are not able to be tracked by the Commission's longitudinal tracking system. This has been added to the supporting data file to enable institutions to easily identify students being counted as drop-outs. On line 23 the GRS form includes both students not tracked (drop-outs) and transfer-out. The transfer-out are counted again on lines 30-39. By using the student dropped indicator,

you can easily identify those students you may wish to focus on for enhancing the data on the GRS facsimile. These could include transfer-out (verified) to Maryland independent colleges and out-of-state colleges which could be added to Part B lines 30-33, exclusions in Part C lines 41-45 or even completers in Part A lines 11-23 where SSN changes may have occurred in cohort years prior to the 1996 cohort.

Implementation Schedule

The following is the implementation schedule for starting the GRS in Maryland.

1998

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| January | - | Commission programming of GRS/SRK interface. |
| Early February | - | Delivery of GRS package to institutions including blank IPEDS GRS form, MHEC facsimile, documentation and supporting data file |
| March 1 | - | Completed IPEDS GRS form due to Commission. |
| March 15 | - | Mail out of new optional SSN change form, collect only changes for 1996 first-time student cohort for the 1997 EIS/DIS systems. |
| March 30 | - | Completed SSN change form due, only if institution chooses to submit. |
| Spring/Summer | - | Pilot test of Transfer Track with UMCP and Montgomery College. On hold, see end of Appendix A. |
| Summer/Fall | - | Commission modifications to its longitudinal tracking system for 1996 and later cohorts. |
| Fall | - | SSN cohort change form becomes part of annual collection. |
| November | - | Colleges and Universities insure EIS is properly submitted for concurrently enrolled high school students. |

1999

- | | | |
|----------------|---|--|
| January | - | Commission modification of software for revised GRS forms. |
| Early February | - | Delivery of GRS package to institutions. |
| March 1 | - | Completed IPEDS GRS form due to Commission |

2001

- | | | |
|-------|---|--|
| March | - | Commission modified upload file to new IPEDS web based format but still continued to provide institutions with the more detailed 1998 full version GRS forms and data. |
|-------|---|--|

APPENDIX A

STATE SRK/GRS WORKGROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

**Student Right to Know (SRK)/Graduation Rate Survey (GRS)
Workgroup Recommendations**

1. GRS Reporting Alternatives

The institution is the responsible party for the requirements of the Student Right to Know Law. This federal law was designed to be part of the institution's requirements under their Program Participation Agreement for Title IV HEA programs. The institution is the final and only authority in determining disclosure and reporting compliance with the U.S. Department of Education under this agreement., including reporting using the new federal Graduation Rate Survey (GRS) form. Public institutions will be able to choose one of three methods. Independents will only be able to utilize the first choice.

1. Develop and maintain institutional system to generate GRS data.
2. Use Commission provided GRS facsimile only.
3. Enhance the Commission facsimile and its supporting data with institutional information.

2. Commission Assistance Role

The Commission should provide each year assistance to the institutions for the required GRS reporting cohort. This assistance will be in the form of facsimile of the GRS form. This facsimile will be generated from the Commission's longitudinal tracking system. It will provide a large amount of GRS data. Any missing data or limitations in the system's ability will be documented for the institution with the facsimile.

In addition to the facsimile, a computer readable file identifying students by social security numbers will be provided. This file will identify how each student was counted in the GRS categories. This will allow the institutions the option to use the third choice to enhance the Commission provided data through other information available at the institution.

The Commission should continue to monitor federal change to the GRS form. The assistance to public institutions should be continued. The facsimile should be added to or modified to conform with expected changing federal requirements.

3. Transfer Track Participation

The National Student Loan Clearinghouse (NSLC) is initiating a new service to institutions to expand their abilities to track transfer-out student on a national basis for the GRS form. This service is based upon an institution's participation in the Clearinghouse service for the National student Loan Data System reporting process. The workgroup recommends the Commission pursue a pilot project using both a 4-year and community college to examine the feasibility of developing an interface from the longitudinal tracking system to transfer track starting in either the 1999 or 2000 GRS reporting period. This

interface would only be usable by those institutions that have signed up for Transfer Track which requires participation in their student loan processing service. The Commission by acting as the institution's agent will also be able to access transfer track. Since this requires an institutional commitment beyond the scope of the GRS requirements, the pilot results need to be examined before the workgroup can encourage institutions to examine the NSLC services and their potential benefits. This would expand the transfer tracking ability for both the Commission and the institution by expanding to independent institutions in Maryland and out-of-state institutions.

4. Social Security Identification Changes

The institutions and the Commission recognize that in certain cases social security numbers may change over time. This represents a problem when tracking individuals reported at different points in time. The workgroup recommends the creation of a mechanism by the Commission to collect and correct social security changes for the longitudinal tracking system. The collection should take the form of an optional survey being added to the annual collection. The survey should be instituted to coincide with the first SRK cohort of 1996.

5. Enrollment Information Systems (EIS) Refinements

There are several implications on reporting enrollments in the EIS system due to the new GRS requirements. The reporting of the first-time flag will be the singular criteria for cohort selection. This means institutions should be made aware that any undergraduate student level classification besides the traditional freshman will place a student in the longitudinal tracking system yearly cohort. This change should begin with 1996 cohort.

Institutions should be informed that concurrently enrolled high school students must be properly coded in EIS to insure placement in appropriate first-time cohort. These students must be coded as non-degree, NOT first-time and with unclassified student level. They will only be identified as first-time students after their graduation from high school. The rule pertaining to including students as first-time in EIS if they first attended college in the previous summer remains unchanged.

6. Annual Degree Period GRS Change

The current Degree Information System that reports this information is based upon a fiscal year period (7/1 - 6/30). A last minute GRS change requires counting of degrees through the end of August (period 9/1 - 8/30). Since GRS is based upon a single 150% time report, the effect is expected to be minimal on the Commission provided GRS facsimile. For four year institutions, it only adds two months at the end of a six year time period. Institutions that feel this two months is significant to their graduation rate can use the Commission provided data to enhance the GRS data under the third option for reporting the GRS.

The workgroup does recognize the possible effect of this new de facto national standard on measuring graduation rates. This different degree period may have the affect of increasing graduation rates especially when calculated on shorter yearly time periods (such as 4 years). The major impact in Maryland would only be in research reports on graduation rates. The workgroup did not reach a statewide consensus on the need to address this degree period change for the research report impact. Both the GRS and the accountability process provide a procedure for each institution to address the two month period if they deem this a significant impact on their rates.

The University of Maryland segment representatives suggested the creation of another new annual collection survey consisting of a supplemental Degree Information System file for the two-month summer period each year. This information would have to be incorporated into the collection systems and the Commission's longitudinal tracking system to effectively change its degree period universally.

7. Longitudinal Study File Tracking Methodology

The Commission has used for over 15 years a consistent methodology for tracking students. This methodology included the random selection of enrollment or degree information for a student in cases where multiple institution reporting was found (approximately 1% of students). The new graduation rate methodology of GRS requires reporting of institution specific rates (must graduate from original institution enrolled).

In order to provide the best data for GRS, the totally random method should be replaced with a methodology that favors the institution in which the student enrolled first-time. The algorithm would depend upon the segment and type (2 or 4 year) of institution. A student enrolled and reported by multiple institutions should be resolved by the following order of priority: original cohort institution, another institution (random) in same segment, another institution (random in different segment but same type (2 or 4 year) and another institution (random) in different segment and type. This new methodology is recommended to be used for all cohorts starting with the 1996. This is the first cohort under the Student Right-to-Know regulations.

APPENDIX B

COMPARISON OF GRS TO COMMISSION FACSIMILE

1998 COMPARISON OF NEW SRK/GRS REQUIREMENTS TO MHEC LONGITUDINAL TRACKING

FORM(S)	SECTION/LINE	FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS	MHEC CAPABILITIES
GRSI (4yr)	I/01 – cohort all full-time first-time degree-seeking UG	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. full cohort as of freeze date 2. first-time 3. full-time 4. degree seeking (confusing instructions definition is correct) 5. match cohort's corresponding year in IPEDS fall enrollment report (EF) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OK - basis of EIS which data is extracted from 2. Note – same as EIS first-time flag may include concurrent high school if enrolled full-time (see appendix A #5) 3. OK – Same as EIS full-time field, note full-time taking remedial courses if student full-time for financial aid determination 4. OK – EIS degree sought uses the same definition, student must be indicated as degree seeking 5. OK – EIS used to generate both the cohort and the EF report, but IPEDS rule differences cause facsimile to be more accurate than pre-printed GRS numbers
GRSI (4yr)	I/02 – of cohort, number bachelor degree seeking	1. bachelor degree seeking	1. OK – use EIS degree sought field = bachelor's
GRS1 (4yr)	I/03 – of cohort, number other than bachelor's degree seeking	other than bachelor's degree seeking	1. OK – use EIS degree sought field = Lower Division Certificate, Associates or Upper Division Certificate
GRS1 (4yr)	II/10 – same as line 02	1. See line 02	1. See line 02
GRS1 (4yr)	II/11 – completers of programs <2 years	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. completed <2 year programs in <6 years 2. as of 8/31 3. highest degree reported (federal Q&A) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OK – from DIS student has LDC at original institution 2. Note – not same as DIS,, this causes July and August graduates to be included in the next academic year which starts in following September, for institutions where this is significant the supporting data can be used to adjust 3. OK – determine from DIS the highest degree received and report it on appropriate line 11, 12 or 18
GRS1 (4yr)	II/12 – completers of programs >2 and <4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. completed program (>2 and <4) in <6 years 2. see line 11 #2 3. see line 11 #3 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OK – from DIS student has Associates or UDC at original institution 2. Note – see line 11 #2 3. Note – see line 11 #3
GRS1 (4yr)	II/13-17 – completed “2<program>4” in n years	1. breakdown of line 12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note – use DIS y 2. early basis to determine completion period at original institution, see line 11 #2
GRS1 (4yr)	II-18 – completers of bachelor's or equivalent	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. completed programs (>4 years) in <6 years 2. see line 11 #2 3. see line 11 #3 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OK – from DIS student has bachelor's degree at original institution 2. Note – see line 11 #2 3. Note – see line 11 #3

1998 COMPARISON OF NEW SRK/GRS REQUIREMENTS TO MHEC LONGITUDINAL TRACKING

FORM(S)	SECTION/LINE	FEDERAL REQUIRMENTS	MHEC CAPABILITIES
GRS1 (4yr)	II/19-21 – completed bachelors in n years	1. breakdown of line 18	1. Note – use DIS yearly basis to determine completion period at original institution, see line 11 #2
GRS1 (4yr)	II/22 – non-completers still enrolled	1. still enrolled as of 10/15 even if stop out or transferred out before re-enrolling 2. not completed any program	1. OK – use next fall EIS after sixth year for enrolled, as of 10/15 (or official fall date) and at original institution. 2. OK – students counted as completers first if receive any award
GRS1 (4yr)	II/23 – non-completers not enrolled	1. drop out, stop out, transfer-out	1. OK – use EIS/DIS to determine completers and still enrolled but not transferred in lines 11-22, everyone else included in line 23
GRS1 (4yr)	II/11A – of line 11 how many in completed in 150%	1. completed 150% normal time	1. Note – DIS yearly basis allows only a 2 year (4 semesters) completion period of 200% for LDC.
GRS1 (4yr)	II/12A – of 12 how many completed in 150%	1. AA completed in 150% normal time 2. UDC completed in 150% normal time	1. OK – DIS use 3 year (150%) 2. Note – DIS yearly basis allows only a 5 year (10 semester) completion period of 167% for UDC
GRS1 (4yr)	II/18A – of 18 how many completed in 150%	1. bachelor's in 150% normal time	1. OK – in Maryland all bachelor's are assumed to be four years so line 18A = line 18
GRS1 (4 yr)	II/30 – transfer-out in 150%	1. all transfer-out students 2. for verified transfer-out students 3. transfer-out from line 23	1. Note – only for in-state public institutions not independents or out-of-state lines 30-33 are optional 2. OK – MHEC verified as confirmation of enrollment data from a legal authorized statewide system but only for in-state public institutions 3. OK – not still enrolled without transfer and not a completer but have EIS information for another institution
GRS1 (4yr)	II/31-33 – transfer to what	1. transfer-out to what type of institution	1. OK – Will use either first institution detected after original or last institution attended in six year period. Line 31 would always be blank in Maryland
GRS1 (4yr)	II/38 – of transfer out in line 30 returned and still enrolled	1. transfer-out who re-enrolls in institution as of 10/15	1. OK – see line 22 #1
GRS1 (4yr)	II/41-45 – exclusion numbers under SRK	1. students not at institutions (and not graduated and not transferred) for exclusions reasons	1. OK – optional (federal Q&A) did not have this ability in Maryland system
GRS1 (4yr)	II/46 – still enrolled and in programs >5	1. still enrolled and in programs whose length >5 years	1. Note – not in Maryland System and not used in SRK for institutions with predominantly 4 year programs, for institutions where this is significant supporting data can be used to add

1998 COMPARISON OF NEW SRK/GRS REQUIREMENTS TO MHEC LONGITUDINAL TRACKING

FORM(S)	SECTION/LINE	FEDERAL REQUIRMENTS	MHEC CAPABILITIES
GRS1 (4 yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/10 – other than bachelor's seeking, first-time, full-time	1. uses line 3 of GRS1 or all first-time full-time degree seeking at 2 yr	1. OK – use EIS, see notes on section I line 1
GRS1 (4 yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/11 – completers of programs <2 year	1. same as section II, for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2 yr)	III/12-17 – completers of programs > 2 and <4 years	1. same as section II except covers other than bachelor's (lower division certificate, associate, upper division certificate) degree-seeking students at both 4 year and 2 year	1. OK – lines 15-17 on GRS-2 for 2yr CC are for the future 6 year cohort report, leave blank
GRS1 (4yr)	III/18-21	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/22 – still enrolled	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/23 – non-completers not enrolled (include transfer-out)	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/11A – of line 11 how many completed within 150% of normal time	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. Note – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/12A – of line 12 how many completed within 150% normal time	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS1 (2yr)	III/18A – of line 18 how many completed within 150% normal time	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/30-33 – transfer-out within 150% normal time	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS2 (2yr)	III/34-37 – transfer-out in >3 and <6 of transfer-out in line 30	1. for 6 year cohort report of transfer-out	1. OK – for future GRS reporting, use extended time period with same rules as in section II lines 30-33 but with longer time period and for GRS2 cohort

1998 COMPARISON OF NEW SRK/GRS REQUIREMENTS TO MHEC LONGITUDINAL TRACKING

FORM(S)	SECTION/LINE	FEDERAL REQUIRMENTS	MHEC CAPABILITIES
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/38 – of transfer-out in line 30 returned and still enrolled	1. same as section II for other than bachelor's seeking	1. OK – same as section II
GRS2 (2yr)	III/39 – left in good standing	1. student drop-out and stop-out (not transfers) that left in “good standing”	1. Note – MHEC does not collect this type of student data Note – that this is not required in SRK and optional
GRS1 (4yr) GRS2 (2yr)	III/41-45 – exclusion numbers	1. student not at institution (and not graduated and not transferred) for exclusion reasons	1. OK – optional (federal Q&A), do not have this ability in Maryland systems
GRS2 (2yr)	III/47 – still enrolled programs >3 years	1. still enrolled in programs of 3 years or longer	1. OK – not a problem in Maryland CC system, always blank and check box marked
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/10 – cohort defined	1. <u>part-time</u> first-time degree seeking students	1. OK – see section I line 01 and changing to selection of only part-time students
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/11-17 – completers of programs <2 years and programs >2 years	1. same as section III but part-time cohort	1. Note – same as section III
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/22 – still enrolled	1. same as section III but part-time cohort	1. OK – same as section III
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/23 – not graduated and not enrolled (includes transfer-out)	1. same as section III but part-time cohort	1. OK – same as section III
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/39 – left in good standing	1. same as section III but part-time cohort	1. Note – same as section III
GRS2 (2yr)	IV/47 – still enrolled programs >3 years	1. same as section II but part-time cohort	1. OK – same as section III