



## **Rationale and Strategy for Separate IPEDS Reporting**

### **Introduction**

The University of South Florida is, by Florida Statute, required to pursue separate regional accreditation for each of its four member campuses. USF fully intends to maintain its structure as a single university, governed by one Board of Trustees and with one president. While USF will continue to report data to the State of Florida (Board of Governors and State Legislature) as a single entity, separate campus reporting will enhance student access, strengthen performance accountability, support mission differentiation, and allow member campuses to align with like institutions. Many multi-campus universities across the nation have been submitting separate data reports to IPEDS (Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System) for a number of years (e.g. The Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Rutgers University, Texas A&M University, University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Washington).

### **What is needed?**

USF requests support from the Florida Board of Governors (BOG) to facilitate submission of separate IPEDS data reports to the U.S. Department of Education, beginning in Fall 2009. This will be for (a) USF (Tampa, Academic Affairs and USF Health), (b) USF St. Petersburg, (c) USF Sarasota-Manatee, and (d) USF Polytechnic.

### **What is IPEDS reporting and why is it important?**

IPEDS is the core postsecondary data collection program administered by the National Center for Educational Statistics, a part of the United States Department of Education (<http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/about/>). The data collected serve as a basis for many studies both state and federal. The metrics have become the standard for most higher education activities such as enrollment reporting, student retention and progression to degree, degrees awarded, financial information, and faculty salaries. Additionally, these standardized data provide information for accreditation agencies, both regional and professional. Other organizations such as the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *US News and World Report*, national higher education survey firms, state legislatures, and higher education systems utilize the data for classification and performance assessment.

By statute, the State Legislature has created regional campuses, as sub-entities of the University of South Florida (s. 1004.33(1)(a)&(c), Florida Statutes, 2002, s. 1004.34(1)(a)&(c), Florida Statutes, 2002, and s.1004.345(1)(a)&(c), Florida Statutes, 2008). The aforementioned campuses have been granted fiscal and various other types of autonomy necessary to achieving separate accreditation. Agencies require the submission of reports in IPEDS format fundamentally making the assumption that the campuses would have an IPEDS identity. However, a conversation with the agencies determined that they did not have the authority to require IPEDS participation as long as the data were submitted in that prescribed format. These reports serve not only as descriptors but also provide a significant level of monitoring and accountability for each member campus of USF. Accordingly, it seems appropriate that the BOG require at least this minimum level of standard reporting and accountability. To consolidate the campuses' information and performance into the larger metrics of the whole of USF is to lose accountability while granting independence.

### **What does the U.S. Department of Education say?**

Campuses can report separately if a campus:

- Offers students complete programs of study
- Is beyond a reasonable commuting distance from the main campus

From the federal (U.S. DOE) perspective, the requirement to report is contingent upon an institution administering federal financial aid. Establishing separate Program Participation Agreements (PPA) for each campus is costly and time consuming. Having met the previous conditions (program and commuting), a regional campus can report independently under the main campus' PPA.

Separate regional accreditation is not a precondition to separate reporting. Yet, to realize the benefits of separate reporting, it should be accompanied by the delegation of academic autonomy to each campus, the precursor of separate regional and professional accreditation. Academic autonomy includes, but need not be limited to, the authority to:

- Design, deliver and award degrees.
- Establish differential admission standards.
- Create and promulgate campus policies and procedures consistent with BOG and BOT guidelines.
- Approve faculty and staff hiring; and make recommendations on tenure and promotion.

#### **Why is separate IPEDS reporting needed at USF?**

- To ensure that all member campuses are treated as equal partners at USF.
- To increase access to higher education, an important priority for the State Legislature, the BOG and USF.
- To support campuses in serving the needs of their local communities and to create distinctive identities, so balancing local and national aspirations.
- To actualize differential campus missions and to support the self-determination of a campus' future through enabling increased levels of academic autonomy and accountability.
- To support the pursuit of excellence – Separate campuses will be differentially classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and grouped by *US News and World Report* typologies.
- To ensure greater transparency in performance accountability for member campuses.
- To preserve the structure of a single multi-campus university, one Board of Trustees and one President.

#### **What needs to be done?**

- An agreement on the part of all USF campuses to contract under one Program Participation Agreement (PPA) for federal student financial aid programs (under Title IV from the U.S. DOE/NCES). Strategic Plan approved by the USF Board of Trustees, May 31, 2007. Governance guidelines approved by the USF Board of Trustees, May 31, 2007, with revisions approved on June 12, 2008, and July 1, 2008. Mission Differentiation principles approved by the USF Board of Trustees, March 20, 2008. **COMPLETED ✓ by USF**
- Agreement to report separately through IPEDS to NCES while reporting as one to the BOG. **COMPLETED ✓ by US Department of Education (NCES/IPEDS) and USF**
- Agreement on the part of the BOG (through the Strategic Planning and Academic and System Oversight Committee) to assist in separate federal reporting, while fully acknowledging that USF will remain one university, with one board of trustees and one president. **To be completed by the BOG**
- Modification of institutional student, financial, and human resources systems and data to assure accurate individual campus reporting. **To be completed by USF**
- Partnership between the BOG and USF staff to facilitate unified statewide reporting for USF (no change) and separate federal (IPEDS) reporting in Fall 2009 (Ramon Padilla, Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Resource Management, BOG, and Michael Moore, Associate Vice President, Academic Affairs – Decision Support, USF). The BOG/IRM office would need to re-program to split the USF population sorting on the established keys. USF is prepared to furnish staff assistance as needed. **To be completed by BOG and USF staff**

#### **When is it needed?**

In time for Fall 2009 reporting (October 2009) to IPEDS. Please note: USF St. Petersburg is already separately accredited through SACS and, consistent with Florida statute, USF Sarasota-Manatee will submit its application (approved by the USF Board of Trustees, June 15, 2009) for separate accreditation later this month. It is anticipated that USF Polytechnic's statutory pursuit of separate regional accreditation will follow in the not too distant future.

#### **Who needs to do it?**

The SUS process differs slightly by the type of survey. An IPEDS Key holder is named for each institution. For some simple surveys, the Key holder can submit those data directly. However, for most of the complex surveys the data are collected through the state data collection system, edited, placed into proper format and provided to the Key holder for validation. These data also serve as the unit information source for state reporting. USF has already negotiated with state data administration to include the appropriate keys to sort the USF data by campus. The data are now in place for the 2009-2010 academic and fiscal year.