

Sample Departmental Data

To assist you in conceptualizing your data collection, and hopefully to answer some of the most frequently asked questions concerning how to report data, let's work through a hypothetical department. In working through this sample department, please refer to the attached completed copy of the data collection form (found at the end of this document). Our Data Item List will also help you identify data elements and details required for data collection.

Suppose University X has a Political Science Department that offers course work through the doctorate degree. That information would be entered at the top of the data form, along with the appropriate CIP identifier which, for Political Science, is 45.10.

Question: *My institution has a Department of Political Science and International Relations, which spans two CIP codes. Which one should I use?*

Answer: *If you can cleanly disaggregate both the faculty and the financial data associated with each respective CIP code, by all means do so. If you cannot make a clean disaggregation, use the CIP code which reflects the preponderance of student credit hours taught in the department. So long as the disciplines are related - in this instance, both are social sciences - there will be minimal distortion in the cost and productivity data.*

The Political Science Department has 14 full time faculty: six tenured full professors, three tenured associate professors, three tenure-eligible assistant professors, and two non-tenure eligible instructors. These would be entered on the data form as "Regular Faculty," with 12.0 FTE in Column A for "Tenured/Tenure Eligible" (the full, associate, and assistant professors) and 2.0 FTE for "Other Regular Faculty" (the instructors). In this example, academic rank was the determinant as to how faculty are categorized. Use whatever your institution's conventions are for distinguishing between tenured/tenure eligible faculty and other regular faculty.

Within our hypothetical department, one full professor has a research grant which supports half of her salary and obligates her to spend half her time on that externally funded research project, while two other professors hold public service grants which support one third of each salary, respectively, obligating them to spend a third of their time on an externally funded service project. Because these individuals are contractually paid and obligated to do research/service, they are unavailable to teach; they have in effect been bought out. The proportion of the FTE faculty that have been bought out are 0.5, 0.33, and 0.33, respectively. That adds up to 1.16 FTE that is unavailable to teach, and should be entered on the data form under Column B on the Tenured/Tenure Eligible line. Column C, which reflects Instructional FTE (i.e., faculty full time equivalency available to teach), is computed by subtracting the 1.16 FTE (Column B) buyout from the 12.0 FTE (Column A) Total, leaving 10.84 Instructional FTE. The two instructors in this instance are budgeted solely to teach, and 2.0 FTE is entered in both Columns A and C for "Other Regular Faculty." Some institutions do have non-tenure eligible faculty who engage in externally sponsored research and/or service. Treat them in the same fashion as tenured/tenure eligible faculty with respect to buy-outs.

Question: *What about faculty members whose loads are reduced and/or release time is granted for doing institutionally funded departmental research?*

Answer: *Each full time faculty member falling into this category appears as 1.0 FTE in both Column A and Column C. Since departmental funds are being used to support the salary, the decision to have these faculty do things other than teach is an institutional decision. Technically speaking, they are still available to teach, and are not contractually bound by an externally funded obligation for research or service.*

Question: *What about sabbatical leaves?*

Answer: *These are leaves with pay and, as such, reflect institutional decisions to allow individuals to do things other than instruction. They, too, should appear in both Columns A and C.*

Question: *What about faculty who are paid to teach overload?*

Answer: *Report the faculty's 1.0 FTE and regular load of SCH and OCS in the appropriate T/TT or Other Regular line of their home department. If they taught an overload course which is also paid for by their home department, then the overload FTE (0.25 for one 3 credit course taught) would be counted as Supplemental faculty, and their overload SCH and OCS reported in the Supplemental line of their home department. Note: Part B should include any overload SCH as long as the overload is being funded from the faculty's home department. If another department is paying for the overload, then the overload FTE, SCH and OCS should be reported as Supplemental faculty in the paying department, along with the overload SCH and expenditures in Part B of the department funding the overload salary (the regular load, 1.0 FTE, and salary should remain in the faculty's home department).*

During the fall term, the Political Science Department hired seven adjunct instructors. Two of them each taught two 3-credit courses, while five each taught a single 3-credit course. Additionally, the Dean of the College and an Associate Provost each taught one 3-credit course. Under the definition of terms provided, each of these individuals falls into the category of "Supplemental Faculty." In computing their full time equivalency, we have suggested two calculation conventions: a) divide total teaching credit hours by 12, or b) divide total courses taught by 4. In the former, take the total teaching credit hours taught by these individuals, which in this instance is 33 (adjuncts teach nine 3-credit courses for a total of 27 teaching credits hours, and contributed service administrators teach two 3-credit courses for 6 teaching credit hours) and divide by 12. This results in 2.75 FTE Supplemental Faculty. An alternative would be to divide the 11 sections being taught by 4, again resulting in 2.75 FTE. Since Supplemental Faculty typically have no contractual buy-out, 2.75 would be entered in both Columns A and C.

Question: *Our institution's Personnel Data Base assigns an FTE value to each adjunct faculty member. Should I ignore it?*

Answer: *No. If your institution assigns an FTE to adjuncts and it is consistent across disciplines, use it. The same holds true for teaching assistants. The foregoing methodology is suggested for institutions that do not assign an FTE to adjuncts or teaching assistants, and is based on the practice of those that do.*

The Political Science Department has 12 teaching assistants. Three TAs each teach two 3-credit courses as instructor of record; six TAs are each assigned two zero credit recitation sections that are a mandatory component of a Political Science course for which a regular faculty member is the instructor of record. Three TAs have no formal section assignments, but are expected to perform instructional support functions including grading papers, etc.

Teaching assistants are assigned a 0.5 FTE value in the institution's Personnel Data Base. For 12 TAs, this translates into 6.0 FTE. As noted earlier, three TAs are each teaching two 3-credit course sections. Using the same convention for calculating FTE as with adjuncts, six 3-credit sections equal teaching credit hours which, divided by 12, equate to 1.50 FTE which can be associated with TA credit bearing activity, which would be entered in Column A on the data form, under "Teaching Assistants - Credit Bearing Activity." Subtracting 1.50 FTE from the total of 6.0 FTE for teaching assistants, the remainder of 4.50 FTE would be entered on the data form in Column A under "Teaching Assistants - Non-Credit Bearing Activity."

Student credit hours are then distributed based upon the faculty type for the instructor of record in credit-bearing courses. They are then disaggregated on the basis of **course level** (lower division, upper division, graduate), and wherever possible, further disaggregated by course type (organized class sections, individualized instruction). The 3,366 student credit hours taught by the Political Science Department are broken out accordingly on the attached table.

Question: *We know who is teaching our courses, but it's not easy to make the additional disaggregation requested. What should we do?*

Answer: *If you cannot differentiate between "organized class" and "individualized student credit hours, assign all of the credit hours to the "organized class" column. Similarly, if you can't differentiate between "lower division" and "upper division" student credit hours, report all of those credit hours under "Total Undergraduate Credit Hours."*

Question: *What do I do about dual listed and cross listed courses?*

Answer: *In the instance of dual listed courses (i.e., a single course listed at both undergraduate and graduate level) parse out the student credit hours based upon how the students were registered. If 30 students register for a 3-credit course, and 20 of them register for the 400-level undergraduate section and 10 register for the 600-level graduate section, assign 60 student credit hours to upper division undergraduate instruction and 30 student credit hours to graduate level instruction. Be sure to then count the associated section the same way as the student credit hours by apportioning the section into 0.7 sections at the upper division undergraduate level, and 0.3 at the graduate level. If you can't separate the student credit hours by level for which they were registered, assign them all to the level reflecting the majority of students registered, i.e., either undergraduate or graduate. Count the associated section the same way as the student credit hours.*

*With cross listed courses (i.e., a single course listed with multiple departmental call letters - for example. Political Science 466 also listed as History 466 and Urban Studies 466) **assign all student credit hours and number of sections to the department funding the instructor's salary.***

In examining organized class sections, the Political Science Department starts by isolating laboratory/discussion/recitation sections, i.e., those which frequently carry zero credit hours and might otherwise be lost in an analysis. As noted earlier, six of the TAs assigned to the department are each in charge of two zero credit recitation sections, and those 12 sections are so entered in Column L under "Teaching Assistants - Non-credit Bearing Activity." Moreover, two recitation sections are being led by tenured faculty, and two recitation sections were led by "other regular faculty," and they also appear in Column L. The remainder of the organized class sections are credit-bearing and the task is simply associating the sections with the credit hours reported for each faculty type in the preceding section.

Question: *Should I report distance education courses?*

Answer: *Distance education courses should only be included when the student credit hours and course sections can be reported in the same discrete way that a typical non-distance education course would be reported. In other words, we do not want the sections to be over inflated when there may be no unique time and place of the course offering.*

The institution operates on a semester calendar, and that is so noted at the bottom of Part A of the data form.

While Part A of the data form asked specifically for teaching workload data for the fall term only, Part B asks for data from the academic year and fiscal year. Where the Political Science Department taught 3,366 student credit hours in the fall term, they are reporting 6,891 student credit hours taught during the academic year, of which 5,601 were undergraduate and 1,290 were graduate level, Part B, item 1. These credit hours reflect all teaching activity in all terms supported by the department's instructional budget, in this instance - where Political Science operates on a semester calendar - this represents the Fall and Spring semesters. Report all student credit hour data by level of course as also required in Part A.

Question: *My institution operates on a semester calendar, that is, Fall and Spring are our major terms. What do I do about winter and summer terms at my institution?*

Answer: *The central criterion in this analysis is activity that is supported by the department's instructional budget. At many institutions, special sessions such as winter and summer terms are budgeted separately, and faculty are paid from a budget other than the academic department. If winter and summer teaching are not supported by the departmental budget, they should be excluded from the analysis. If the departmental budget supports all teaching activity throughout the year, then include them.*

The Political Science Department expended \$820,000 in salaries during the fiscal year. This figure includes full time faculty, payments to part time and adjunct faculty, and teaching assistant stipends. Some \$246,000 in benefits expenditures were associated with these salaries. The department also incurred \$213,000 in Other-Than-Personnel Expenses. These include supplies and expense (e.g. printing, search expenses), travel, non-capital equipment costs (e.g. lab supplies, office equipment and software), etc. The total direct instructional expenditures for Political Science during the fiscal year were \$1,279,000. That figure, and its aforementioned components, are reported on Part B, item 2 of the data form.

Question: *My institution includes benefits in the figure we report for compensation. Do I need to split benefits out?*

Answer: *No. Simply enter "Included in Salaries" on benefits line.*

Question: *Our benefits are booked centrally and we don't allocate them out to departments. What should I do?*

Answer: *You have three options, all of which involve estimation of benefits. You might begin by consulting with your benefits office and obtaining the "benefits as a percent of salary" rate for each employee category, and calculate the benefits for the department using actual departmental salaries. A second, less accurate estimate would be to apply the overall "benefits as a percent of salary" rate for your faculty published in the most recent March/April issue of Academe, and apply that to the total*

salary figure for the department. Least accurate, but still acceptable for analytical purposes, would be to do nothing. We will then apply a default rate of 28% to your salary data.

Professor Smith in the Political Science Department had half of her salary and other costs associated with a research project paid from grant funds she received from a national foundation supporting her study of political third parties. These funds are separately budgeted and apart from departmental funds, and those expenditures totaled \$125,000 for the fiscal year, and are so reported on Part B, item 3 of the data form. Similarly, Professors Jones and McCabe had one third of each of their salaries and associated telephone, postage, and miscellaneous costs paid from a public service grant they received to do demographic polling for the State government. As with the research grant, these funds are separately budgeted and apart from departmental funds. The \$100,000 in public service expenditures are reported on Part B, item 4 of the data form.

Question: *Some of the research expenditures involving departmental faculty on my campus are not booked to the department, but instead are booked to separate research centers. What should I do?*

Answer: *This is a problem faced by a number of institutions. To the extent possible, we'd like for you to disaggregate research center expenditures to the appropriate departments. Where this is not possible, please attach a note to your data submission apprising us of the general magnitude of the problem on your campus. This will enable us to provide a context for the extent to which expenditure data may be under-reported within the overall study. A similar problem - and caveat - may occur when research grants are booked through college or university system foundation offices.*

That's it. The Political Science Department data are now complete. We've attempted to address the problems we heard most frequently during the last data collection. If you encounter new problems, we'd like to hear about them. With each data collection cycle and with your help, the data will become more and more refined, and their utility enhanced.

Thanks for working with us and participating in the National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity.