

Preparing a Submission for

# THE COST STUDY

at the University of Delaware

*What data do you need to participate in the study?*

*How do you prepare and submit your data?*



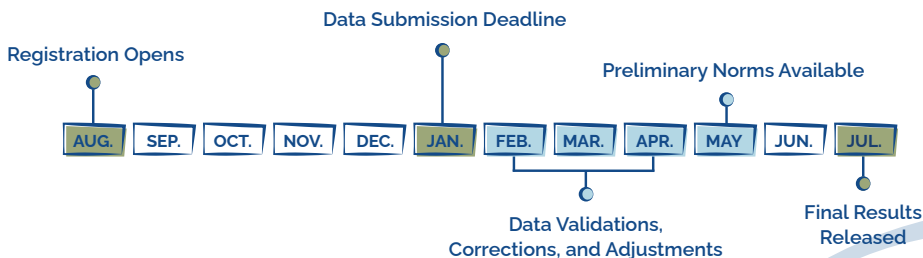
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## OVERVIEW

The National Study of Instructional Costs and Productivity (The Cost Study) is a **national longitudinal study** that focuses on the academic program-level analysis of **faculty instructional workloads and costs** and provides an improved understanding of **cost differences by academic program** as well as cost trends and cost drivers.

The Cost Study is conducted annually by the Higher Education Consortia (HEC). HEC is composed of a diverse group of over 700 **four-year, public and private, non-profit colleges and universities** that have contributed data to The Cost Study since its inception in the 1990s. In continued collaboration with an advisory board, various regional and national associations, and policy experts, HEC is committed to **guiding research and public understanding** of the changing realities that affect productivity and cost in higher education.

## THE COST STUDY TIMELINE



## KEY TERMS

**Origin of Instructor**—the method used by The Cost Study that assigns instructors and their associated instructional activity to the academic program where the instructor is budgeted, regardless of where the activity is delivered.

**Program**—an academic unit (identified by CIP code) used to report data and produce benchmarks for The Cost Study. Programs should be disaggregated only to the degree that they have distinguishable budgets. Typically, this occurs at the department level; however, institutions may choose to report at the college level or disaggregate departments into more specific programs if full-time equivalent (FTE) faculty counts, student credit hours (SCH), organized class sections (OCS), and direct expenditures can be clearly separated into those programs.

**CIP Codes**—a system of identifying instructional program specialties within educational institutions based on the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) taxonomy, which was developed by the National Center for Education Statistics.

**Instructional Budget**—the basic operating budget of an academic program that funds faculty instructional activity. The instructional budget also supports research and service that is generally part of the workload expectation of tenured faculty and some regular, non-tenured faculty.

**Instructional Courseload: Fall Semester**—the section on the data entry form that collects FTE faculty counts using the “origin of instructor” method, along with their corresponding instructional activity (i.e., SCH and OCS) for the fall semester.

**Cost Data: Academic and Fiscal Year**—the section on the data entry form that collects financial information for the fiscal year and SCH data for the major terms in an academic year that are supported by a program’s instructional budget. Major terms are typically fall and spring terms at institutions on a semester calendar and fall, winter, and spring terms at institutions on a quarterly calendar. The same “origin of instructor” method of reporting should be used.

**Direct Expenditure Data**—costs incurred by a program for personnel compensation, supplies, and services used in the conduct of three functional areas: instruction, research, and public service.

## DATA COLLECTION

	Degree Completions Data	Human Resources Data	Course Data	Finance Data
Data Reporting Period	Average of prior 3 years	Fall term	Fall term and academic year	Fiscal year
Fields in Submission File	Degrees awarded by major (first majors only, all majors) and level (bachelor’s, master’s, doctorate, and professional)	Number of FTE faculty (regular tenured/tenure eligible, other regular, supplemental, and teaching assistants)	Aggregate SCH and OCS by level of instruction (undergraduate upper division, undergraduate lower division, graduate and individualized instruction), faculty type, and delivery mode	Direct expenditures for instruction (salary, benefits, and other than personnel expenditures) and direct expenditures for separately budgeted research and public service activities
Data Needed to Create Submission	Degree major, degree type, degree level	Instructor name/ID, total FTE, instructional FTE, tenure status, etc.	Course workload, course level, credit value of course, number of students enrolled, etc.	Accounting period, funding source, direct expenditures, etc.

FTE - full-time equivalent; ID - identification; OCS - organized class sections; SCH - student credit hours.

# DATA PREPARATION

Before preparing a data submission, please read the detailed instructions on how to submit data to The Cost Study at <https://ire.udel.edu/how-to-submit-data/>.



## Add, manage, and delete academic programs.

Data submissions are collected through a secure, online web portal. First-time participants must add program names and CIP codes into the web portal before entering or uploading data. Returning users should ensure program names and CIP codes are current by reviewing existing programs, looking for changes to program names and CIP codes, merging or separating old programs, and removing inactive programs from the current study year.



## Gather data and prepare a submission.

There are two options for entering data into the web portal:

1. Uploading an Excel file.
  - Data for multiple programs can be uploaded simultaneously using an Excel file (xlsx) with no formulas or formatting (except where allowed). See template (<https://ire.udel.edu/web-portal-templates/>) for guidance.
  - The CIP codes and program names in the file must match those in the web portal to ensure a successful upload.
  - If changes are made, correctly uploading a new file will overwrite any existing data.
2. Key in data for each program.
  - Data can be manually input one program at a time on the data entry forms in the web portal.
  - This feature can also be used to edit data that have been uploaded into the web portal.



## Review the data submission and *Red Flag Report* to check for errors.

Review the *Red Flag Report* and address any potential errors or warnings. Inspect each program individually, reviewing the data and potential errors. Correct any errors in the data or use the "Program Notes" textbox at the top of the data entry form to provide an explanation for any red flags.



## View the preliminary results for each program.

After reviewing data for a program, click *Review for Submission* at the bottom of each page. Each program's workload and cost metrics can be viewed, and the *three-year-averages* of comparative institutions can be used to ensure the data are within an appropriate range.

Review the *Direct Instructional Expense per Student Credit Hour Report*. Take note of large year-over-year fluctuations, as they may indicate an error in the data.



## After reviewing the data and *Red Flag Report*, submit the data.

Click on the "Submit data for review by The Cost Study staff" button on the Data tab in the web portal. An email will be sent confirming the submission. Your submission will undergo validation before it is approved.



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For more information about The Cost Study:  
<https://ire.udel.edu/cost/>

For more information about HEC:  
<https://ire.udel.edu/cost/intro-to-hec/>

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