

Consideration of Collection of Commission on Higher Education Management
Information Systems (CHEMIS) Data from Private Institutions

The Commission on Higher Education maintains a comprehensive data system with regard to student information in the higher education institutions in South Carolina. For the public institutions, enrollment data is received by CHE electronically each semester. The institutions report on a unit record basis information on each student that is enrolled. Degrees awarded are also reported in a similar manner on an annual basis. This data collection system has been in place since fall 1993.

As the coordinator of state information for Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), we have been collecting data from the private institutions on enrollment and completions for many years. It has been reported in an aggregate format to the commission. The reporting of the complete data set will eliminate separate reporting of enrollment and completions data for IPEDS.

When the Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence (LIFE) scholarship program was implemented, we began collecting limited unit record data on enrollment and disbursements from the private institutions. The information received, however, was only those students that received a LIFE scholarship.

We have found with the increasing of scholarships and other programs in the state that are funded by state dollars our need for full data reporting by the private institutions is necessary. We receive many requests for information during the legislative session. Having complete enrollment data would make the analysis and fiscal impact of these requests more accurate.

The Commission is guided by Family Education Rights to Privacy Act (FERPA) with regards to the receiving and sharing of any student data.

Staff recommends that CHE begin collecting CHEMIS data from the private institutions in the fall of 2001.