

Cuyamaca College Research Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines provide information regarding the proper access, protection, use, and dissemination of data at Cuyamaca College. Each principle is discussed relative to three levels of data sensitivity: Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3. These guidelines are evolving and shall be reviewed and amended periodically by the Cuyamaca College Institutional Effectiveness Council and the Institutional Effectiveness, Success, and Equity (IESE) Office. External requests, such as those from the press, community, or outside agencies, are to be routed through the district Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness (RPIE) office.

Survey Guidelines

The IESE Office will review internal surveys to ensure they address the project research question(s), are appropriate to the population of interest, and are developed with an emphasis on cultural sensitivity.

External survey requests will be reviewed by the IESE Office and IE Council to ensure appropriateness and minimize risks to participants, including employees and students.

Terms and Definitions

The following terms and definitions establish a shared understanding of the underlying concepts concerning data sensitivity.

Data Sensitivity: the extent to which data should be protected, based on the nature and content of the data

Level 1: public information which is highly aggregated, or broadly categorized, such as enrollment figures, transfer rates, or any other institution-wide data

Level 2: general Requests for Research Reports, survey data, and data that are disaggregated, or broken out by categories, to some extent, such as success rates or student progress at the program level

Level 3: special Requests for Research reports and sensitive information that is highly disaggregated, such as student contact information data at the course section level, student records, and all personally identifiable information

Data Specificity: a continuum along which data may be generalized to broad groups or specified to smaller units

Aggregate Data: data expressed as total summaries that encompass multiple groups or units within broad categories, i.e., level I data

Disaggregated Data: data that are broken out by categories or units, i.e., Level II data or Level III data if the unit of division is individual students, staff, or faculty members such that the information is personally identifiable

Data Steward: any individual who uses, handles, or manages data and is thus responsible for ensuring the security and integrity of the data

Highly Sensitive: data that include any personally-identifying information, such as name, date of birth, email addresses, and phone numbers

Intranet: an internal, private network that can only be accessed within the confines of an enterprise, e.g., the Cuyamaca College Intranet

Need-to-know: data will be used to inform changes to, or validate, current efforts aimed at improving programs or services; the request must pertain to the requestor's area of responsibility or purview; in addition, the request

Other Considerations:

- The IESE Office has the bandwidth to complete the request, given external reporting requirements to state and federal agencies, accreditation, and information that is critical to annual college planning and evaluation efforts
- The request does not meet judicial notice criteria (i.e., you don't have to prove the obvious, such as the sky is blue)
- Confidentiality: The level of disaggregation must be appropriate for the request and intended use of the information.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p><u>Data Access:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public data are posted on the GCCCD website Program review data reports and other select data are available on the IESE website If a requestor of research would like access to Level I data that are not already available, the requestor should complete a Research Request Form <p><u>Data Security:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data reports are available in PDF format <p><u>Use of Data:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All aspects of research including formulation of the research question, sample selection, choice of variables, and methodology, should be carefully thought out and planned by the requestor and IESE Office Special attention should be given to data definitions and interpretations of findings <p><u>Data Dissemination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data will be disseminated in their appropriate context Data on specific programs or departments shall be disseminated only with permission from the stewards of those data Individuals are obligated to respect all copyright laws and give credit where credit is due Reproductions of data reports should have all original titles, footnotes, and supplemental information intact and unaltered 	<p><u>Data Access:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals must complete a Research Request Form, available on the IESE website Please note that the requestor will need approval from their Department Chair and Dean Although the requestor may specify a project timeline, prioritization of the requests shall be left to the discretion of IESE Individuals who wish to gain access are required to comply with and shall be ethically bound to these guidelines Deans are responsible for ensuring that data are being requested on a legitimate need-to-know basis In the event that the data requested are not deemed “need-to-know”, the data request shall be fulfilled at a more aggregated and appropriate level of data sensitivity <p><u>Data Security:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All data will be stored on a secure server Proprietary data will be stored on the GCCCD Intranet Data reports will be available in PDF format <p><u>Use of Data:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All aspects of research including formulation of the research question, sample selection, choice of variables, and methodology, should be carefully thought out and planned by the requestor and IESE Office Special attention should be given to data definitions and interpretations of findings <p><u>Data Dissemination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data will be disseminated in their appropriate context Data on specific programs or departments shall be disseminated only with permission from the stewards of those data 	<p><u>Data Access:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals must complete a Research Request Form, available on the IESE website Please note that the requestor will need approval from their Department Chair and Dean Although the requestor may specify a project timeline, prioritization of the requests shall be left to the discretion of IESE Individuals who wish to gain access are required to comply with and shall be ethically bound to these guidelines Deans are responsible for ensuring that data are being requested on a legitimate need-to-know basis In the event that the data requested are not deemed “need-to-know”, the data request shall be fulfilled at a more aggregated and appropriate level of data sensitivity <p><u>Data Security:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access shall be password-protected and on a need-to-know basis Data Stewards shall take all precautions necessary to prevent disclosure of highly sensitive data to individuals who have not been granted access Failure to comply with these precautions and restrictions shall result in suspension of data access rights <p><u>Use of Data:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All aspects of research including formulation of the research question, sample selection, choice of variables, and methodology, should be carefully thought out and planned by the requestor and IESE Office Special attention should be given to data definitions and interpretations of findings Highly sensitive data should always be used on a need-to-know basis

Level 1	Level 2 (continued)	Level 3 (continued)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals are obligated to respect all copyright laws and give credit where credit is due • Reproductions of data reports should have all original titles, footnotes, and supplemental information intact and unaltered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These data should never be used for commercial, private, personal, or political purpose <p><u>Data Dissemination:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly sensitive data will be disseminated by IESE on a need-to-know basis • These data are considered confidential, and issues related to confidentiality will be discussed with requestors <p>Reproductions and unauthorized dissemination of Level 3 and are prohibited</p>