



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Analysis of the Coverage of GE Metrics for Small Cohort Sizes

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Due to both FSA and other federal agencies' privacy protocols, programs with too few completers in a cohort (after sample restrictions) cannot have debt or earnings rates published. These programs effectively are not subject to sanctions in the GE rule and cannot have their outcomes disclosed to students because outcome data is not publishable.

This analysis presents information on the share of programs and the share of Title IV completers in such programs that would not be covered by GE metrics due to their small size. Data are based on the number of completers in the two-year period spanning award year (AY) 2016 and AY2017 (referred to as “2-Year Cohort” in Tables below). We model how many programs have fewer than 30 completers (the threshold used in the 2014 Gainful Employment rule), and what fraction of total Title IV completers are in such programs. In addition, we present estimates of how many programs (and completers in those programs) would continue to have fewer than 30 completers if instead of completers in two consecutive years we combine completers in four-consecutive years to form the cohort for GE metrics (referred to as a “4-Year Cohort” below, and estimated by doubling the number of completers in the two-year cohort from 2016 to 2017).

Table 1. Percent of GE Programs/Completers in Programs with Fewer than 30 Graduates in a Cohort, by Control

The data show that, while there are many programs for which GE metrics may not be publishable due to a small n-size, the majority of completers—particularly at proprietary institutions—are in programs sufficiently large to disclose GE metrics. Using a four-year cohort for programs that have insufficient numbers of completers in the two-year cohort allows GE metrics to be published for more students and programs.

	Percent / Number of GE Programs with <30 T4 Completers			Percent / Number of all T4 Completers in GE programs in programs with <30 T4 Completers		
	Public	Nonprofit	For-Profit	Public	Nonprofit	For-Profit
2-Year Cohort	88%	88%	55%	40%	22%	4%
4-Year Cohort	76%	78%	42%	22%	12%	2%

Total Number of GE Programs/Completers	21,912	3,815	9,861	304,527	78,759	996,556
Additional Coverage (Number of Programs / Completers) Using a 4-Year Cohort	2,692	365	1,284	55,896	7,405	27,307

Table 2. Percent of GE Programs with Fewer than 30 Graduates in a Cohort, By Credential Level and Control

The data in this table show that most of the programs for which GE metrics may not be publishable due to a small n-size are in the public and nonprofit sectors. The largest percent of programs in the proprietary sector that are too small to produce data are post-baccalaureate and graduate certificate programs, but those programs make up a small share of the total number of programs in the proprietary sector.

	Public			Nonprofit			For-Profit		
	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total Programs	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total Programs	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total Programs
Undergrad Cert.	87%	75%	19,094	80%	69%	1,630	48%	36%	4,792
Associate							63%	48%	2,762
Bachelor's							59%	46%	1,351
Postbacc. Cert.	96%	89%	873	97%	89%	685	91%	89%	56
Master's							52%	41%	560
Doctoral							58%	44%	144
Prof.							45%	43%	44
Grad. Cert.	94%	86%	1,945	92%	84%	1,500	79%	68%	152

Table 3. Percent of Completers in GE Programs with Fewer than 30 Graduates in a Cohort, By Credential Level and Control

Table 3 shows the percent of Title IV completers from the programs illustrated in Table 2 with fewer than 30 completers. The data show that coverage of GE metrics is lowest among post-baccalaureate and graduate certificate programs, but the number of completers in those programs is a modest share of the total number of completers. Overall, however, the share of Title IV completers attending programs that would be covered by GE rates is high at each credential level.

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	Public			Nonprofit			For-Profit		
	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total T4 Grads	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total T4 Grads	2-Year Cohort	4-Year Cohort	Total T4 Grads
Undergrad Cert.	39%	21%	281,897	12%	6%	59,851	4%	1%	500,479
Associate							8%	3%	187,696
Bachelor's							4%	2%	186,467
Postbacc. Cert.	64%	43%	5,473	69%	42%	4,083	32%	28%	505
Master's							2%	1%	100,684
Doctoral							8%	3%	8,561
Prof.							1%	1%	7,874
Grad. Cert.	56%	36%	17,157	47%	29%	14,825	16%	8%	4,290

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