NORTHWEST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE



DATA DICTIONARY

Prepared by:
The Office of Institutional Research & Effectiveness

ABOUT THE DATA DICTIONARY

Our Data Dictionary is a resource to help you find clear definitions of terms, data points, and abbreviations used in our reports and analyses. Whether you're a faculty member, staff member, student, or community partner, this dictionary will assist you to interpret the data that is frequently used by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness.

This dictionary is continuously updated and maintained to ensure accurate data literacy.

If you have any questions, please contact research@northwestms.edu.

AACRAO	The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) is a nonprofit, voluntary, professional association of more than 10,000 higher education admissions and registration professionals who represent more than 2,600 institutions and agencies in the United States and in 28 countries around the world. The mission of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers is to serve and advance higher education by providing leadership in academic and enrollment services. (MCCB)
AIR	The Association of Instructional Research empowers higher education professionals to leverage data, analytics, information, and evidence to make decisions and take actions that benefit students and institutions and improve higher education.
Annual Goals	Specific, measurable objectives set by an instructional or administrative department to align with the institution's broader strategic plan and mission. These goals are typically reviewed and updated each year to ensure continuous improvement and accountability.
Attrition	measures the number of students who leave a program before actually completing the program.
Benchmark	A standard or point of reference against which gathered data may be compared or assessed.
Calendar Year	January through December.
CampusKey	NWCC's Student Information System
Canvas	NWCC's Student Learning Management System
CIP Code	A six-digit code in the form xx.xxxx that identifies instructional program specialties within educational institutions. (IPEDS)
Common Data Set	The Common Data Set (CDS) is a set of clearly-defined data items developed through collaboration of publishers and higher education. These items are used to share standard information about a college or university. Information covers data on admissions, enrollment, retention, classes, activities, policies and costs.
Completer	A student who receives a degree, diploma, certificate, or other formal award. In order to be considered a completer, the degree / award must actually be conferred. (IPEDS)
Completers within 150% of normal time	Students who completed their program within 150% of the normal (or expected) time for completion. (IPEDS)
Contact Hour	A unit of measure that represents an hour of scheduled instruction given to students. Also referred to as a clock hour (MCCB)
Credit Hour	As defined in State Board Policy 8.2, a semester credit hour is defined as minimum student-teacher contact of 750 minutes for lecture and 1500 minutes for laboratory, not to include time for passing between classes, registration, nor final examinations. (MCCB)

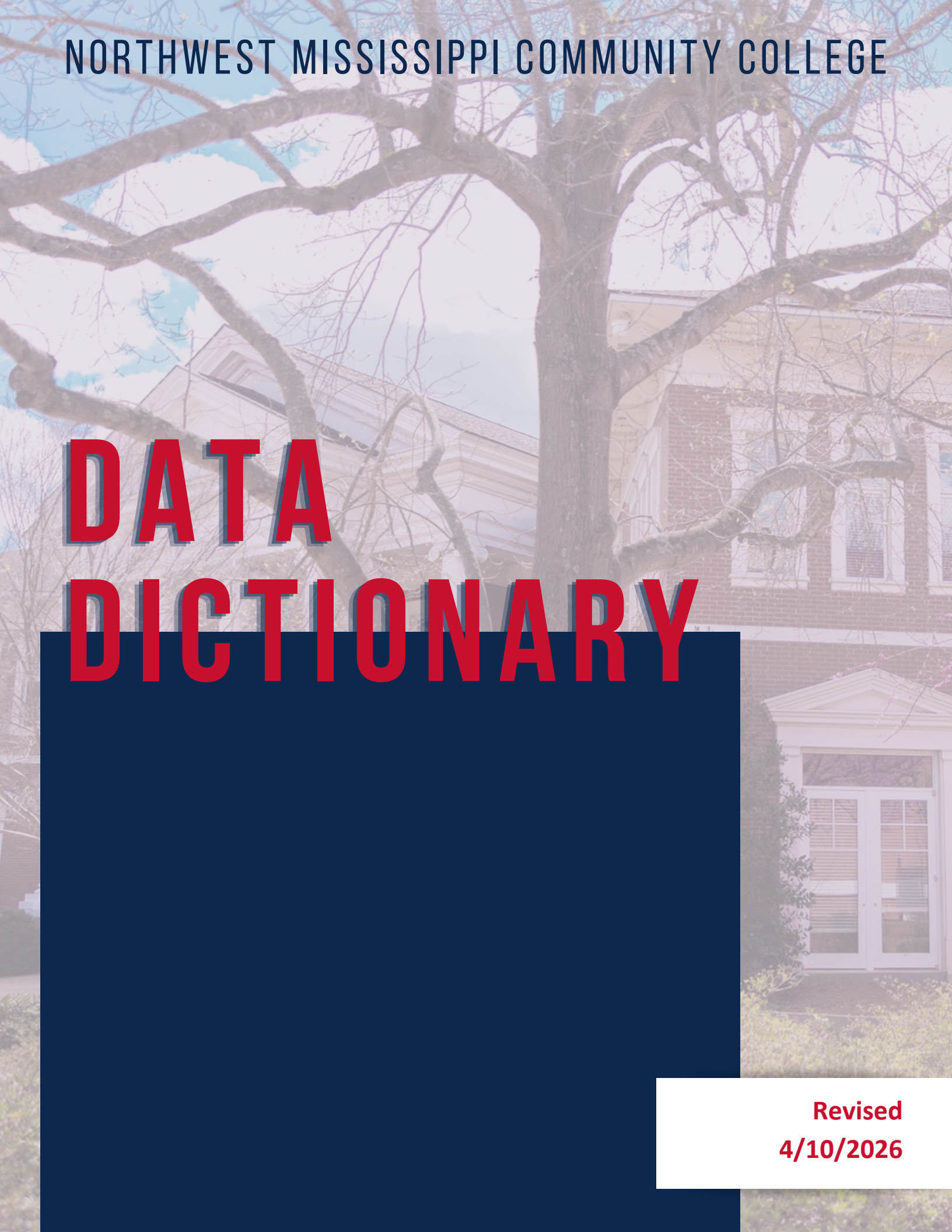
Degree-Seeking Student	Students enrolled in courses for credit who are recognized by the institution as seeking a certificate or degree.
Dual Enrollment	A student who is enrolled in a community or junior college or state institution of higher learning while enrolled in high school and who is receiving ONLY college credit for the postsecondary coursework (MCCB)
Educational Program	An educational program is a coherent course of study leading to a for credit credential including a degree, diploma, certificate, or other generally recognized credential. (SACSCOC)
Electronic Audit Reporting System (eARS)	A system designed and developed by the MCCB to help colleges report data, and to assist the board with conducting the audits. The system allows colleges to upload data upon completion of a term. The data is validated to ensure values are correct and consistent throughout each data set and among all the colleges. It then allows auditors to visit each campus and conduct all work electronically. (MCCB)
Enrolled	Any registered, active (not withdrawn or dropped) student listed on a course roster. (MCCB)
Ethnicity	is based on whether an individual is of Hispanic or Latino descent or not. Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term "Spanish origin" can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino." (MCCB)
Faculty Qualifications	Standard 6.2.a (Faculty qualifications) of the Principles of Accreditation requires that the institution justifies and documents the qualifications of its faculty members. (SACSCOC)
Fall Cohort	The group of students entering in the fall term established for tracking purposes. [For the IPEDS Graduation Rates component, this includes all students who enter the institution as full-time, first-time degree or certificate-seeking undergraduate students during the fall term of a given year.] (MCCB)
Fall Term	August to December.
FERPA	The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that affords parents the right to have access to their children's education records, the right to seek to have the records amended, and the right to have some control over the disclosure of personally identifiable information from the education records. When a student turns 18 years old, or enters a postsecondary institution at any age, the rights under FERPA transfer from the parents to the student ("eligible student"). (U.S. Dept. of Education)
FTE	Refers to full-time equivalent. For state reimbursement, this refers to full-time equivalent students and is defined as the total credit hours accumulated by Academic, Technical, and Vocational students during the summer, fall and spring semesters divided by thirty (30). (MCCB)

Full-Time Student	a student enrolled in 15 or more credit hours per term.
Headcount (Unduplicated)	The sum of students enrolled for credit with each student counted only once during the reporting period, regardless of when the student enrolled. (IPEDS)
Hybrid Course	a course that blends online and face-to-face delivery. A certain percentage of course instruction is delivered via electronic means and a certain percentage of instruction is conducted face-to-face. (Some hours are spent in the classroom with the rest being completed online.) Modality.
Institutional Effectiveness	Institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution. (SACSCOC)
Instructional Calendar Year (NWCC)	The sequence of three terms—Fall, Spring, and Summer.
Instructional Program Review	to provide a system for continuous improvement in instructional programs. Review and assessment procedures provide recognition of the accomplishments of an instructional program and identify interventions needed to improve the program.
[Integrated Post-secondary Education Data System (IPEDS)	The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), conducted by the NCES, began in 1986 and involves annual institution-level data collections. All postsecondary institutions that have a Program Participation Agreement with the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE), U.S. Department of Education (throughout IPEDS referred to as "Title IV") are required to report data using a web-based data collection system. IPEDS currently consists of the following components: Institutional Characteristics (IC); 12-month Enrollment (E12); Completions (C); Cost (CST); Student Financial Aid (SFA); Human Resources (HR) composed of Employees by Assigned Position, Fall Staff, and Salaries; Fall Enrollment (EF); Graduation Rates (GR); Graduation Rates 200% (GR200); Outcome Measures (OM); Finance (F); and Admissions (ADM).
IOTA360	NWCC's faculty credentialing and course evaluation system
MCCB	Refers to the Mississippi Community College Board (MCCB), formerly the State Board for Community & Junior Colleges (SBCJC), is the agency responsible for the coordination of the fifteen public 2-year colleges in Mississippi.
Mission Statement	The mission statement is a comprehensive statement addressing all aspects of institutional function. It is important that the institutional mission statement be formally adopted, published, implemented, and made available to all the constituencies of the institution and to the general public. Because the mission statement describes what the institution does, it is the foundation for planning and effectiveness processes. These processes validate that the institution does what it claims and evaluates how well it fulfills its mission statement. The mission statement thus provides the basis and context for evaluating institutional effectiveness. SACSCOC uses the term "mission" throughout its standards to be consistent in representing other terminology which may mean the same, such as purpose or vision. (SACSCOC)

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)	A division within the U.S. Department of Education, NCES is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the U.S. and other nations.
National Student Clearinghouse	NWCC uses the National Student Clearinghouse to provide trusted, authenticated, and secure education data insights for our students.
Non-degree Seeking	Enrolled in courses but does not have intentions of pursuing a formal degree or award.
Part-Time Student	a student enrolled in fewer than 15 credit hours per term.
Perkins Report	This refers to the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. Colleges are required to submit accountability reports annually to the MS Department of Education in order to receive federal funds through Perkins. (MCCB)
Persistence Rate	The percentage of students who return to the college for the following term.
Program Outcomes	are the specific, measurable knowledge and skills that students are expected to acquire through their educational programs. These outcomes must be regularly assessed and aligned with both the institution's mission and established academic standards to ensure the quality and effectiveness of the education provided.
Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)	Required of all member institutions undergoing reaffirmation of Accreditation, the Quality Enhancement Plan is a carefully designed and focused course of action derived from the institution's existing planning and evaluation processes that addresses a well-defined issue directly related to enhancing specific student learning outcomes and/or student success. Applicant and candidate institutions do not prepare a Quality Enhancement Plan during the process for initial accreditation. (See Standard 7.2 [Quality Enhancement Plan] of the Resource Manual.) (SACSCOC)
Race	is based in the following five categorizations (IPEDS definitions): · American Indian or Alaska Native: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. · Asian: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. · Black or African American: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. · Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. · White: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Report Card	the Community College Report Card includes student enrollment, degrees awarded, student success, student retention, student progress, workforce development information, GED and adult basic education statistics, as well as enrollment(college readiness). Each report card includes information for the specific college, along with figures for the system.
Retention	Refers to a student's persistence at NWCC calculated at a fall semester at census to the next fall semester at census that is of students enrolled in a particular fall semester how many are still enrolled the subsequent fall semester.
Retention Rate	A measure of the rate at which students persist in their educational program at an institution, expressed as a percentage.
SACSCOC	One of two separately incorporated entities of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on College) is an institutional accreditor for quality assurance in higher education. SACSCOC accredits institutions that award associate, baccalaureate, master's, or doctoral degrees, including those offered via distance and correspondence education, and direct assessment within these institutions. It serves as the common denominator of shared values and practices among its members in the United States and international institutions of higher education approved by the SACSCOC Executive Council, Board of Trustees, and the Appeals Committee of the College Delegate Assembly. (See Appendix E of the Resource Manual.) (SACSCOC)
Spring Term	January to May
Summer Term	May to August
Strategic Plan	A comprehensive roadmap that outlines an institution's long-term goals, priorities, and actions to achieve its mission and vision. It serves as a guiding framework for decision-making, resource allocation, and institutional growth.
Student Learning Outcomes	the specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that students are expected to acquire and demonstrate as a result of their engagement in an educational program. These outcomes should be clearly defined, measurable, and aligned with the institution's mission and goals.
Transfer Student	A student entering the reporting institution for the first time or returning to the reporting institution after a break in enrollment and who has attempted hours from a postsecondary institution from which transfer coursework is accepted. (MCCB)
Transient college student	a student who is enrolled in one college or university (their home institution) and takes courses temporarily (a single semester) at another college or university (their host institution) with the intention of transferring the course credit back to their home institution. (MCCB)

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