

# USING DATA TO IMPROVE HOW ACCREDITORS MEASURE STUDENT SUCCESS

Here are 3 data practices that the Department of Education could easily require accrediting agencies to apply to assess outcomes at taxpayer-funded colleges and universities.

## 01 Use reliable data.

Right now, accreditors can use any data sources they choose to assess an institution's student success outcomes, including opt-in surveys and self-reported data that may be skewed. Instead, accreditors should have to use reliable data from federal, public sources, like the College Scorecard or Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

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## 02 Establish baseline standards for student success.

The Department of Education should require accreditors to work with the institutions in their portfolio to establish target levels for key student outcomes to maintain access to federal funds. Once institutions establish a self-determined minimum floor for metrics like graduation rates, earnings, and default rates, accreditors can use these standards to hold institutions accountable if they consistently fail to meet their own mark.

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## 03 Disaggregate data whenever possible.

Accreditors should require that institutions disaggregate data whenever possible and be required to publicly report data separated by student demographics, like race, gender, and income. With these data in hand, accreditors and the Department can better identify how institutions are serving student subgroups to ensure equitable student success.

