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Comments Received:

I am an academic library director for a small college in Arkansas, without many resources or staffing. Despite my situation, or perhaps because of it, I'm writing again to advocate that academic library data remain in IPEDS. Libraries serve the ENTIRE campus of a college or university, and therefore when data is gathered from libraries, that data reflects the entire campus and community we serve - it is really one of the most representative data points for any campus. We increasingly find ourselves having to advocate for our existence with budget and staffing cuts, and the incredible rising prices of our resources which are now more essential as valid information than ever. In addition, the skills we teach students are the most essential to a healthy democracy - teaching people critical thinking skills so they can evaluate information for themselves. The erosion of data collection around academic libraries is an erosion of the importance of libraries themselves - especially the little guys like us won't be able to advocate as strongly to our administrations. The absence of valid data leads to the absence of libraries themselves. Please do not push us over the edge! We need the support your agency lends to make the case for a strong system of higher education in our nation. Especially today when libraries are under attack, and information is not "real" - we can't abandon our citizenry. Y'all really are THAT critical to keeping us healthy - and by relation, our democracy.