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Since IPEDS is “the primary source for information on US Colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutes”, it is imperative that all institutions participating in federal student financial aid programs must participate. As a librarians in higher education, the Association of Christian Librarians of whom I am part perceive IPEDS as providing a comprehensive picture of the higher education landscape. As librarians, we are concerned that removing library data from IPEDS will take a step back, breeding further inequity in higher education and hampering academic assessment.

Libraries and librarians are critical in higher education due to their roles in teaching, research and student support services. We are concerned that removing library data from IPEDS will obscure the data collection performed by IPEDS and will not provide a complete picture of academic vitality.

The dissolution of library data in IPEDS also creates a context where data access for librarians becomes fettered and fragmented, subsequently creating an inequitable playing field.

First, while there are venues outside of IPEDS that collect similar data, unlike IPEDS, data submission is optional in these contexts. Optional data submission creates a problematic data set. Second, many of these contexts also charge for data access. This is problematic as this cuts out valuable data from smaller institutions. My Association of Christian Librarians colleagues who serve at smaller institutions ask that you retain the library information in future IPEDS reporting.

Thank you for your attention,

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