

Data Element Dictionary

Overview

The purpose of the Data Element Dictionary (DED) is to define the data needs of the functional areas or major organizational components of System Administration.

The DED is organized into several major sections containing detailed specifications of the data elements relating to the curricular, student, physical facilities, and Multiple Applications and Admissions Database (MAAD) data areas. Each of these sections is prefaced by an explanation of the data element combinations that constitute a logically complete record for that particular data area. These general remarks are followed by a diagram depicting a logical data record, a logical listing, an alphabetical listing of the data elements contained in the given data area and the specification sheets for each data element in the given data subset. +Sp/00

The logical listings present the data elements in groupings which highlight the bases upon which the elements are inter-related. These logical listings do not represent a magnetic tape layout nor do they reflect a fixed set of data applications; instead, the logical listings are intended to facilitate user understanding of the data elements within the DED. It should be noted that the data element specification sheets are ordered and numbered in logical sequence rather than alphabetical order.

The alphabetical indices of the data elements in this DED also contain the page number on which each data element is described. These indices should be useful to anyone desiring to reference a particular data element on a selective basis.

Each data element is defined in detail on a data element specification sheet. The format for the specification sheets is explained and illustrated by means of the following data element.

DATA ELEMENT DESCRIPTION

NUMBER: 1130

Every data element has a unique number.

NAME: SECTION LENGTH

The name of the given data element is "section length."

DEFINITION: The number of weeks that this section meets (including final exam period). UW System Administration's understanding of each Unit's total number of weeks of instruction for each term may be found on pages III.A.3-III.A.4 of this manual.

In an effort to provide a clear, reliable definition; a narrative statement, coding considerations and an example are supplied wherever pertinent for each data element.

The data element is defined in narrative format. Special attention should be given to any exceptions or qualifications that are noted within a definition.

CODING REQUIREMENTS

If there are any special coding practices or considerations associated with the recording of a data element, then it is noted in this section. In the example, "section length" is to be coded by a two-digit numeric, indicating the total number of weeks that the given section meets. As a general rule, all numeric fields should be right-justified and zero-filled. Alpha fields should be left-justified and blank-filled; alpha-numeric fields should be treated like alpha fields.

LENGTH: 2 positions

The character length of each data element is indicated in the space provided. The character length of the "section length" data element is two characters.

DECIMAL POSITION: N/A

If the data element is numeric, "9's" are used to indicate the placement of the numbers and a "V" is used to indicate the placement of the decimal. In the "section length" example, this notation is not necessary because the decimal is in the rightmost position.

SPECIFICATIONS: Must be numeric and less than 19.

EXAMPLE: Section meets for 9 weeks, hence, the element is "09."

Wherever possible, data elements are illustrated by means of an example.

If the data element is derived from other more basic or primary data elements, then the formula or derivation algorithm is indicated. The example above is a primary data element and, hence, has no derivation algorithm. It is important to note derivation algorithms very carefully since data-reliability is dependent upon uniform application of such algorithms.

APPLICABILITY

Various items of information relevant to each data element are covered in the categories below.

UNITS: All

Those units reporting this element as part of the Central Data Request. In the example, "all" would be entered for "section length."

POPULATION: All course sections

The criteria which must be met for this element to be reported. For example, "section length" is reported for all course sections.

DATE OF RECORD: Second Week of Term

Date of record refers to the point in time that the given data element is to be recorded for the Central Data Request. Thus, "section length" information is to be recorded by the Unit at the end of the second week of instruction of each term. All data with an indicated date of record as of the end of the second week of instruction includes all relevant transactions conducted prior to and during the last day of the second week of instruction. Campuses then will have three weeks to complete the necessary processing of these transactions for submission of the specified data elements to System Administration.

SUBMISSION DATE: Sixth week of term

The Central Data Request submission date of the recorded data is indicated here. For example, "section length" data should be submitted in the Central Data Request no later than the beginning of the sixth week of instruction in each term.

The specific dates of record and submission for each campus are indicated in Part III under Section A. Data Submission Schedule.

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