

Hispanic-Serving Institution Definitions

Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are defined in Title V of the Higher Education Act as not-for-profit institutions of higher learning with a full-time equivalent (FTE) undergraduate student enrollment that is at least 25 percent Hispanic. The federal definition can be found here: www2.ed.gov/print/programs/ideshsi/definition.html.

HACU maintains two lists of HSIs based on differing definitions for differing uses, either advocacy or membership.

1. For HACU's **advocacy and research** purposes, the "List of HSIs" follows the criteria set forth in Title V of the Higher Education Act.

- HACU often is asked for an "official" list of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). As of 2016, the U.S. Department of Education began to publish a list of eligible Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as a result of HACU's continued advocacy work. These institutions of higher education are eligible to compete for HSI-related federal funding. The list can be found in the Hispanic-Serving Institutions Division webpage: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/ides/hsidivision.html>.
- In the absence of there being an "official" HSI list in prior years, the [HACU List of HSIs](#) has been published online following the federal definition. This list is developed using data from the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).
- In following this definition, HACU has only included non-profit institutions that are eligible for Title IV (federal student financial aid) funding.
- Additionally, since institutional Hispanic enrollment percentage needs to be calculated, HACU has developed a custom file by calculating the undergraduate full-time equivalent (FTE), as defined by IPEDS, by race/ethnicity. Further calculation is done to determine the Hispanic FTE enrollment of each institution. The percent FTE Hispanic enrollment is rounded to the tenth decimal point (e.g., 25.56% is rounded to 25.6%).
- Federal definition requires that institutions meet a 25.0% Hispanic FTE threshold; therefore, HACU only includes institutions that meet the 25.0% minimum.

2. For HACU's **membership** purposes, HSIs are defined as colleges, universities, or systems/districts where total Hispanic enrollment constitutes a minimum of 25% of the total headcount enrollment.

- "Total Enrollment" includes full-time and part-time students at the undergraduate or graduate level (including professional schools) of the institution, or both (i.e., headcount of for-credit students).
- Member enrollment statistics are self reported by the institution for the fall semester of the year prior to the membership year. For example, year 2009 members provide Fall 2008 enrollment statistics.
- HACU's [HSI member institutions](#) are listed on HACU's website.

Listing as an HSI by HACU, on either list, does not "certify" an institution as an HSI for Title V or other Federal grant purposes. Title V eligibility (i.e., meeting the Federal definition of an HSI) is determined by the U.S. Department of Education as the first step in the application process for a Title V grant. Specifically, if your college or university has (1) a full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment of undergraduate students that is at least 25 percent Hispanic students and (2) not less than 50 percent of all students are eligible for need-based Title IV aid, it should be an "eligible institution" for Title V.

Eligibility designation qualifies an institution of higher education to receive grants under the Title V and Title III, Part A, Programs, provided certain other program-specific eligibility requirements are met. Title V authorizes the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions Program. Title III, Part A, authorizes the Strengthening Institutions, American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities, and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions Programs. The [U.S. Department of Education's Office of Institutional Development and Undergraduate Education Service](#) administers both programs. Visit their website for additional information. In particular, visit the [Title V Program Statute](#) for legislation about Title V.

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, founded in 1986, represents more than 500 colleges and universities in the United States, Latin America, Spain, and school districts throughout the U.S. HACU is the only national association representing existing and emerging Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). The Association's headquarters are in San Antonio, Texas, with regional offices in Washington, D.C. and Sacramento, California.

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