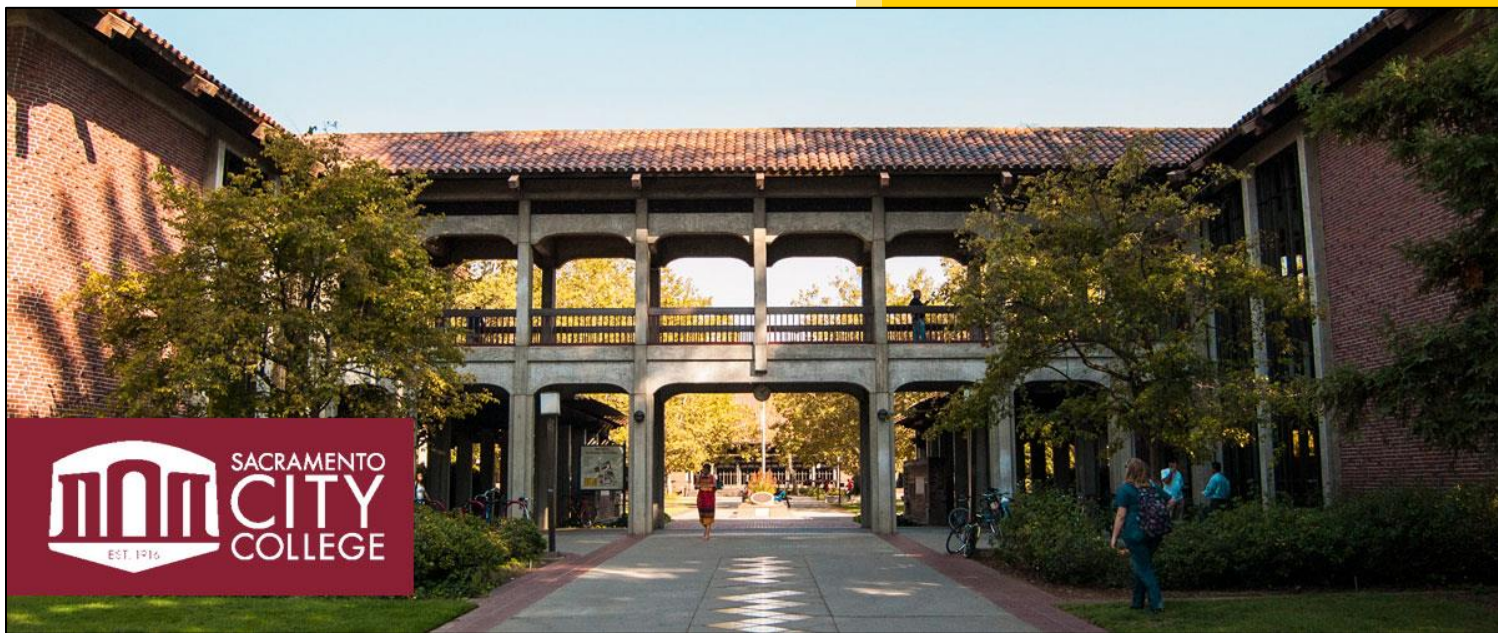


Research Handbook

Fall 2022 Edition



Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness Office



Sacramento City College

Connect with each other to create change
Care with courage and compassion
Contribute to an equitable community
Commit to something greater than yourself

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*Data does not give us answers. It helps us
ask the right questions.*

Introduction

The Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) Office oversees institutional research at SCC, which includes compiling and tracking student enrollment and outcomes data. We can help with current and historical information on SCC's student population, research reports, and relevant data and reports at other sites.

The PRIE office staff are available as a general resource for assistance with survey design, database design, data analysis, student learning outcomes assessment, and special studies on program/ service effectiveness.

The purpose of the Institutional Research Handbook is to provide a general understanding of rules and guidelines associated with research requests, data usage requirements and best practices, and resources where existing data is available or can be found.

As always, if you are at all uncertain about what data you need, come speak to the PRIE Office staff. We are happy to help!

Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) Office
Rodda Hall North (RHN) 221
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Common Types of Data Used at SCC

The most common types of data the PRIE Office is asked for or about include information about the following:

Access and/ or Usage: This is information about student access to, or use of, college services and college-related activities. It can include information about the number or characteristics of students who are in a program, course, service, or intervention. It can also include data about students who complete parts of a program or use different aspects of a service.

Student Experience: This is information about students' perception of their experience. It can include student ratings of the value of an intervention, course, etc. This data is often based on surveys, focus groups, interviews, or other similar methods.

Outcomes: This is information about student outcomes in courses, programs, etc. The most common type of data used for student outcomes work is successful course completion rate. Outcomes can also include student completion of steps of a process (e.g., completion of matriculation steps) or progress through a course of study (e.g., number of units accumulated).

Some Places to Locate Data on the SCC Website

The PRIE Office offers an entire website from which you may easily locate data independently. To access the [Data and Research webpage](#) (see below).

Data and Research

The PRIE Office supports, guides, and empowers higher education professionals at Sacramento City College to use data and evidence to make decisions and take actions that benefit our students.

I Want To...

+ Access SCC Data Dashboards

+ Look at Other Sources of Student Data

+ Find an SCC Survey or Research Report

+ Make a Research and Data Request

+ Conduct Classroom-Based Research

+ Conduct External Research

- Access SCC Data Dashboards

SCC DATA DASHBOARDS >

Expand this tile and click on the button provided to be directed to the SCC Data Dashboards page, also accessible by [clicking here](#).

This page provides the following types of data dashboards that offer interactive, data visualization features:

- General Dashboards
 - PRIE Dashboard
 - PRIE Census Dashboard
 - PRIE Awards Dashboard
 - PRIE English, Math, & ESL Dashboard
- Faculty Dashboards
 - Faculty Data Portal
- Program-specific Dashboards
 - FTIC/ FYE
- Enrollment Management Dashboards
 - Daily Enrollment
 - Weekly Drop Rate
 - Term Contact for Majors
 - Courses Completed
- Program Development and Program Review Dashboards
 - WSCH, FTE, Productivity
 - Program Review
 - Program Creation Data
- Student Support Services Dashboard
 - Tutoring Labs (OnTrack)

Each of the dashboards featured on this page are accessible via login by SCC employees only. (See the next page for a description of each dashboard listed above.)

Below is a description of all the dashboards currently available for access to SCC employees via login. Some restrictions may apply. [See SCC Data Dashboards webpage](#) for details.

PRIE Dashboard. This dashboard displays a student profile with information about a range of student characteristics, including race/ethnicity, age, gender, enrollment status, feeder high school, declared majors, and zip code information. It also contains data on course success, enrollments, headcount, drop rates, and fall to spring retention, disaggregated by a variety of student characteristics. This dashboard is updated every semester. Please see the [PRIE Dashboard navigation guide](#) for more details.

PRIE Census Dashboard. This dashboard displays a student profile with information about a range of student characteristics (e.g., race/ethnicity, low-income status, first-generation status, education goal, enrollment status, unit load, hours employed, and declared major). This dashboard is updated every fall or spring term after census.

PRIE Awards Dashboard. This dashboard features both the number of awards (certificates and degrees) earned by students and the number of students earning awards each academic year. Awards data are disaggregated by division, department, and student ethnicity.

PRIE Math, English, & ESL Dashboard. This dashboard features English, Math, and ESL placements and enrollments and displays data for first-time-in-college students.

Faculty Data Portal. This dashboard allows instructional faculty to view their individual course success rates, drop rates, enrollments, and student headcounts, disaggregated by a variety of student characteristics. A distinguishing feature of this dashboard is the visual conceptualization of equity gaps existing within the diverse student population faculty teach. Data presented in this dashboard are representative only of courses faculty taught at SCC (and not at other colleges within LRCCD). Please see the [Faculty Data Portal navigation guide](#) for more details.

FTIC/ FYE. This dashboard tracks information about our first time in college (FTIC) students, including those enrolled in our First Year Experience (FYE) program. Please see the [FTIC/ FYE dashboard navigation guide](#) for more details.

Daily Enrollment. This dashboard tracks daily enrollments and allows users to compare data from the prior year. Users can view enrollment data for the entire college and drill down to the location, division, department, course, and section level.

Weekly Drop Rate. This dashboard tracks dropped enrollments and is updated weekly. It also allows users to compare current drop rates from those of the previous three years, and identify the reasons students dropped their courses.

Term Contact for Majors. This dashboard provides department chairs and instructional deans with contact information for students who have declared a major in their area.

Courses Completed. This dashboard allows department chairs and instructional deans to identify which courses students have completed in their program. It also contains student contact

information, so chairs and deans can encourage students to enroll in courses they still need to complete. Please see the [Courses Completed dashboard navigation guide](#) for details.

WSCH, FTE, Productivity. This dashboard, designed primarily for department chairs and division deans, allows users to track Weekly Student Contact Hours (WSCH), FTE, and productivity rates. This data can be used for enrollment management purposes, as well as to assess justification for requesting new faculty hires.

Program Review. This dashboard, designed primarily for department chairs, provides data needed to complete Program Review reports. In addition to a department overview, this dashboard allows users to view course success rates, drop rates, enrollments and student headcounts, and WSCH/FTE/productivity information. It also tracks the number of declared majors and number of awards conferred. The data in this dashboard spans a six-year period. Please see the [Program Review dashboard navigation guide](#) for more details on what the PRIE Dashboard includes.

Program Creation Data. This dashboard, designed for department chairs and for the Office of Instruction, allows users who are developing new programs to view course enrollment data, including number of sections offered and total enrollments. All new programs submitted to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) for approval must report this data as part of their justification.

Tutoring Labs (OnTrack). This dashboard allows tutoring lab coordinators to track student usage in their tutoring areas, including number and length of visits. It also displays success rates and drop rates in the courses for which students received tutoring.

Data and Research

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+ Conduct External Research

Look at Other Sources of Student Data

- [Dashboards and information about California Community College students](#) (CCCCO):
 - Student Success Metrics
 - Data Mart
 - Transfer Level Gateway Completion
 - and more
- [Information about students from the California Community College attending CSUs](#) (CSU)
- [Information about students from the California Community College attending UCs](#) (UC)
- [Information about students in California's K-12 public education system](#) (CA Department of Education)

Expand this tile to see a selection of student data sources publicly available that *are not published by PRIE* but are commonly used and referenced.

Dashboards published by the CCCCCO, accessible by [clicking here](#), include but are not limited to the following: Student Success Metrics, Data Mart, and Transfer-level Gateway Completion.

This tile also includes direct links to dashboards published by the CSUs and UCs that provide information about SCC students who attend these universities. *(Please note that the student data presented in these dashboards are reported by students and are not cross-referenced or verified with SCC's official student records.)*

For quick access to information about students in the K-12 system, attending SCC's local feeder high schools, data published by the state's Department of Education are also included on this page.

Data and Research

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Find an SCC Survey or Research Report

The PRIE Office conducts surveys and produces research reports for external accountability and internal use. Reports and surveys are available online.

LOOK UP SURVEYS/REPORTS >

Expand this tile and click on the button provided to be directed to the Research Reports and Surveys page, also accessible by [clicking here](#).

This page provides reports published by the PRIE Office and research reports concerning SCC that have been published by external/ partnering agencies.

This page features the following types of reports:

- Achievement Reports
- Achieving the Dream*
- Assessment Validation Reports
- Career Technical Education
- Community College Survey of Student Engagement Surveys*
- Course Analysis Reports
- Governance and Communication Surveys
- Planning Reports
- Prerequisite Validation Reports
- Survey of Entering Student Engagement Survey*
- Tutoring Surveys
- Various College Surveys

Note: Items above noted with an asterisk indicate reports that are published by external/ partnering agencies.

While the information on the previous pages show where you may locate data that is already available and accessible to you on the SCC website, you may be interested in information that is not readily available.

Below are examples of types of data that you may seek to obtain but could take longer or be more difficult to analyze:

New surveys of students or college employees:

It can take a while to develop and administer a new survey. We can work with you to be sure that the question wording is clear and to figure out the best way to administer the survey (e.g. online or on paper).

Data about a specific group of students or a type of intervention that has not been studied before:

In this case, we will probably need to work with you to figure out how best to approach your overall question. We call this operationalizing the question and it might take a few meetings with you to be sure we have it right.

Data that requires combining information from more than one source:

It will take the PRIE Office more time to work with data that combines information from more than one of our data files. For example, if we have to combine information from the student application with information from student transcripts or information from student services, this makes the task more complex. We can do this, it just takes a bit longer.

Data about small groups of students:

In order to get a large enough sample size, we may need to combine several semesters of data. If you are studying a new program or intervention, there may not be enough information to analyze your data in the first semester that you ask about it. In that case, we can look at other ways to approach the question.

Please contact the PRIE Office for assistance for information about obtaining these types of data.

General Overview about Asking PRIE for Data

Think about your overall question. What is the goal of your work? Would it be helpful to look at information about steps along the way to that goal? Sometimes the overall goal of our work is something that is far away from the intervention that we are trying. For example, the overall goal of a change in matriculation processes may be to increase graduation rates, but many things will happen in between the intervention and graduation. In these cases, it is often more useful to look at something closer to the intervention – “leading indicators.” For example, perhaps students using the new matriculation process sign-up for classes sooner, or sign-up for more classes, or are more likely to complete an iSEP.

Decide what type of data you need to address your question. Do you need data on how many students used a program or intervention? Do you need information about what the students think about something? Do you need information on student success in courses or student achievement of degrees/certificates? Be as specific as possible. If feasible, choose something that does not require extensive development of new types of data. It may be helpful to look at the previous section of this handbook, which outlines the types of data that are already available to you.

Remember that the data might not provide proof of causation but can still provide actionable information. As a college, we are trying many things at once, and we hope that our collective efforts move the needle for students. Program evaluation data often tells us that we are probably making a difference but does not provide proof that our work is the only thing affecting the students’ outcomes. So, we interpret the data carefully and use it to improve our efforts.

Decide what students and what semesters will be studied. What group of students will you ask about and how many students are likely to be part of your data? Remember that if we break the data out by student characteristic (e.g., race/ethnicity, age, etc.) you will need a lot more students in your study, so no one group is too small. Usually, information about a small number of students is not very useful.

Complete the research data request form. The PRIE office gets a lot of requests for information. We use the research data request forms to keep track of it all. Thank you for completing one!

Student Research Projects. *Student research projects that are part of class work should follow the same internal and external guidelines.* The student’s research project will be treated as internal research if the information will not be used externally. If the student wants to publish findings in a journal, book, proceedings, etc., it will be treated as external research and will need to follow the external research process. Student research projects should always follow the best practices set forth in this document, see “Best Practices When Conducting Research at a College” section, regardless of the student’s decision to use internally or externally. Please see the sections “An ‘Internal’ versus ‘External’ Data Process” and “External Research Data Request Guidelines” in this handbook for more information.

Common Research Questions and How to Find Related Data

Usage Data: Who is my program/activity serving?

PRIE can provide usage data for some areas of the college, but in other cases, you will need to get the usage data from the records of the program or activity. Talk with us and we will help you figure it out. If there is a list of student ID numbers for those students in the program/activity then PRIE can use that to access data about the characteristics of the students. This is useful for questions such as “does my program/activity serve disproportionately impacted groups?”

Student Experience Data: What do the students think about...?

PRIE can help you design a survey or other method of assessing how students perceive their experience with your program, classes, etc. In some cases, we may have data already from one of the surveys that the college runs on a periodic basis. Check out our [Research Reports and Surveys webpage](#) on the PRIE website for an overview of the major surveys conducted. Come by the PRIE office to discuss how we can help you with surveys, focus groups, and more.

Outcomes Data: How are my students doing? Is our intervention working?

Looking for information on course success or course retention for students in a given discipline or division or on the number of students completing degrees or certificates in a given area? This is available through the PRIE Dashboard and the PRIE Awards Dashboard, accessible from the [SCC Data Dashboards webpage](#).

For other “how are they doing?” questions it is best to talk with the PRIE staff early in the development of your question. We will ask you to define “my students” (e.g., students taking a specific set of courses, students who are part of an intervention or service that you have implemented, etc.). We will also ask you to define “how are they doing?” (e.g., success in courses, staying in college). Then, we can develop the data that you seek.

College Process Data: What data do I need for an instructional Program Review? How do I show that a prerequisite is needed?

Data for instructional program review is available on the Program Review dashboard (accessible to department chairs only) and the PRIE Dashboard (accessible to all SCC employees), both available from the [SCC Data Dashboards webpage](#). If you need additional data, please submit a research data request form and we will work on it. If you are unsure what data is needed, come talk to the PRIE Office.

If you are thinking about adding a prerequisite from a discipline outside of that of the course, you will need to a research study analyzing the impact of the prerequisite. PRIE can assist, so just let us know.

Completing the Research Data Request Form

The research data request form is available on the [Data and Research webpage](#) and also accessible by [clicking here](#).

See the callout boxes below for additional information about what to include in each of the text boxes within the research data request form.

In order to assist us with the efficient processing of your request, please complete this form and submit it. We will notify you of the proposed timeline and scheduled completion of your project. Please be advised that we will be sharing a copy of your request submission with your supervisor.

In our efforts to ensure that the information we provide in this request process is helping you achieve the goals of your work to support the college's mission, we will contact you after we process your request to learn how you have used the information we provided. Your engagement in this follow-up will help assist college-wide improvements and will help inform processes concerning information and data use in inquiry, exploration, and decision making.

Please contact us at extension 2511 if you have any questions.

FERPA Note

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits an educational agency or institution to disclose, without consent, personally identifiable information from students' education records only to school officials within the educational agency or institution that the educational agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests in the information. Generally, a school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility. 34 CFR § 99.31(a)(1). This may limit what data PRIE can provide for your request.

Please read the FERPA note carefully. There may be certain information you would like to have that the PRIE Office may not be able to release.

Your Information

Contact Person *

Email *

Department (optional)

Phone (optional)

Name of Manager Approving Data Request *

Requested Due Date (optional)

Data availability:

DATA TYPE FOR SEMESTER/ TERM	DATA AVAILABLE
End-of-semester Fall data	End of February
End-of-semester Spring data	End of July
End-of-semester Summer data	End of September
Census data for Fall and Spring (regular term only)	Week 5 of class

Complete the information required in the “Your Information” section as directed.

- ➔ Please pay careful attention to the data availability table to help you decide the semester/ term for which you would like data.
- ➔ Please allow us at least a few weeks in most cases. If there is flexibility in the due date it may be helpful to chat with PRIE first as some kinds of data take much longer to develop than others. In some cases, we may have already developed the data for a different project – in that case, you may get it very quickly. In some cases, we may have to wait to receive data from District Office or other sources and won’t be able to start on your request for a while.

Project Description

If you are at all uncertain of how to approach a question, please consider **consulting with the PRIE staff** before completing your research request. We will be happy to provide information on what data we can access and ideas about how to approach your question.

This project is (check all that apply): *

- ☐ Required for external reporting (ACCJC reports, DO reports, BSI reports, grants, etc.)
- ☐ Required for College processes (program review, pre-requisite validation, curriculum process, etc.)
- ☐ Required for a grant application.
- ☐ Required for grant reporting.
- ☐ Part of Student Equity or SSSP
- ☐ Part of student achievement data analysis or SLO assessment
- ☐ Exploratory in nature (new data being developed for the first time)
- ☐ Other:

Complete the information required in the “Project Description” section as directed.

Doing your best to identify the type of project for which you are requesting data will help the PRIE Office better assist you.

- ➔ Projects that are required for external reporting or college processes generally have to be given a higher priority for completion than those that are exploratory in nature.
- ➔ If your project is in response to required reporting, please send us any materials that will help us respond to the reporting requirements (e.g., the reporting instructions or template).

Please describe the questions(s) you are trying to answer, the specific measures you are interested in (e.g. course success), and as much about the population as you can (e.g. first time students) with the data broken down by demographics.

1. Overall question: *

Describe the research question that you are studying and how you hope to use the data. If you are evaluating the impact of an intervention or program, let us know that, preferably before you implement the intervention or program. It is often a good idea to talk with one of the PRIE staff about your overall question before submitting the data request. We may be able to help you choose the best type of data for your question. We may even be able to steer you to data that is already available on the SCC website or the State Chancellor's Office websites.

2. Specific measures or metrics to be included (e.g., course success rates): *

Tell us what you are measuring. This has to be quite specific so that we can provide you with actionable information. It simplifies things if you can use a type of data metric that the PRIE Office often provides to the college – e.g. successful course completion, course retention rate, enrollment numbers, etc. If you're looking to develop a new measure, rather than use a metric we often provide, be sure to include a data definition. If you don't know exactly what data metric you need, come and talk with a PRIE staff member.

3. Specific populations to be included (e.g., males compared to females): *

Tell us what overall group you want to study (e.g., all students in History classes, or all students using the Transfer Center). Tell us how you want the data to be broken out for subpopulations. We can break out the data by student age, race/ethnicity, etc. Important note: The detailed data for any group with 10 or fewer individuals in a given category will not be reported. This is to protect student confidentiality to stay compliant with CCCC equity reporting guidelines.

4. Semesters to be included (within the last 5 years): *

Let us know what semesters to include. Please note that we don't get the end-of-semester data from the District Office until a couple of months after the semester is over. Please reference the "data availability" table in the previous section of this form.

5. Are you planning to share this data with anyone outside of the college? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Please note that data sharing with external entities is subject to additional paperwork and processes. *Please be advised that if you are planning to share data externally, you are highly encouraged to discuss this in advance with the PRIE Office.*

6. Deliverable notes (e.g., data only [no analysis], Excel file, Word file, etc.): *

Please note your preferred format in which you would like to receive the data.

File upload (optional)

Choose File Remove File No File Chosen

File upload (optional)

Choose File Remove File No File Chosen

Please upload any files you have that are relevant to your request form (e.g., student lists with IDs, data templates for which you need help completing, data reporting instructions).

SUBMIT FORM

Some Rules and Guidelines for Requesting or Releasing Data

Can an SCC employee have access to individual student records?

Only within very strict limits. FERPA and Education Code rules restrict access to student records and student identifying information. (FERPA 99.31(a)(1) Ed. Code 76243(a)(1) R2265.4.2.) Information from a government website related to FERPA restrictions is shown below.

Under FERPA, may an educational agency or institution disclose education records to any of its employees without consent?

No. FERPA permits an educational agency or institution to disclose, without consent, personally identifiable information from students' education records only to school officials within the educational agency or institution that the educational agency or institution has determined to have legitimate educational interests in the information. 34 CFR § 99.31(a)(1). Generally, a school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Information on the FERPA policy is available on the United States Department of Education webpage.

PRIE's guidelines are that individual student information will be provided only if a compelling case can be made that the job responsibilities of the individual cannot be completed without this information. Normally and in this case, the individual already has access to the information as part of his/her required work.

What about "directory information?"

Under FERPA rules "directory information" can be released without a signed student consent. This information includes student name, major field of study, and participation in activities such as college student government or college athletic teams, dates of attendance at the college, and degrees/certificates awarded. Note that this information cannot be connected to any of the records protected under FERPA. For example, we can say that student X attends SCC, but cannot provide any grade data or other protected data along with that student's name.

How is student confidentiality protected in aggregate data?

Normally PRIE will provide only aggregated data about students. In order to protect student confidentiality, data will be suppressed when there are 10 or fewer individuals in the group.

Will the PRIE Office share information about the course success data of individual professors?

The PRIE Office will not release information about overall course success or course drop data to anyone who does not already have access to the grade records for that course (i.e., the professor who taught the course or the professor's dean). For example, if an individual professor submits a research data request form for course success broken out by student demographics for his/her courses, PRIE will provide the data to that professor. However, if a department chair were to ask

for this information about other professors in the department, we would not provide the data, unless those other professors ask us to do so. Course data can be released if multiple people teach it, as long as the results are not disaggregated by instructor or disaggregated in any way that would identify the instructor.

Best Practices When Conducting Research at a College

One of the most important components of any study that involves the collection or use of data from human subjects is the inclusion of a plan that assures that each study participant will be protected from any form of physical, emotional, or social harm. Whenever you plan to use data about our students, your study should include the following:

Ensure that the research participants are not at risk. Risk to participants includes not just physical risk, but also psychological stress, the risk of a lower grade in a class, etc. Avoiding any risk is not as easy as it sounds. Sometimes an insensitive question may evoke memories or responses that cause real psychological stress to the research participant. Carefully review your questions and tasks to ensure that this risk is avoided. Be sure that students know that participating will not jeopardize their grade in any course or affect their academic standing at the college.

Ensure that the research participant has given their “informed consent” to participate in the study. Informed consent implies that the research participant has been informed with regard to what will be required of them, as well as any possible risk that they might face. The research participants must know that they have the right to opt out or refuse to participate without any negative consequences.

Protect the anonymity/confidentiality of the research participant. Every research project involving human subjects—particularly those that collect personal information—should have procedures in place to protect the participant’s confidentiality and/or anonymity.

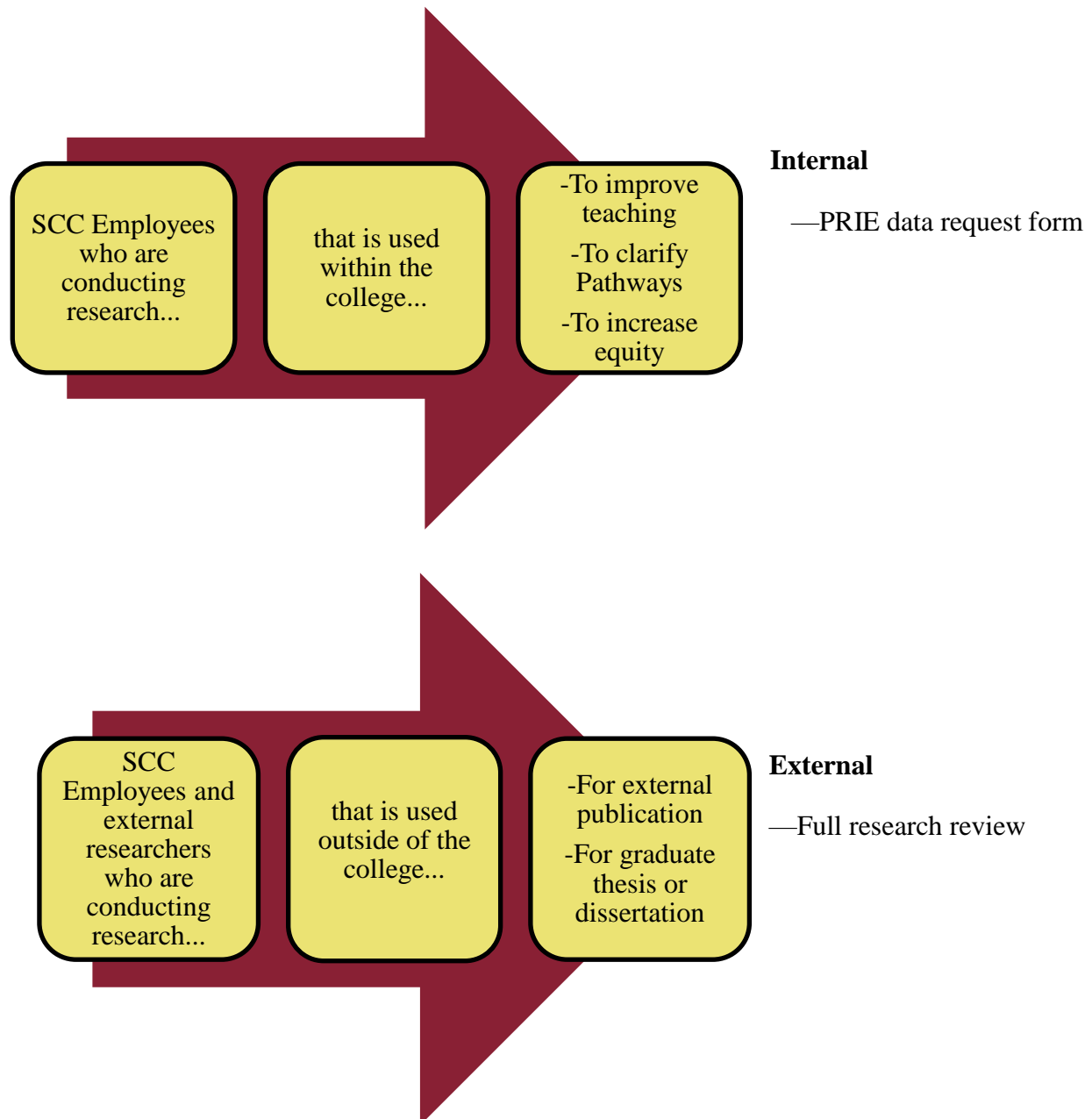
- *Confidentiality: While the researcher may know who the research participants are, access to the data is restricted, so that no one else will be able to match research data to a particular participant.*
- *Anonymity: Information about which individual gave which response must be protected. Records should not include participant names associated with specific responses. Identifying details of individuals should not be reported. (For example, the research report cannot say “the only African American woman over 50 in the study said...”.)*

Data provided by the PRIE Office will protect anonymity and confidentiality of the participants. If you have any questions about how to protect anonymity or confidentiality, contact your college Faculty Researcher Coordinator or a PRIE staff member.

Maintain careful data security. Some research projects collect sensitive information about a study participant. Do not collect the most sensitive information (e.g., social security numbers). Classroom-based research often uses student IDs, which allows for cross-referencing data to an individual. Be careful with this information. Keep all data records locked in a cabinet, and password protect all data files when possible. Consider encrypting data files—so that no one can access them—but yourself. If you need help with any of these, or other security procedures, contact your college Faculty Researcher Coordinator or a PRIE staff member.

An “Internal” versus “External” Data Process

Most data requests from SCC employees are under the “Internal” data process and only require completion of the research data request form. However, if the data are to be used outside of the college, it may fall under the “External” data process, which includes a full review.



For additional information about internal versus external research processes at the college, visit the [Data and Research webpage](#) (see below).

Data and Research

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Expand each of the tiles shown to find more information.

- Conduct Classroom-Based Research

SCC employees conducting classroom-based research for internal use at SCC are expected to follow best practices for conducting research involving human subjects but are not required to complete the full local review process.

See guidelines for internal research in section D of [Conducting Research Guidelines \(PDF\)](#).

[Sample Consent Form \(PDF\)](#)

RESEARCH D

- Conduct External Research

If an SCC employee is conducting research that is not classroom-based (e.g., as part of a sabbatical, for professional interest, for publication, or for a graduate thesis or dissertation) and plans to use data either from college students or the community, he or she should contact the college Faculty Researcher and/or the college Research Office. It is likely that this research will fall under the External Guidelines and require a local research review for approval (section C). For additional information, please review the [Research Handbook \(PDF\)](#).

As with any professional research, approval is contingent upon a review of the research plan to ensure that there is no risk to participants, that informed consent is followed and that anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. Please note that, because our local review is only an informal IRB, we ask that external researchers have permission from a formal IRB at their home institution. In order to process your proposal for approval, we will be requesting the following:

1. LRCCD [External Research Request Form \(PDF\)](#)
2. A description of the proposed research
3. A copy of university/agency research IRB approval, including approved guidelines for human subjects in the research
4. Copies of any consent form for participants (if appropriate); see [Sample Consent Form \(PDF\)](#)
5. Copies of any draft survey instruments and/or interview protocols (if appropriate)

External Research Data Request Guidelines

If an external researcher would like to request permission to conduct research at SCC, and/or other colleges in the Los Rios District, approval is required through the local research review process to gain approval for the work to occur at SCC. The following guidelines apply to persons not employed in LRCCD, who wish to conduct research about our colleges, or for LRCCD employees who are conducting research for external purposes (e.g., graduate degree work, publication, etc.). *If an outside researcher approaches you to ask if your students or your colleagues will participate in external research, direct them to the PRIE Office for more information.*

If an SCC employee is conducting research that is to be released external to the college (e.g., via a journal publication or graduate thesis/dissertation) and plans to use data either from college students or college employees, he or she should contact the PRIE Office. It is likely that this research will fall under the External Guidelines and require a research review for approval.

As with any professional research, approval is contingent upon a review of the research plan to ensure that there is no risk to participants, that informed consent is followed, and that anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. Please note that, because our local review is only an informal institutional review board (IRB) process, we ask that external researchers obtain permission from a formal IRB review at their home institution.

Requirements for submitting a proposal:

If a request relates to a single-college study, it should be submitted to the Dean responsible for research at the college. Requests related to more than one Los Rios College should be submitted to the District Office's Director of Institutional Research. In both cases, a formal research proposal using the LRCCD External Research Request form must be submitted including the following attachments: University/external agency approval, including a copy of approved guidelines for human subjects in the research; an abstract of the proposed research; draft survey instrument or interview protocol; and/or a sample consent form that participants will sign, as appropriate, depending on the nature of the study. The proposal will be reviewed for consideration of approval based upon college/district criteria.

Requirements of investigator upon project approval of an external research project:

Ensure that the research participant is not at risk: This means that the questions you ask or the tasks that the participants are expected to complete will in no way harm them. Care must be taken to ensure that questions are not loaded, insensitive, or biased in any way. Careful piloting of questions is required.

Ensure that participants have given their informed consent: Informed consent implies that the research participants have been informed with regard to what will be required of them, as well as any danger or risk (physically or psychologically) they may face. The participants must know that they have the right to opt out or refuse to participate at any time during the research.

Protect the Anonymity/Confidentiality of the Participants: Every research project involving human subjects—particularly those that gather or utilize personal and/or sensitive data—should have procedures in place to protect the participants’ confidentiality and/or anonymity. The investigator must ensure that all data will be reported at the aggregate level *only*, i.e., no individuals (students, faculty, staff, etc.) will be identified. In order to preserve individual anonymity, in a case where there is a small “N” (10 or fewer records), which might reveal the identity of individuals, the researcher(s) will not make the data available. Upon completion of the research study, all data files that contain individual identification data must be destroyed.

Research Approval and Review:

As with any professional research, approval is contingent upon a review of the research plan to ensure that there is no risk to participants, that informed consent is followed, data security protocols are in place, and that anonymity and confidentiality are guaranteed. Please note that, because our local review is only an informal IRB, we ask that external researchers obtain permission from a formal IRB at their home institution.

Research Approval is for a One-Year Period:

Approval to conduct research is for a one-year period. Research activities that must last more than one year are subject to annual review. It is the investigator’s responsibility to inform the college or district research office that the project has been completed or that they wish to renew the research request. Renewal requires a brief status report about the research. Prior to publication, a copy of the research report will be shared with the research office approving the study.

Changes to the Research Project or its Design:

If, during the course of any research project, a change in design is made such that the research methods or techniques are different, the risk/benefits balance have been altered, or the informed consent is modified in some way, the college or district research office must be informed in writing for subsequent approval prior to proceeding with the research.

What you must submit for review:

1. [LRCCD External Research Data Request Form](#) that can be located by expanding the “Conduct External Research” tile from the [Data and Research webpage](#).
2. A detailed description of the proposed research including research methods, timelines, protections of anonymity and confidentiality, and data security protocols.
3. Copy of university/agency research approval, including approved guidelines for human subjects in the research
4. Consent form for participants (if appropriate)
5. Draft survey instrument and/or interview protocol (if appropriate)

Where to submit your proposal:

- Research involving more than one LRCCD College: Contact the LRCCD Director of Institutional Research at: (916) 568-3131 or by e-mail at <mailto:IR@losrios.edu>
- Research involving Sacramento City College: Contact the Dean of Planning, Research & Institutional Effectiveness at: (916) 558-2512 or by e-mail at scc-prie@scc.losrios.edu.

Glossary

CCCCO	The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office
Course Success (Successful Course Completion Rate)	Course success is defined as a grade of A, B, C, Pass, or Credit. The successful course completion rate for a group or class(es) is the percent of all grades for that group or class(es) which are successful.
Course Drop	Course drop is defined as staying in the class long enough not to finish but is given a notation on the transcript. In other words, the course drop rate is the percent of students who did withdraw from the class.
Course Retention	Course retention is defined as staying in the class long enough to get a grade. In other words, the course retention rate is the percent of students who did not withdraw from the class.
Disaggregated	Data that is broken out by some characteristic of the group, the courses, the service, or intervention being studied. Examples include student data broken out by age or ethnicity, course data broken out by location or modality, etc.
External Data Request	A request for data that will be used externally to the college. For example, data requested by researchers for university studies, data used for journal publications, data requested by external vendors, etc.
External Publication	An official publication of an organization external to the college such as a journal, a university program, a dissertation, etc.
FTE	<p>Full-Time Equivalent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FTE students = a number showing how many full-time students would equal the number of units taken by the actual mix of full-time and part-time enrolled students. FTE faculty = a number showing how many full-time faculty would equal the number of units taught by the actual mix of full-time and part-time faculty.
Informal IRB (local research review process)	<p>An IRB is an Institutional Review Board. A formal IRB is an official body that reviews research to ensure the rights and safety of human subjects.</p> <p>At SCC we do <u>not</u> have a formal IRB. We have a local research review process that is similar in intent, but does not have the official government documentation (Formal IRBs are regulated by the Office for Human Research Protections).</p> <p>Note: Research in educational settings that is used within the institution to improve instructional strategies is exempt from formal IRB approval under the Code of Federal Regulations 45</p>

	CFR 46 (info from hhs.gov under Office of Human Research Protections).
Informed Consent	Informed consent is the voluntary agreement of a person to participate in research after being given full information about his or her rights and any risks for benefits associated with that participation. The researcher must have a signed informed consent document from each participant.
Internal Data Request	Research conducted at SCC for use within the college in order to improve instructional strategies or assess the impact of services or interventions. Examples include: Data on the number of students using a service, surveys of student or staff opinion, student outcome data provided by PRIE, etc.
PRIE Committee	The Planning Research and Institutional Effectiveness Committee is a college Standing Committee. It acts to support the use of college data and to provide feedback to the PRIE Office.
PRIE Research Data Request Form	An online form used to request data from the SCC PRIE Office about college metrics.
PRIE Office	The Planning Research and Institutional Effectiveness Office is responsible for institutional research at SCC, facilitates the college planning processes, supports accreditation processes, and assists with grant paperwork.
WSCH	Weekly Student Contact Hours is a measure of the number of hours of instruction per week multiplied by the number of students in the class.