Reporting Race & Ethnicity Data
Trends and Challenges

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Starting Assumptions

- This presentation describes current definitions, reporting conventions, and practices used in higher education to collect, store, and report race/ethnicity information.

- I am not advocating or defending every practice, definition, or process described here. My goal is <u>transparency</u> - improved access to and understanding of these data.

- I know there's a lot I don't know, and I'm looking forward to your feedback and questions. I'm grateful for the chance to learn and grow.

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Key Points to Cover

- Data collection and classification methods over the last 20+ years

- Current practices
  - Definitions
  - Frequently asked questions
  - Limitations of / concerns about definitions and collection

- Transparency and privacy considerations

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Data Collection Changes

- In 1997, the federal Office of Management & Budget (OMB) announced a new standard for collecting and reporting race and ethnicity data

- It was based on several rounds of comments and feedback, summarized in the *Federal Register* notice: https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-1997-10-30/pdf/97-28653.pdf

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Time Out – who says OMB decides this?

- Federal government
  - Financial aid
  - Research funding
  - Civil rights monitoring

BUT this is the *last* step in the standard-setting, after:

Setting (New) Standards

- Local discussions bubble into regional, then national conversations, often in discipline-specific organizations
- Many new standards are formed and start to compete
- Eventually one or two settle into a "national norm" status
- This ultimately forces the federal government to start discussions about setting or changing the standard
- After discussing it for several years, a new standard is proposed to the OMB, and they act
- This is a big change, so it can't practically take effect immediately – there is a multiple-year phase-in period

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Speed of Change in Large Bureaucracies

- New format announced in 1997, but higher education institutions not required to use new format until Fall 2010.

Evolving Understanding

Outdated Schema

Image posted on Facebook by SuezCanalAuthorityEG

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Other Standards Being Debated Right Now

- Gender
- First Generation
- Veterans

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Race/Ethnicity Wording Prior to 1997 Change

Choose the one option that best describes you:

1) Non-Resident Alien
2) Race and Ethnicity unknown
3) Black, non-Hispanic
4) American Indian/Alaskan Native
5) Asian/Pacific Islander
6) Hispanic
7) White, non-Hispanic

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Why Change?

- Doesn't distinguish between race and ethnicity, e.g. Hispanic / Latino

- Requires a person to choose a single "predominant" racial identity

- Groups Asian and Pacific Islander together

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New Question**s**

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Select one or more of the following races:
   - American Indian or Alaska Native
   - Asian
   - Black or African American
   - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   - White

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Fixed It?

- Hispanic/Latino is the only ethnicity option
  - How is ethnicity defined? Who participates in setting the definition? Should there be other options?
- White still includes people from Middle East and North Africa
  - If we differentiate Asian from Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander why not do the same within White?
- What about other kinds of identities, such as Muslim – more than religion but not a race: where does it fit?

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Fixed It?

- The two-question approach allows people to more fully self-identify

    BUT

- The way these newly comprehensive data are stored and reported makes marginalized groups even less visible than before

Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

- Commonly referred to as **IPEDS**

- Helpful resource for how data are reported now:

  https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/race-ethnicity-definitions

  and links to comment on emerging standards:

  https://edsurveys.rti.org/IPEDS_TRP/Default.aspx

  (Summary of most recent discussion on Gender is here:
  https://edsurveys.rti.org/IPEDS_TRP_DOCS/prod/documents/TRP51_Summary.pdf)

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Notes: 1) As of 2010 the US Department of Education requires institutions to gather self-reported race/ethnicity information from new students using a two question format. This new method allows students to pick multiple race/ethnicity categories; prior to the change students had to pick a single category they felt best described them.

2) While International (nonresident alien) students also answer the two race/ethnicity questions, their answers are excluded from this area of reporting due to federal guidelines.

3) The US Department of Education's IPEDS system gathers enrollment information in a way that requires each student to be in a single race/ethnicity category to prevent a student being counted multiple times and inflating enrollment figures. To accommodate those students who picked more than one race/ethnicity, they are shown in official reporting counts in the "Two or More Races" category rather than in each individual category selected. While allowing for easier reporting, this means that enrollments in the individual race/ethnicity categories look smaller than before the methodology change because students that used to pick one category to best fit their circumstances now move to the new "Two or More Races" category.

Still awake after plowing through that?

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IPEDS Decision Tree

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? You can answer the second
   question, but you're reported as ⟶ Hispanic/Latino
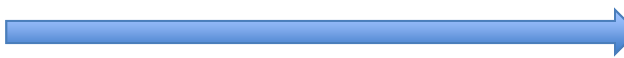2. Select [one] or more of the following races:
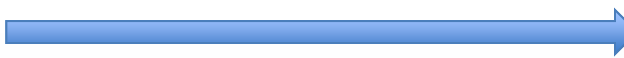   – American Indian or Alaska Native ⟶ American Indian/AN
   – Asian ⟶ Asian
   – Black or African American ⟶ Black/African American
   – Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander ⟶ Native Hawaiian/OPI
   – White ⟶ White

Picked [more than one]? ⟶ Two or More Races

Didn't pick anything? ⟶ Not Reported

Non-Resident Alien? Answers don't matter. ⟶ International

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NORMAN CAMPUS STUDENTS

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity
U.S. Department of Education (IPEDS) Categories

Fall 2008 - 2020

	Amer. Ind./ Alaska Nat.	Asian	Black/ Afr. Amer.	Hispanic	Nat. Hawaiian/ Oth. Pac. Isl.	Two or More Races	White	Not Reported	Inter- national	Total
2008	1,685	1,310	1,625	1,059	-	-	19,054	-	1,468	26,201
2009	1,721	1,363	1,670	1,195	-	-	19,054	-	1,537	26,540
2010	1,439	1,287	1,493	1,036	38	513	16,206	2,871	1,607	26,490
2011	1,334	1,279	1,557	1,432	53	915	16,784	2,111	1,684	27,149
2012	1,213	1,283	1,600	1,849	55	1,290	16,890	1,604	1,734	27,518
2013	1,118	1,305	1,529	2,154	51	1,532	16,496	1,304	1,814	27,303
2014	1,078	1,352	1,432	2,197	38	1,723	16,366	1,094	1,998	27,278
2015	1,076	1,401	1,466	2,246	46	1,811	16,233	1,125	2,041	27,445
2016	1,124	1,481	1,495	2,418	32	1,958	16,466	931	2,032	27,937
2017	1,171	1,560	1,498	2,569	33	2,166	16,721	840	1,983	28,541
2018	1,160	1,614	1,460	2,728	29	2,313	16,676	758	1,844	28,582
2019	1,102	1,639	1,429	2,837	33	2,345	16,373	630	1,701	28,089
2020	1,014	1,685	1,445	3,013	31	2,399	16,356	454	1,385	27,782

Note: As of 2010, new federal race/ethnicity categories implemented. Data are not comparable to prior years.

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Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity
Total Count of All Those Indicating Each Category

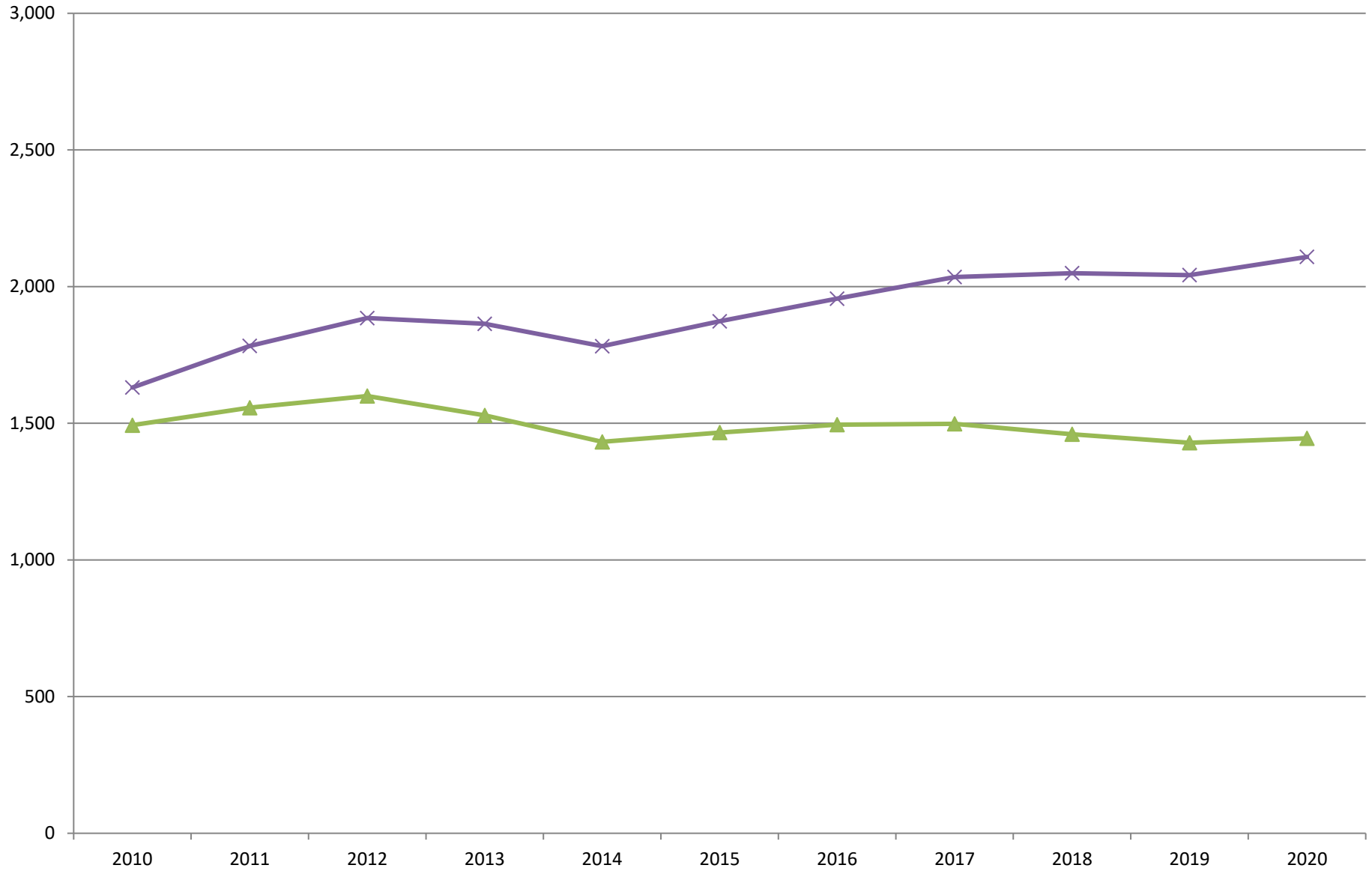|	Amer. Ind./ Alaska Nat.	Asian	Black/ Afr. Amer.	Hispanic	Nat. Hawaiian/ Oth. Pac. Isl.	White
2010	1,847	1,390	1,631	1,036	90	17,110
2011	2,035	1,468	1,783	1,432	118	18,296
2012	2,201	1,569	1,885	1,849	149	19,030
2013	2,285	1,643	1,864	2,154	157	19,137
2014	2,392	1,763	1,782	2,197	157	19,257
2015	2,440	1,846	1,873	2,246	169	19,289
2016	2,594	1,975	1,956	2,418	146	19,822
2017	2,818	2,100	2,035	2,569	150	20,456
2018	2,928	2,204	2,049	2,728	166	20,701
2019	2,908	2,240	2,042	2,837	183	20,537
2020	2,868	2,302	2,109	3,013	179	20,747

The Majority Minority

- The "Two or More Races" group is now the second largest minority category at OU, surpassed only by Hispanic.

- 8.6% of our students are in the "Two or More Races" IPEDS category, a 368% increase since 2010.

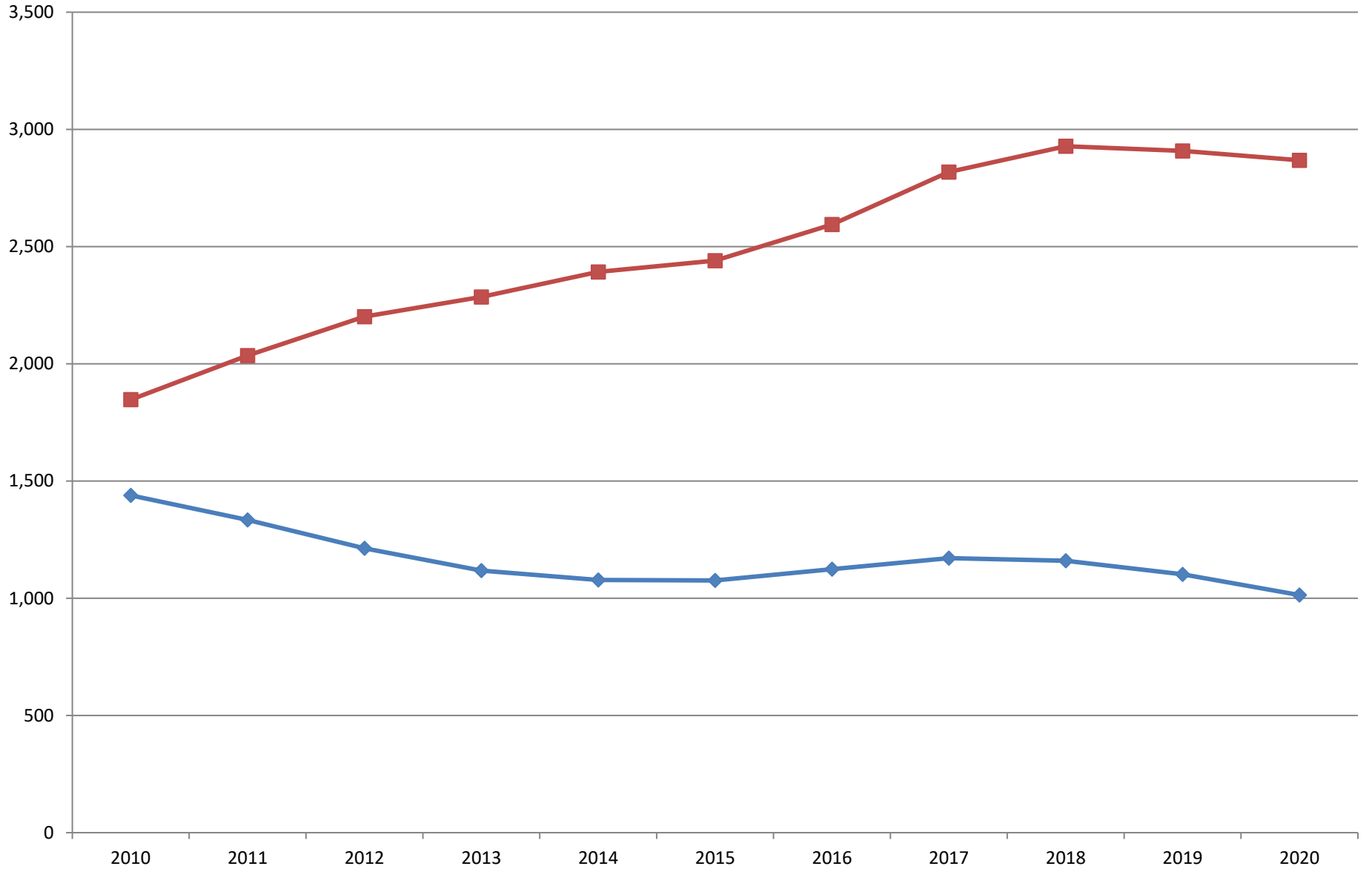- What impact did that have on our other IPEDS minority categories?

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University of Oklahoma, Norman Campus
Total Fall Headcount Enrollment

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Total Fall Headcount Enrollment

American Indian / Alaska Native	Asian	Black / African American	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	White	International	Not Reported	Headcount
X	X	X			X			2
X	X	X						1
X	X		X		X			2
X	X			X	X			1
X	X			X				2
X	X				X			17
X	X							8
X		X	X		X			4
X		X	X					1
X		X		X				1
X		X			X			25
X		X						55
X			X	X	X			1
X			X		X			70
X			X					37
X				X	X			8
X				X				7
X					X			889
X								817
	X	X	X		X			1
	X	X	X					1
	X	X			X			8
	X	X						16
	X		X	X	X			3
	X		X	X				2
	X		X		X			10
	X		X					19
	X			X	X			11
	X			X				9
	X				X			244
	X							1,228
		X	X		X			4
		X	X					31
		X		X	X			3
		X		X				3
		X			X			128
		X						957
			X	X	X			1
			X	X				6
			X		X			1,024
			X					649
				X	X			33
				X				23
					X			12,974
						X		1,200
							X	492
1,948	1,585	1,241	1,866	114	15,463	1,200	492	21,028

Comparisons and Benchmarking

- The most comprehensive, accessible source of higher education data is the federal IPEDS system, which requires data be reported using the "Two or More Races" category.

- Most higher education institutions provide only IPEDS category data in their external reporting.

  - If institutions want to report multi-choice race/ethnicity detail responsibly, it requires long notes and/or complicated tables.

  - If institutions want to keep it short and simple, they run the risk of being accused of being misleading or duplicitous.

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More Data Questions to Consider

- Should we address the lack of consistent data collection about Native American students' tribal affiliation(s)?
  - current system forces a single choice per person
  - up until a few years ago this information was only stored centrally if a student provided proof for financial aid reasons
- OU is allowed to collect more detailed information so long as we can map to federal categories; if we decide to do that, who sets the choices and definitions?
  - Adding race/ethnicity groups like Middle Eastern or Muslim to the main question? Collecting more granular data on existing groups (e.g., asking Asian students if they have roots in historically under-represented areas such as Vietnam, Cambodia)?

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Privacy Considerations

- Everyone has their own threshold for sharing personal information.

- These data must be volunteered; they should never be assumed or inferred.

- If we respect personal privacy, we will not collect data on 100% of a population.

- We need to know our data and speak about it accordingly.

- We must be excellent data stewards.

Balancing Act

- This is an institution dedicated to research, so we know the value of data to inform efforts to improve our community. We know that knowledge is powerful.

  TRANSPARENCY: Showing and sharing allows us to see where we are compared to where we want to be.

- History shows us data can be used to systematically isolate and marginalize groups of people. We know that data access comes with the responsibility to gather, store, and use it wisely.

  PRIVACY: Remembering that someone's personal data belongs to them, not us, encourages us to be careful stewards of critically important information.

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Thanks for your kind attention!

- Comments?
- Questions?

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