POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION FACILITIES INVENTORY AND CLASSIFICATION MANUAL

JULY 1992

Working Group on Postsecondary Physical Facilities
WORKING GROUP ON COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL FACILITIES

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NCES is pleased to release the 1992 Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual (FICM). It is a major update of the types and uses of postsecondary institutions' physical facilities and re-establishes current and consistent definitions and classification codes to collect, report, and exchange comparable data on institutional facilities.

At the outset of this effort, the only existing national standards for facilities data had been published by NCES in 1973 and thus were almost 20 years old. Because the planning for and use of facilities have evolved over that period of time, many states and individual institutions had devised, or were beginning to devise their own, unique classification structures and definitions. As a result, problems with comparing facilities information became increasingly severe and the need to undertake an update of the national standards became more and more critical.

This national effort was initiated by a small group of dedicated individuals, but quickly evolved into a collaborative and collegial activity that encompassed many individuals from diverse sectors of the postsecondary education community. These included not only the members of the Working Group on Postsecondary Physical Facilities who drafted several versions of the updated manual, but also the over 200 individuals from postsecondary education institutions and state higher education agencies who reviewed and commented on the several drafts.

NCES has a strong commitment to provide technical assistance and support to the education community to facilitate the collection, reporting, and use of high quality education data. This manual is one outcome of that commitment. In the future NCES hopes to support the development of additional manuals and to update them on more regular cycles.

That the 1973 Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual was considered the standard to be followed for so many years and is the basis for the current manual testifies to the work of those individuals who conceived the original strategy for describing facilities in postsecondary institutions. We are confident that once the education community begins using this 1992 FICM, it will have the same lasting value and utility as its 1973 predecessor.

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Foreword
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

From its inception to completion, this project has reflected voluntary cooperation and genuine collaboration among many individuals and organizations. In several instances, the circumstances and extent of this involvement deserve specific acknowledgment.

J. Michael Mullen of the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, who became involved as a result of his participation on a higher education facilities panel at the annual forum of the Association for Institutional Research in 1989, subsequently chaired the working group assembled to revise and update the 1973 facilities manual. John A. Dunn, who was then president of the Society for College and University Planning (SCUP), organized a well-attended meeting at the close of the SCUP annual conference in mid-1989. His support and contributions have been steadfast throughout the project, including drafting several new chapters. Also in 1989, Charles S. Lenth of the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) organization became involved as a reflection of state interest in encouraging greater comparability in facilities data. He assumed responsibility for organizing meetings, assembling materials, coordinating the field review, editing, and other aspects of the project.

SHEEO assembled the Working Group on College and University Physical Facilities in late 1989, attempting to involve and draw on diverse perspectives, institutional and state needs, and individual expertise. Without the direct and substantive contributions of the working group, this project could not have been carried out. Several individuals took on primary responsibility for drafting chapters of the revised manual and incorporating field review comments; others participated in numerous meetings and contributed their experience and perspectives. Special acknowledgment should be given to the contributions of David D. McFadden, who chaired the subcommittee on room use codes; Kreon L. Cyros, who contributed the building definitions sections and chaired that subcommittee; Joanne D. Cate, who contributed to many sections of the manual and prepared a data exchange instrument; Joan Racki, who wrote the question and answer chapter; and Denis J. Curry, whose experience and advice helped to shape many parts of the manual. Robert L. Clowers and Adrienne Sack played essential roles in assembling and formatting the revised manual.

The working group met numerous times from late 1989 through 1991 to prepare drafts, review comments and attempt to forge a true consensus approach suitable for the collection and exchange of data on physical facilities. Acknowledgment must also be made for the effort and contributions by the many practitioners throughout the country who contributed comments, suggestions and ideas as part of the extensive field review of early drafts of this revised manual, and to the organizations and state higher education offices who helped to facilitate the field review. Their contributions were essential to the consensus sought by the working group.

In many ways this project has been a new venture in joint federal, state, institutional, organizational and individual professional collaboration. All who have been involved have and can continue to benefit from such a process. The 1973 physical facilities data manual lasted, more or less intact, for nearly 20 years. All who were involved hope that this update of that manual will be equally useful and enduring.
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Scratch the surface of any higher education facilities data system and you are more than likely to find "FICM," the 1973 Higher Education Facilities Inventory and Classification Manual\(^1\), Published by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The manual was developed by a group of facilities experts under a contract to the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) from the then Office of Education in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW). It evolved through several versions and was issued and used with the imprimatur of professional groups, state agencies and institutional associations. Last published by NCES in 1974, the manual has been widely used and adapted and, for the most part, has faithfully withstood the test of time and multiple purposes.

For at least a decade, however, practitioners in the field, facilities managers and policy makers have recognized the need to update and reissue the FICM manual. Building types and room uses have changed substantially, the nomenclature and technologies for data collection have been advanced, and the types of information needed have shifted. Many institutions, associations of cooperating institutions, and states have accommodated these changes through modifications or additions to the definitions and categories established by FICM. The result, of course, is detrimental to the comparability of data collected on higher education facilities, and has reduced the availability and usefulness of information to facilities managers, planners, policy makers and the public.

This manual is intended to supersede the 1973 edition of FICM. As with the earlier manual, this revised and updated version provides a common framework and coding structure to be used in collecting and reporting inventory data on college and university "buildings," and on the space within those structures, primarily "rooms." Physical "facilities" is used as a more generic term to include other types of structures, real property and fixed assets, although "buildings" and "rooms" will typically be the two primary components of a facilities inventory system. The manual suggests to institutions a pattern for compiling essential data on their physical facilities and provides a set of common building definitions and room codes so that the reported data are reasonably consistent and comparable across institutions and states. The 1973 manual also provided the definitions used for the last federal survey of college and university facilities, which was part of the Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS IX) for the 1974-75 academic year.

Revisions, modifications and additions to the 1973 manual have been made in order to:

1. Account for changes in building structures and room uses that have occurred in the intervening years;

2. Reflect current practices and nomenclature in facilities inventory systems and postsecondary education; and

3. Make the manual as clear and easy to use as possible.

Changes in these areas reflect the judgment of the working group that assembled this revised manual, as well as the many comments and suggestions made from the field.

Users of the previous 1973 manual will need to note the following changes in this revised version:

1. **Title and Application**

   In recognition of the diversity and proliferation of postsecondary education providers, the title has been changed and the intended application of this manual expanded to include all postsecondary institutions, schools, organizations and other data providers within the universe of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) administered by the National Center for Education Statistics. Not all sections will be relevant to the facilities inventories of smaller schools, institutions and organizations.

2. **Organization**

   Sections have been rearranged to simplify the organization of the manual and to incorporate materials that were previously in appendices into the appropriate sections. Building data definitions and codes are now in Chapter 4, and the room use definitions and codes are in Chapter 5.

3. **Nomenclature and Program Classification Structures**

   The 1973 manual used the NCHEMS' *Program Classification Structure* (PCS) to assign space to functional program areas (e.g., Instruction, Organized Research, Public Service, etc.) and the *Taxonomy of Instructional Programs in Higher Education* (the HEGIS discipline codes) to further classify some functional areas to standard academic discipline categories. The former codes were referred to as "programs" and the latter as "program categories."

   To help avoid the ambiguity in these similar terms, this revised manual refers to the first coding structure as *function* codes or functional categories. For functional coding, this revised manual recommends the structure of the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) that is widely used for financial reporting. This structure is introduced in Chapter 2 and outlined in Appendix 2.
For coding space by the type of academic or instructional use, this revised manual uses the nomenclature *academic discipline*. Since the HEGIS academic discipline codes are no longer used by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), this manual recommends that institutions and states use a disciplinary or academic organization structure that is appropriate for their institution(s). For purposes of external reporting, it is further recommended that these academic discipline or organizational codes be capable of being crosswalked to the NCES *Classification of Instructional Programs* (CIP) at an appropriate level of detail. This academic program reporting structure is also introduced in Chapter 2 and is outlined in Appendix 3.

4. **Data Elements**

This revised manual suggests several new or additional data elements for buildings and rooms to reflect current data needs and uses. Chapter 2 divides these building and room data elements into recommended and optional categories, and provides technical definitions and explanations for these data fields. The categories are intended as guidelines for constructing an inventory system and for data exchange across institutions, without inhibiting institutions from collecting additional information or accommodating their information needs through other means.

5. **Room Use Codes**

The structure of the 1973 room use codes remains essentially intact in the updated Room Use Category Structure found in Chapter 5. Definitions have been clarified and codes added or combined when necessary to reflect new room categories or prevailing room use patterns. Appendix 8 provides an overview of major code changes, and Appendix 9 a crosswalk of the 1973 codes to the revised room codes.

6. **Condition Codes/Suitability Codes**

The codes used for the *condition of space* have been retained from the 1973 manual and are included in Chapter 4. Optional *suitability codes* (suitability of the room for its current uses), based on codes developed and used by the National Science Foundation (NSF), are provided in Appendix 5.
7. Adaptation to Current Practices

The previous manual was published at a time when many institutions collected and compiled facilities data using "paper" forms and hand calculations. Computerized systems were found mainly in larger institutions (or states) and relied on card entry to mainframe computer systems. This revised manual is intended to accommodate today's diverse data base management equipment and practices, including the use of microcomputers, minicomputers, mainframes or some combination of these systems. Institutions without a developed system should see Chapter 3, "How to Get Started."

It should be emphasized that, as with the 1973 version, the title refers to facilities inventory, but the definitions and procedures pertain only to buildings and rooms. Other types of institutional facilities, such as playing fields, uncovered parking areas, and utility networks, are not included. It is recommended that institutions and states include these other types of facilities as well as land and capital equipment in their broader, fixed-asset inventory systems.

During the development of this document, the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (P.L. 101-336) began to be implemented. It is clear that physical barriers within rooms or at entrances to buildings could limit access to programs and services housed within such locations. However, some aspects of the interpretation and implementation of this Act as applied to colleges and universities may remain unresolved for some time. The 1991 publication of the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers, *Removing the Barriers -- Accessibility Guidelines and Specifications* by S.R. Colter, provides guidance on what information should be included in an institution's facilities inventory and accessibility reviews. Rather than attempting to establish a suggested coding structure, this manual identifies access to facilities and programs as a major issue and refers readers to the most recent federal and industry publications for detailed requirements, such as the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards or the ADA Accessibility Guidelines developed by the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.\(^2\)

\(^2\)Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in programs or activities that receive or benefit from financial assistance from the U.S. Government. In addition, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government programs.

Currently, the Section 504 Regulation reference the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), which provide accessibility standards for the disabled for existing facilities as well as new construction.
Under Title II of the ADA, moreover, state and local government entities must comply with either UFAS or the ADA Accessibility Guidelines. An overview of the Section 504 program accessibility standards and the accessibility standards under ADA is provided in Appendix 1. More comprehensive standards are available from the Elementary and Secondary Education Policy Division of the Office of Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education.