Frequently Asked Questions
University of Missouri-Columbia Changes in Race/Ethnicity Categories
Student Data, starting Fall Semester 2010

1) Why is the University of Missouri-Columbia (MU) changing the way it asks for race/ethnicity information on its admissions applications and the way that it reports race/ethnicity student counts?


2) What are the changes?

When collecting race/ethnicity information from students, institutions must use a two-question format:

A. Are you Hispanic or Latino?
   ___ No, not Hispanic or Latino
   ___ Yes, Hispanic or Latino (regardless of race)

B. What is your race? (Select one or more.)
   ___ American Indian or Alaska Native
   ___ Asian
   ___ Black or African American
   ___ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   ___ White

Prior to Fall Semester (FS) 2010, students were asked one question with Hispanic/Latino included with the race categories (American Indian/Alaska Native, Black, White, and Asian). Additionally, students were asked to select only one race/ethnicity, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander was not included as a separate category.

When reporting race/ethnicity information to the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) the following protocols are to be followed:

A. Students who are Non-Resident International are only included in the Non-Resident International category.

B. Students who are not Non-Resident International and who responded “Yes” to the Hispanic/Latino category are only included in the Hispanic/Latino category.

C. Students who are not Non-Resident International and who did not respond or responded “No” to the Hispanic/Latino category are either a) reported in the racial category they
selected if they selected only one, or b) reported as “Two or more races” if they selected more than one race.

D. If a student is not Non-Resident International and they did not respond to either of the two race/ethnicity questions, they are included in the “Unknown” or “Chose not to respond” category.

These protocols will be followed unless noted otherwise.

3) *Are these changes mandatory?*

Yes, these changes are mandatory under the Higher Education Opportunity Act ([http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea08/index.html)).

4) *When will the new questions be incorporated into the MU application process?*

The new questions were incorporated into the Fall Semester 2010 application process. Students admitted prior to FS 2010 may update their race/ethnicity information through the registrar’s office, if they so choose.

5) *How will the changes affect what we know about race/ethnicity at MU?*

Any increase or decrease in a particular race/ethnicity category when comparing past years to FS 2010 and after may not be due to an actual increase or decrease in the number of students in that particular racial category. The change may actually be due to the changes in data collection and reporting. The data are maintained as they were collected, thus we do have the ability to report “maximum counts” when necessary.