



Graduate Comprehensive Licensed Data Set—2008 Database Overview

INTRODUCTION:

Since 1966, Peterson's has been at the forefront of collecting and publishing comprehensive data on graduate education. Peterson's Graduate Comprehensive Licensed Data Set for 2008 covers 2,121 institutions and 31,785 profiled units in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, as well as U.S. accredited institutions and units abroad that offer graduate and professional programs. Within this data set you will find information about institution and unit names and addresses, enrollment figures, and faculty makeup; institutional characteristics, computer facilities and services, expense information, library facilities, research affiliations, and student services and housing; and unit degrees awarded, degrees offered, entrance and degree requirements, faculty research, financial aid, and program option information. This Overview is designed to give you a broad sense of the database. A Data Dictionary, comprised of detailed descriptions of the tables and fields in the database, is available in a separate document.

UNIVERSE:

To be included, an institution must either have full accreditation or candidate-for-accreditation (preaccreditation) status granted by an institutional or specialized accrediting body that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). Specialized accrediting bodies exist in over forty different fields, each of which is authorized to accredit specific programs in its particular field. This can serve as the equivalent of institutional accreditation for specialized institutions offering programs in only a single field (e.g., schools of art, optometry, music, theology, etc.). Canadian institutions must be chartered and authorized to grant degrees by a provincial government, affiliated with a chartered institution, or accredited by a recognized U.S. accrediting body. Institutions from outside the U.S., its territories, and Canada that are accredited by recognized U.S. accrediting bodies are also included.

Each year, Peterson's conducts a comprehensive review of the membership lists of the regional, institutional, and specialized accrediting bodies. Newly listed schools are added to Peterson's listings and surveyed, while schools no longer accredited by the above standard are suppressed in the database.

TIME FRAME:

The database contains information collected for the previous academic year. The database is updated annually in conjunction with the release of updated guides and electronic products. Archived databases are available, beginning with the 1988-89 academic year. Databases from the 1988-89 through the 1997-98 academic years are stored in legacy structures; databases from the 1998-1999 academic year forward are stored in structures consistent with the current set.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA VERIFICATION:

Data collection for the Graduate Database begins in February and continues through August, for release in the fall. Questionnaires are sent to the institutions meeting the criteria defined above (see "Universe"). For schools that have previously been included, responses from the preceding year are included on the questionnaires for guidance. Officials from the schools (usually Graduate Deans or institutional research personnel) submit responses by confirming that pre-existing information is correct or providing new, updated information. A trained data collection staff at Peterson's reviews the questionnaires as they are returned.

GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE:

As noted above, Peterson's Graduate Database includes accredited institutions in the United States and U.S. territories (1957), Canada (103), Mexico (28), and 18 other nations (33).

DATABASE VERSATILITY AND EXTENT OF USE:

Peterson's Graduate Database is an important component of many products and services. Among these are:

- Peterson's Annual Guides to Graduate Study (a reference set):
 - Graduate & Professional Programs: An Overview*
 - Graduate Programs in the Humanities, Arts & Social Sciences*
 - Graduate Programs in the Biological Sciences*
 - Graduate Programs in the Physical Sciences, Mathematics, Agricultural Sciences, the Environment & Natural Resources*
 - Graduate Programs in Engineering & Applied Sciences*
 - Graduate Programs in Business, Education, Health, Information Studies, Law & Social Work*
- Peterson's Education Supersite (Graduate Schools Channel) at <http://www.petersons.com/>