

**Harvard University**  
**New Demographic Data Collection Format**  
**FAQ**

The following Frequently Asked Questions were prepared by the University transition team to assist the University community in understanding how universities collect and report race and ethnicity information under the new government mandated format. If you have any further questions about the changes, please contact your local human resources representative.

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**1. Why is the University changing the way it asks for race/ethnicity information?**

To comply with the mandate issued by the Department of Education (DOE), Harvard University, along with all providers of postsecondary education in the U.S., is implementing this change as prescribed by the Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education: <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/rschstat/guid/raceethnicity/index.html>.

Complying with the new standards issued by the Office of Management & Budget (OMB), the DOE issued this Guidance, followed by the enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which spells out the new format and requires uniformity in the way race and ethnicity are reported. This new format will make the data comparable to the U.S. Census statistics (the U.S. Census Bureau has used the Hispanic/Latino question for a decade).

**2. What are the changes?**

Under the new federal requirements, institutions must use a 2-question format:

a. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- No, not Hispanic or Latino
- Yes, Hispanic or Latino (a person of Cuban, Mexican, Chicano, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race)

b. What is your race? You may select one or more races:

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

Under the requirements of the federal Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, which collects this data for the government, respondents are encouraged to answer both questions as it is vital to reporting race and ethnicity uniformly across the U.S.

### **3. Am I required to self-identify?**

While self-identification is voluntary, the University is still required to make an identification even if you choose not to self-identify for Affirmative Action reporting. Harvard University prefers to report on data based on self-identification, and encourages you to help us comply with the new federal mandate. The new categories allow individuals to self-identify their ethnicity and race, and permit the selection of more than one race and/or ethnicity, allowing individuals to more accurately reflect their racial and ethnic background by not limiting responses to only one category.

### **4. When and how will current faculty and staff be given an opportunity to self-identify using the new categories?**

All new faculty, staff and job applicants have already been self-identifying under the new format. Existing faculty and staff are currently being asked to review, confirm, and update as appropriate their racial/ethnic information based on the new categories on PeopleSoft starting September 13, 2010. We ask that you complete this information within the next 3 weeks.

The navigation path in PeopleSoft to access the Employee Self Service page for updating ethnicity/race definition:

Home → Self Service → Personal Information → Ethnicity/Race

### **5. Are international employees resurveyed?**

While DOE does not require reporting on the race/ethnicity of nonresident aliens, by collecting it, we will have the information if the person changes residency status and/or if we want to use the data for other required reporting purposes.