

Appendix A

REVISIONS TO THE STANDARDS FOR THE CLASSIFICATION OF FEDERAL DATA ON RACE AND ETHNICITY¹

The information provided below describes the reasoning for the change in the Race and Ethnicity Data Elements between the 1995 and 2001 Editions of the Staff Data Handbook. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) adopted, in 1997, new standards for classifying race and ethnicity and provided guidelines in 2000. Tabulation guidelines may allow some of the 63 possible combinations of race and ethnicity to be collapsed into broader categories. The Department of Education intends to allow education organizations three years to implement the guidelines for aggregating and reporting data, once these are established. Data for individuals, however, will be reported by the Department following the schedule set by OMB. However, the USED has not endorsed a set of guidelines for tabulating these data in aggregated reports.

Pending final adoption of tabulation standards, many Departmental Programs have not yet adopted the new standards, but continue to use the older standards set in Directive 15. A description of both is provided here for easy reference.

Directive 15: Presented in the 1995 Edition of the Staff Data Handbook

The *Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* (Statistical Policy Directive No. 15) was issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 1977. They were designed to provide standard classification for record keeping, collection, and presentation of data on race and ethnicity in Federal program administrative reporting and statistical activities. As such, these are standards to which all federal agencies and programs must adhere.

Directive 15 required a minimum of five acceptable racial and ethnic categories be included in all federal data collection instruments. The categories and their definitions are as follow:

- **American Indian or Alaskan Native** : A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- **Asian or Pacific Islander**: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.
- **Black**: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic**: A person of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
- **White** : A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

¹ The *Recommendations from the Interagency Committee for the Review of the Racial and Ethnic Standards* is available from the OMB at the federal register web site at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/directive_15.html. The *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* are also available from the OMB web site at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/ombdir15.html>. The *Draft Provisional Guidance on the Implementation of the 1997 Standards for the Collection of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity* is available from the OMB web site at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/inforeg/race.pdf>.

1997 Standards for the Collection of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity: Presented in the 2001 Edition of the Staff Data Handbook

In 1994, in response to the need to reflect the increasing diversity of the population of the United States, OMB began a comprehensive review of the current categories in collaboration with the Interagency Committee for the Review of the Racial and Ethnic Standards. In 1997, OMB accepted the recommendations of the Interagency Committee. The revised standards have five minimum categories for data on race and two categories for data on ethnicity (“Hispanic or Latino” and “Not Hispanic or Latino”). The new categories and their definitions are as follow:

Racial Categories

- **American Indian or Alaska Native:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America), and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American:** A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. Terms such as “Haitian” or “Negro” can be used in addition to “Black or African American.”
- **Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **White:** A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Ethnic Categories (“Hispanic or Latino” and “Not Hispanic or Latino”)

- **Hispanic or Latino:** A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, “Spanish origin,” can be used in addition to “Hispanic or Latino.”

Under the 1997 standards, individuals may select any and all racial and ethnic categories to characterize themselves. There are 63 possible combinations of race/ethnicity.

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