

# College Students and the U.S. Census

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# Introduction

- How are college students counted by the U.S. Census Bureau?
- How does the way in which we count college students affect census data?
- What are some of the issues and ramifications?
- Discussion & Questions



# How are college students counted by the U.S. Census Bureau?

***College students living at their parental home while attending college*** - Counted at their parental home.

***College students living away from their parental home while attending college in the U.S. (living either on-campus or off-campus)*** - Counted at the on-campus or off-campus residence where they live and sleep most of the time.

***College students living away from their parental home while attending college in the U.S. (living either on-campus or off-campus) but staying at their parental home while on break or vacation*** - Counted at the on-campus or off-campus residence where they live and sleep most of the time.

***U.S. college students living outside the U.S. while attending college outside the U.S.*** - Not counted in the census.

(Residence Rule And Residence Situations For The 2010 Census: Facts About the Census 2010 Residence Rule and Residence Situations, U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2010  
[http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2010/resid\\_rules/resid\\_rules.html](http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2010/resid_rules/resid_rules.html))



# What types of data are affected?

- Population
- Race
- Poverty



# Population

In many cities college students are a significant proportion of the population.

- Burlington, VT 29.8%
- Charlottesville, VA 29.6%
- College Station, TX 47.3%
- U.S. 7.5%

(Enrolled in college or graduate school, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



# Race

## Proportion of Black or African-American Alone Population 18-24 years old

- College Station, TX 22.3%
- U.S. 11.9%

(Sex by Age (Black or African-American Alone), 2008-2012  
American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)



# Poverty

- College students living in dormitories are “not part of the poverty universe used for the official poverty measure.” (Bishaw, 1-2.)
- The poverty status of college students residing with parents or relatives is determined together with their families. (Bishaw, 1.)
- Off-campus students not living with parents or relatives are included in the poverty universe. (Bishaw, 2.)



# Examining the Effects of Off-Campus Students on Poverty Rates

Bishaw, Alemayehu. "Examining the Effect of Off-Campus College Students on Poverty Rates." Washington: U.S. Census Bureau, Social, Economic & Housing Statistics Division, Poverty, 2013. (SEHSD 2013-17)

<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/publications/bishaw.pdf>





# Issues and Ramifications

- Population

- Political representation and partisan politics
- Wide range of government funding

- Race

- Diversity – Including students may increase or decrease measures of diversity and segregation

- Poverty

- Inflated poverty rates may result in misdirection of funds
- Should students even be included in the poverty universe?



# How are college students counted in other countries?

- England and Wales

- Students counted at school address but also included at home address for basic demographic information

(2011 Census (United Kingdom), "Final recommended questions for the 2011 Census in England and Wales, Students," 2010, 2011 Census Programme, <http://tinyurl.com/pjc77b7> )

- Canada

- Students living with parents for part of the year counted at parental residence.

(Statistics Canada, Census Dictionary, Usual Place of Residence, 2012, <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2011/ref/dict/pop126-eng.cfm>)



# Discussion and Questions

Thank you!

