

Tenets of the PSEO Coalition Research Community of Practice

Why are we creating the PSEO Coalition Research Community of Practice (PSEO RCOP)?

Executive leadership is increasingly facing the need to defend the outcomes of a postsecondary education credential to parents, board members, elected officials, and policymakers. Outcomes data from the PSEO provide a solid foundation for quantifying the earnings outcomes for a majority of higher education students in the United States. Strategic planning initiatives, accreditation standard requirements, academic program creation processes, employer and alumni engagement opportunities, and educating students on the inherent economic value of their degrees are all perfect use cases for a research community to discuss and leverage to improve institutional and student outcomes.

How does the RCOP align with the mission of the PSEO Coalition?

The PSEO Coalition powers informed decisions by integrating nationwide postsecondary graduate outcomes data in a comprehensive, collaborative, and sustainable way, driving strategic enhancements across educational and employment landscapes. By extension, the RCOP serves as a catalyst to help advance this mission. For more information about the PSEO Coalition and its governance, visit [our website](#).

Who is an ideal fit for the PSEO RCOP?

We are partnering with individuals who work specifically for two- and four-year institutions of higher education whose data are in PSEO. To see if your institution is currently participating, [please visit the PSEO Explorer](#). Staff who will find this opportunity most engaging ideally have experience in one or more of the following general areas: institutional research, institutional effectiveness, career services, student affairs assessment, academic program development, institutional advancement, and institutional marketing and communications.

What roles on campus would be a logical fit for the PSEO RCOP?

We are specifically interested in leadership from the offices of Institutional Research, Business Intelligence, Decision Support, Institutional Effectiveness and Accreditation, Career Services, Student Affairs Assessment, Advancement and Development, Academic Affairs, Strategic Planning/Chief of Staff, Budget Offices, and Communications/Marketing.

What are the benefits of joining the PSEO RCOP?

Members will join a community of like-minded individuals who understand the need for and value of applying an outcomes data lens to the current challenges facing higher education. Members will have the opportunity to deepen their understanding and use cases for PSEO data and data structures and have opportunities to learn insider tips and tricks for making the most of these valuable data. Individuals will gain exposure at the national level and have the chance to hone their skills in applying data to inform campus decision-making. Special emphasis will be placed on increasing capacity for using outcomes data through design thinking methodologies. Finally, members will be one of the first groups to learn about new PSEO updates, programs, and research grant opportunities.

What are the expectations of all RCOP participants?

- Promote collaborative and equitable partnerships in all research.
- Recognize our community as a form of professional identity.
- Build on strengths and resources within the PSEO Research Community of Practice.
- Facilitate co-learning and capacity building among all members by sharing expertise and relevant knowledge.
- Focus on challenges of relevance to the higher education community using a diverse array of approaches to surface new information.
- Balance personal responsibility with research and action for the mutual benefit of all members.
- Embrace the tenets of ethical use of data and methodological transparency in all activities.
- Commit to a process of continuous development and a growth mindset.
- Understand and embrace the need to follow all relevant State and Federal policies regarding PSEO data structures and tools.
- Ensure a long-term focus on processes to enable sustainability of the community.
- As part of RCOP's shared culture, agree to: seek different perspectives, actively listen, encourage all voices, weigh impacts, engage in critical discourse, and act ethically, honestly, and with integrity.

What is the process for participating in the PSEO RCOP?

Interested members should use the following [link](#) to the PSEO RCOP interest form. All applicants will be screened by PSEO Coalition staff, and individuals who are selected will be invited to officially participate.

What is the time commitment for being a member of the PSEO RCOP?

Members are invited to serve a minimum of one year in the community of practice. We will hold a 60-minute virtual meeting once every two months. Meeting time will have both structured and pre-planned content designed to assist members, as well as open forum time for community question-and-answer support. Members may choose to interact outside of formal meetings for networking and professional growth.

What are the desired outcomes at the end of the first year to demonstrate success?

The ultimate goal of the PSEO RCOP is to catalyze the powerful opportunities that PSEO data can offer institutions of higher education. This group will help model how to best utilize these data resources to create meaningful and tangible research and develop practical use cases for institutional leadership. A secondary outcome of our community is to inculcate a design thinking approach to data-informed decision-making and highlight how to utilize this framework to maximize outcomes of data research. Members will be asked to submit a reflective summary at the end of each semester on what they valued from the RCOP, as well as how they applied what they learned to their institutions.

What are global areas of interest that warrant engagement with the PSEO RCOP?

Research using [PSEO data](#) focuses on the program- and degree-level outcomes of postsecondary students, including earnings, geography, and industry of employment. When combined with validated institutional data, other quantitative topics of interest could focus on the interplay of State or Institutional policy on outcomes or the varied effects of earnings for similar academic programs locally, regionally, or nationally. PSEO RCOP members are also interested in qualitative research designed to help us better understand how campus leadership embraces, utilizes, and deploys PSEO data to improve outcomes. Research here might focus on strategies to socialize data, best practices in elevating campus literacy of PSEO data, or how executives create official pathways and protocols to leverage PSEO data for academic program development or improvement processes. The creativity of the RCOP means that other topics, areas of focus, and research questions may emerge. RCOP members will be encouraged to collaborate, share ideas, and help elevate data-informed decision-making with PSEO data.

What does a typical PSEO RCOP meeting entail?

Each meeting, members will be invited to a virtual forum where the following topics may be addressed (e.g. the following sample agenda):

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Data tips/tricks
3. Design thinking use case
4. General information and PSEO technical updates (if applicable)
5. Research question generation from within the community
6. Research resource sharing from within the community
7. Research findings and presentation from the community (once member efforts yield outcomes)
8. Open RCOP Q&A
9. Other business and next meeting

Where is the PSEO RCOP going in the future?

As detailed, the initial focus of the community is on institutional data and analytics leadership from administrative areas. Depending on resources and interest, we anticipate launching a secondary RCOP for academic faculty and others interested in using PSEO data to study higher education and higher education policy, including master's and doctoral students with an interest in leveraging PSEO data for thesis and dissertation research.

What does the PSEO RCOP *not* do?

The overarching role of the facilitators is to organize RCOP meetings and their content. As such:

- RCOP is not intended as an approval gateway, endorsement agent, or funding source for any research generated from individual members.
- RCOP will not provide researchers with workarounds or alternative methods of data manipulation that would violate the standards and policies of the U.S. Census or any other state or federal agency.

- Facilitators will not provide technical assistance to individual members of the community.
- RCOP will not provide direct assistance for campus IRB processes.

I am interested in joining the RCOP. What are my next steps?

We have created an online form to enable you to quickly send us your interest. Please [access the form](#) to indicate your interest and share more about yourself.